



# **11<sup>th</sup> InSEA EUROPEAN CONGRESS**

**InSEA**

**Proceedings**

*'Arts Education at the  
crossroad of cultures'*

**CySEA Board**

**LEMESOS- CYPRUS, 2012**



## InSEA 2012 European Congress

Lemesos, Cyprus

25-27 June 2012

### ORGINIZERS:

CySEA (Cyprus Society for Education through Arts)

### Co-Organizers:

Frederick University, Cyprus

European Parliament Office in Cyprus

### Sponsors:

Famagusta Lion Clubs

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Cyprus Ministry of Education Cultural

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## Welcome Speeches

### Welcome speech by the CySEA

Honourable Minister, honourable Mayor, honourable Director of the Office of the European Council of Cyprus and dear conference participants,

I am honoured to have the opening statement, as President of the Executive Board of CySEA, the organizer of the InSEA European Conference 2012, entitled 'Arts Education at the Crossroad of Cultures'.

I warmly welcome you with the defining verse of a Cypriot song, that is of a specific symbolic nature: 'It is a good, golden and blessed time, which we have chosen to begin this undertaking'. Today's gathering is truly a union of many cultures in harmonious co-existence, with participants from 56 different countries spanning all 5 continents.

CySEA, as a full member of InSEA and in recognition of this international organization's vast contribution to the education of the arts and culture, applied at the 2010 European Conference in Lapland, and was awarded the honour of hosting this three day conference in Limassol. It is a great honour for CySEA, and it is of particular significance for Cyprus too, which in a few days shall accede to the presidency of the European Union council for the second half of 2012.

The title of our three day conference, 'Arts Education at the Crossroad of Cultures' emphasizes the importance that men of the arts assign to Culture. Culture and the Arts are the key components for a comprehensive education that leads to a multifaceted development of the individual. Allow me to use the words of the late Melina Merkouri 'If a child is sensitized to culture, then a different society, a different mentality and a different direction will be created.'

Dear delegates, we live in a world undergoing transformation, subject to rapid changes and defined by globalisation, the mobility of Cultures, modern technologies and by economic upheaval. As such, the aims and practical procedures in the education of the arts must be in a state of continuous redefinition.

The main purpose of today's conference is to provide an environment for fruitful and constructive dialogue amongst delegates. To exchange ideas and experiences on new creative teaching methods and innovative approaches to research in which the Arts can shape Culture.

The artistic and scientific program of the conference focuses on social and cultural issues, modern technologies and environmental challenges that we face in the 21st century. The whole program is designed to help develop dialogue through different perspectives with the purpose of exploring ways through which, education through art can respond to the contemporary needs of students; to enable them as the citizens of tomorrow to function harmoniously both at the level of their local and global communities.

I would like to thank the World Council of InSEA, the European Council of InSEA, and all of you, who, in spite of the current global economic crisis have travelled from far and wide to make this conference possible.

I would also like to thank our co-organizers, the Office of the European Council of Cyprus and Frederick University. Special thanks to my colleagues from CySEA and the organizing committee for their tireless contribution, as well as to CPC Event Management for their superb contribution to the organization of the conference.

The Executive Board of CySEA and I, warmly welcome you to the city of Limassol. We are confident that your time here will be constructive and enjoyable and we hope this will be an unforgettable experience for all of us!

Gianna Theocharous –Gkantzidou  
President, CySEA

## **Welcome speech by the chair of the InSEA European Regional Council**

***"If the only tool you have is a hammer, you tend to see every problem as a nail."***  
*Abraham Maslow*

Dear InSEA/Cysea Congress delegates,

WELCOME TO THE EUROPEAN REGIONAL CONGRESS OF INSEA, LIMASSOL, CYPRUS,  
JUNE 2012

On behalf of the European Regional Council of InSEA, it is my sincere pleasure to welcome you in the 2012 InSEA/CYSEA European Regional Congress in Limassol, Cyprus. This meeting of devoted and committed art(s) educators from all around is the largest visual arts education event in Europe this year. It is a first class chance to present and attend new discoveries in the art education field.

We must use an opportunity to meet (new) friends and make networks during the Crossroads venue days of the Congress. Limassol is indeed a superb chance to throw a bridge across a river; to throw many bridges across many rivers, represented by us participants! Limassol is an excellent opportunity for not only realising the theme "Art(s) education at the Crossroads of Cultures", but also to prepare an additional firm ground for "Art(s) education to be one of the key Crossroads in General Education, if speaking in interdisciplinary terms"!

I would so much like to thank the organizers of this congress. It is through your hard work, motivation and creative efforts that we are able to benefit from this event.

Here will be speakers, all kind of workshops and cultural events to peek our interest and broaden our experiences, knowledge and understanding. I hope you will find the Congress fulfilling, invigorating and renewing you as an art educator and artist. Let us make the art(s) education stronger in Europe and wider! Let us not forget to paint, to dance and to sing when an opportunity arise in the promising events! And - let us enjoy!

Crossroads are waiting for us to explore and to give meaning and content!

Marjan Prevodnik  
Chair of the InSEA European Regional Council 2011-2014

## **Welcome speech by the InSEA president**

I want to thank each of you for attending this congress. It is always such a heart-warming experience to meet other arts educators from around the world. The International Society for Education through Art is a worldwide organization guided by the belief that visual arts in its many manifestations are essential to human life and learning. There are a variety of reasons. I believe the primary reason is that the visual arts foster local and global transcultural understanding and appreciation. Each of our countries has exemplary traditions in the visual arts and our contemporary artists are forging new directions in international visual arts practices.

Learning in, through and from the arts provides an education that opens minds to alternative ways of thinking and being, to the processes of creating one's self, to nurturing a sense of excitement and a passion for learning, and to appreciating the diversity of cultures in which we live. Developing one's imaginative life through mindful awareness is a way for human beings to experience life in vivid detail and, arguably more important, to effect personal and social change. Maxine Greene, perhaps, says it best: "At a time of boredom, disenchantment, and passivity, few concerns seem as important to me as the concern for imagination, especially as that capacity can be released by encounters with the arts, and on whose release encounters with the arts depend." The arts call us to use images, sounds, and movements, to think metaphorically about ideas in ways that may have previously seemed



unconnected. This act of change, invention, metamorphosis, is what makes the arts so important to all learning activities.

Learning in, through, and from the arts are important conceptions for the design of curriculum experiences in any learning environment at any age level. Our schools, galleries, museums and other arts education centres are important learning communities for providing the conditions for students to experience the very best education by learning in, through, and from the arts. The arts belong to all of us, exist in multiple forms within our communities and our society at large, and should be considered essential to a balanced curriculum. After all, schools are places where students can flourish as they realize their full human potential to think, feel, intuit, imagine, and act, as they engage in an artful curriculum, a curriculum full of life, a curriculum that embraces what it means to be humanly present.

To reinforce these ideas with the larger society I am thrilled to say that with advocacy efforts from InSEA, ISME, IDEA and WDA, and ultimately, WAAE (World Alliance for Arts Education) among other NGOs and arts education organizations, UNESCO has proclaimed the fourth week of May each year as International Arts Education Week. Let's all make sure we are highlighting our arts education activities that week, securing media attention and sharing our important work around the world.

Thank you for attending this InSEA European Regional Congress whether you are from Europe or abroad. We value your contribution to our discussions and look forward to learning alongside each of you. Lastly, I want to extend gratitude to several organizations and groups who have supported this congress. First of all, on behalf of InSEA I want to thank the executive board of CySEA, Gianna Theocharous and Frederick University for co-organizing the congress. What a powerful team. We are deeply indebted to their time and attention given to this immense effort. Working closely with them is the Congress Committee: we appreciate their commitment to making this congress a reality. It takes many long hours of volunteer work to make sure a congress comes alive and we are all indebted to their dedication and enthusiasm for ensuring the success of this amazing undertaking. In addition to this team of art educators, we are also grateful to the Cyprus Ministry of Education and Culture and Cultural Services for sponsoring the congress. We know there are many worthy causes and we greatly appreciate their support for ensuring European and international art educators have an annual event to discuss, debate and engage with innovative ideas. And lastly, we would like to thank the European Parliamentary Office of Cyprus and the Cyprus Tourist Organization for supporting our efforts. We are very grateful for their assistance. On behalf of the wider InSEA membership allow me to express our deepest gratitude to all of the organizers, sponsors and supporters of the Congress.

Rita L. Irwin  
President, InSEA

### **Welcome speech by the Cyprus Minister of Education and Culture**

It is with great joy and satisfaction that I welcome the InSEA European Conference "Education through the Arts at the Crossroad of Cultures". The presence of many distinguished guests and delegates from around the world reflects the importance and significance of the conference and I am sure that throughout its duration there will be ample opportunity for the exchange of ideas and perspectives, as well as for the drawing of valuable conclusions about the Arts and culture.

One of the major goals of the cultural policy of the Ministry of Education and Culture is the development of intercultural dialogue, particularly in the current environment of globalization, where societies are increasingly shaped by the participation of people from different cultural backgrounds and where the urgent need for mutual acquaintance and understanding is exhibited.

With the opportunity presented to our country for chairmanship of the EU in the second half of 2012, I believe that the Arts and culture in general, comprise, perhaps, the most important element of all events taking place. They are emphasized within the scope of intercultural dialogue, given that the Arts and their accomplishments, in their every facet, are the sharpest representation of the psyche of

all nations and the most powerful manifestation of its existence. With these characteristics, the Arts are a means to self-knowledge and thus, a bridge of communication, as much between countries as between different groups living together within a given society. The Cypriot people have always turned to the Arts to express sorrow, pain or joy. Every significant event that has marked the history of Cyprus comes to life through the eyes of our artists. This is, in any case, the privilege of every great art; it is the irrefutable evidence of the era in which it was created.

The pursuit of Arts is an oasis for people of all ages who live in society, where values are questioned and wealth is measured by material possessions. The Arts help to shape a rounded personality, equipping people with an appropriate aesthetic education, with sensitivity and imagination, leading to a rich and all-round experience that ensures intellectual enjoyment. The proclamation by the International Art Association (Internationale Association of Art) of the 15th of July as the global day of Art, will undoubtedly help our children realize the importance of Art in the world through all time. It is therefore, understandable, why development of the Arts is one of the main goals of the Ministry of Education and Culture. Conferences such as this here today have the full and active support of the Ministry.

The inaugural UNESCO International Arts Education Week is starting this year on May 21-27, 2012. I congratulate the Cyprus Society for Education through the Arts (K.O.E.T.) for its initiative in hosting the InSEA European Conference. Since its establishment, the Society, through its activities has been recognized both in Cyprus and abroad. It has developed significant activities with regards to the Arts and culture, organizing exhibitions in Cyprus and abroad, seminars with renowned speakers and whenever given the opportunity, has undertaken the organization of conferences such as the Sixth Regional Conference of Europe, Africa and the Middle East as well as this InSEA Conference.

Dear delegates, the title of this Conference is ideal since it fits perfectly with the location and venue. Our country, Cyprus, has the privilege of being located at the crossroads of three continents and with its thousands of years of history has certainly much to show. I therefore believe that the outcomes of the conference, to which I look forward, will be a useful tool and opportunity for reflection.

I wish every success to the work of the Conference and an enjoyable stay to all those who have come from abroad. I congratulate and express my sincere gratitude to the organizers for the invitation to welcome you.

Giorgos Demosthenous  
Cyprus Minister of Education and Culture

### **Welcome speech by the Dean of the School of Architecture, Fine and Applied Arts, Frederick University**

Dear Congress delegates,

On behalf of Frederick University, I would like to welcome you to the European Regional Congress of INSEA here in Limassol, Cyprus.

Frederick University, a co-organizer of this conference provides learning opportunities through teaching and research in the areas of science, technology, literature and the arts as well as a systematic contribution to the wider social context.

It is with great pleasure that Frederick University has joined up in organizing this conference having a very active and vital role coming from its academic schools and faculty of Education and Art and Design.

Education is the biggest tool towards creating and promoting ethos, culture and progress. Frederick University acknowledges and encourages the current "Information Revolution" taking place. It is because of this revolution that we need to communicate more and expand our networks. The planet is

becoming a 'one world' and there is now a great need for intercultural dialogue that must lead us to a collective society.

Us here in Cyprus we know well that being part of a cultural crossroad between East and West, South and North has contributed to a wonderful mélange of lifestyles and behaviors. Let's all use this geographical crossroad as our guide and inspiration throughout these 3 days of the conference.

Frederick University wishes you all a very successful and fruitful experience during the conference.

Thank you.

Costas Mantzalos,  
Dean of the School of Architecture, Fine and Applied Arts  
Frederick University, Cyprus

## **Closing Speech**

### **A word of closing by the CySEA president**

Dear conference delegates,

Our Congress has reached its end. Unfortunately, valuable things are hard to build and easily lost.

I will avoid lengthy analysis because I find it unhelpful and tiring. I do hope that you have all gained something from this conference and that the findings and your experiences will be used to enrich teaching methods and approaches to the research of the teaching of the Arts, in the overall aim of the aesthetic education of children.

Undoubtedly the various models of teaching and scientific research have their importance in improving the quality of the teaching of the Arts, but the key to success lies in the hands of the teacher, who is enthusiastic and is able to incite enthusiasm, who can be inspired by the spirit of his students and is able to inspire. Enrich your teaching with devotion and enthusiasm towards the children, for these are expressions which are necessary in the difficult times in which we live. The aesthetic cultivation of children and raising the intellectual level of society lies in our hands and it is upon these that we base our future.

In closing, I would like to thank you all and wish you all good progress in whatever you do, as well as personal happiness. Allow me also to express my sincere thanks to our co-organizers, Frederick University and the European Parliament Office in Cyprus, as well as to the Ministry of Education and Culture that always supports our activities.

I give wholehearted thanks to the members of the INSEA executive; Rita, Marjan, Glen, Graham, James and Tereza for their guidance on organizing the conference as well as to all of you, for making this conference possible. Also, many thanks to CPC, our event management company – this conference would never have happened without them.

Finally I call upon the Executive board of CySEA to stand here next to me. This dynamic team has worked hard with selflessness and volunteerism to accomplish our task. I thank them wholeheartedly! Dear delegates, hold in your thoughts a little sunshine from our island to warm your hearts and a little of the Mediterranean Sea as a memory of your stay here on the island of Aphrodite.

I wish you all a good summer and hope we meet again at similar events.

Gianna Theocharous –Gkantzidou  
President, CySEA

## CONTENTS

Welcome Speeches

Closing Speech

### **PART 1** **Keynote Speeches**

Irwin, Rita L.	Personalized Inquiry-Based Learning for the 21st Century	2
Gavriel, George, Genethliou, Genethlis, Lambrianou, Tereza and Soteropoulos, Tatiana	Reforming the curriculum of art education in Cyprus	3
Mantzalos, Costas	ART CARES; promoting cultural awareness and understanding through art teaching	4
Smith-Shank, Deborah	Gender, Girl Power, and Issues-based Art Education	13
Wagenaar, Robert	Strategies for demonstrating the relevance of Art education: the Tuning approach	18

### **PART 2** **Arts and Cultural identities**

Alajmi, Fatema	Developing the conceptual framework for a curriculum for Year Five Art Lessons in Kuwaiti Primary Schools	20
Eteokleous, Nikleia, Pavlou, Victoria and Tsolakidis, Simeon	Integrating the Multimedia Builder Software as an education tool to deliver Fairy Tales: promoting multiliteracies and multimodality	28
Kalemis, Konstantinos	Enhancing Cultural Education to Students of Different Ethnic Minorities: A Path to Achieve Individual Identity and Multicultural Understanding among the Students in the Primary Education.	42
Lima Caminha, Melissa	Female Clowning: The Place of Women in the Clown World	55
Mello, Paulo and Fonseca, Reinaldo	Curating for Critical Mediation	65
Michaelidou, Lefki , Zapiti, Eleni ,	The Bank of Cyprus Cultural Foundation. 20 Years of Educational Activity	71

Hadjichristodoulou,  
Christodoulos and  
Loizidou, Maria

Michaelidou Lefki: The Bank of Cyprus Cultural Foundation	72
Hadjichristodoulou Christodoulos: Educational programmes pertaining to the periodical exhibitions of the Bank of Cyprus Cultural Foundation from 1995 to the present day	76
Zapiti Eleni: Museum of the History of Cypriot Educational Programmes	80
Loizidou Maria: Educational Programmes 2004 – 2013	85

Räsänen, Marjo

Visual multiliteracy and cultural understanding	92
---	----

Savva, Stefania

Museum-based literacies and learning in Cyprus for 21 <sup>st</sup> century skills	105
--	-----

Silverman, Jonathan

Mobilizing our cultural identities through art: communicating at the crossroads	122
---	-----

Wong, Shukfan

Body Image, Identity and Art Education-A comparative study between Hong Kong and London	126
---	-----

Zenios, Ioannis

Using Technology and Art for bridging the gap between "Us" and the "Others"	140
---	-----

### PART 3 Arts and Society

Amengual Quevedo,  
Irene

Reflecting on Artists in Residence	148
------------------------------------	-----

Callegaro, Tania

Art Educational and Social Communication - Review of Pedagogies	157
---	-----

Constantinou, Andri

Drama and Adolescents: Social issues focused drama workshops and performances in 21st century Cyprus	166
--	-----

Dias, Belidson

Parody and precariousness in Felipe Sobreiro's artwork: a visual culture education practice.	174
--	-----

Fakidou, Anastasia and  
Magouliotis, Apostolos

The social discourse of childhood and the children's notions for the childhood's characteristics	186
--	-----

Fiona, Blaikie

Pinkalicious Mean Girls: A Visual and Poetic Inquiry	200
--	-----

Khalil, Sahar

Urban museums - more green steps	214
----------------------------------	-----

Mason, Rachel, Cohen  
Evron, Nurit,  
Buschkuehle, Carl  
Peter and De. Mousumi

#### Teaching Controversial Issues

Mason, Rachel: Teaching about controversial issues through art education	223
Cohen Evron, Nurit: Art curriculum strategies addressing deep- rooted	227

	De, Mousumi: Moving Beyond 26/11 and (re)imagining the possible: Conflict Transformation through Art	237
	Buschkuehle, Carl-Peter: Confrontation with the Unknown through Art	249
Merry, Anna	An Investigation into Integrated Art and Design in Public Space in relation to Sustainable Development for the 21st Century City and its Society.	251
Pataky, Gabriella	PAPRIKA: A cross-cultural visual communication exchange project for teachers-in-training.	261
Philippidou-loannidou, Christiana	New information concerning the cultural and individual identities of the Cyprus inhabitants with Westerns, particular from Florence in Tuscany of Italy, in the Medieval Kindom of Cyprus (12th-16th ce.) which let to a cosmopolitan culture.	264
Reis, Ricardo	The concept of visual literacy behind visual arts education classroom practices: a study on images, activities and strategies used by teachers	269
Siebermair, Helene	championesse - women's boxing in the media	279
Tibbetts, Suzi	Tom Hudson: Art Education and Society	281
Von Brandenburg, Cecilia	Health through capacity building - mediation of arts in working communities	289
Wirilander, Heidi	Use of Arts Education Theory in Analyses of the Cultural Heritage Process	297

#### **PART 4** Arts and Audiences

Athanasiou, Georgina and Pavlou, Victoria	Interaction of art and music: the contribution of music in constructing the meaning of a painting	308
Menelaou, Niki	The importance of translation: Cypriot Literature and the contribution of the state	318
Lin, Shuhua	Discussions on Biennial Art Exhibition and Audience's Response: A Case Study of Taipei Biennial	326
Souliotou, Anastasia Zoi and Latorre Romero, Amparo	Let's set up together the 'e-Mates' Art Exhibition!	335

#### **PART 5** Learning in and through arts in the 21<sup>st</sup> century

de Maio Nascimento, Marcelo and Laitano, Orlando	Dance Theatre and Bioenergetics: an interdisciplinary reporting developed by the discipline of "methodology of Dance" in the Platform Freire – Brazil.	352
Fendler, Rachel and Hernández-	The role of the Virtual Campus in the undergraduate course "Arts-Based Research": A site for student experimentation and	361

Hernández, Fernando	authorization	
Grushka, Kathryn and Goodlad, Nicole	Learning through visual praxis in the post-literate age: an Australian pre-service teacher education case study	371
Hayiannis, Yiannis	Possibilities for learning through painting in secondary schools: embodiment and interpretation.	386
Kalafati, Marianthi, Daskolia, Maria, Flogaitis, Evgenia and Salla, Titika	Exploring the relationship between environmental and art education in the context of pre-school education	395
Kassem, Walaa	Using Technology As A Creative Tool To Enhance New Means Of Expression At Students' Artworks	409
Kiviniemi, Ulla	General and Sustainable Learning through Craft Education	434
Kouvri, Eleni and Margaroni, Maria	Concrete Poetry and Didactics of Second Language Learning: The Contribution of a Literature Genre to the Development of Language and Creative skills of Foreign Language Learners.	443
Labitsi, Vasiliki	As an illustrator-in-schools: Reflections on a personal itinerary	454
Lima Caminha, Melissa	The Place of Theater Groups in The Pedagogy of Theater in Brazil	473
Lopes, Emilia , Agra Pardinias, Maria Jesus, Trigo, Cristina and Eca, Teresa	Sharing Artist Books for arts education practice and inquire	486
Merry, Anna and Daniel, Stavri	Model making: A tool for visualizing the built environment and how it continues to play a vital and increasing role as a teaching method.	488
Michaelides, Georgia	The expression of scientific knowledge / information through art.	499
Morais, Raquel	Severance. Class displacement for alternative paths of learning in a vocational graphic design course.	508
Moren, Sol	Learning in and through arts in the 21st century: An aesthetic approach to new technology	514
Nazor, Dijana	Learning outside of school, developing a creative collaboration and the use of film in the project "Adriatic fish"	527
Okonofua, Anthony and Ekpo, Comfort	Effect of Kolb's Experiential Learning Theory and Model (KELT&M) on Learning of Fine Art and Praxis in Uyo Secondary Schools, Nigeria.	540
Paeglite, Dace and Dzirkale, Arta	Plane, Image and Space.	553
Saura, Angeles and Moreno, Cristina	AVATARS for artistic and technological learning	561
Sellars, Maura	A Celebration of Monet's In The Norwegian	573
Stillman, Jayne	Collaborative Professional development: Monitoring change and development of a community of art teachers learning together.	584



Temple, Bryan Mantzalos, Costas, ,	Intercultural innovation insight workshops	593
---------------------------------------	--	-----

Veleni, Themis and Kourakis, Orestis	Virtual reality and multi-sensory stimulation: a joint method of teaching art history	600
---	---	-----

Yap, Kheng Kin, Yang, Xueyan and Cohen, Libby	Using the Critique Process to Enhance Learning in Visual Arts	612
---	---	-----

## PART 6

### Education policy making and arts

Bračun Sova, Rajka and Kemperl, Metoda	Art education in Slovenia between policy and practice	624
---	---	-----

Flood, Adele	Stories of Change: with twelve guiding principles of learning along the way.	632
--------------	--	-----

Gregory, Peter	Against the odds? Developing effective teachers of art.	640
----------------	---	-----

Hall, Emese	Visual Journals and Trainee Teachers professional Development	652
-------------	---	-----

Kuo, Ann C. S., Chang, Chia-Lin and Lee, Chih-Yuan	Contemporary art education and creativity	666
--	---	-----

Papachrisanthaki, Andriana	Developing effective visual art strategies of promote young children's with autism interaction with their peers and teachers. An action research approach	671
----------------------------	---	-----

Prevodnik, Marjan	What do secondary art teachers from Cyprus think of creativity as expressed in children's colour linocut artworks from Slovenia - during and after evaluation?	682
-------------------	--	-----

Prevodnik, Marjan	Feeling a success in one's own drawing improvement as one of the key factors influencing a motivation of elementary teachers of art	697
-------------------	---	-----

Serjouie, Ava	Intercultural art education a dialogue between the members of the society	707
---------------	---	-----

Sotiropoulou- Zormpala, Marina	Categories of teaching through the arts activities in elementary school	718
-----------------------------------	---	-----

Tipton, Teresa	(Re)forming knowing: reconceptualizing the role of creativity in knowledge-based economies	729
----------------	--	-----

Ulkuniemi, Seija	Born to Be a Teacher? A narrative of becoming an art educator-artist-researcher	741
------------------	---	-----

# **PART 1**

## **Keynote Speeches**



## **What does art education practice set in motion do?**

**Irwin, Rita**  
**Professor of Art Education,**  
**Associate Dean of Teacher Education,**  
**University of British Columbia, Vancouver.**

### **Abstract:**

The presentation will explore moments of becoming *a/r/tography*. *A/r/tography* is a research methodology, a creative practice and a performative pedagogy that lives in the rhizomatic practices of the in-between. Resisting the tendency for endless critique of past experience and bodies of knowledge, *a/r/tography* is concerned with the creative invention of concepts and mapping the intensities experienced in relational, rhizomatic yet singular events. Considering several recent research projects, this presentation explores what it means to be becoming *a/r/tography*. Rather than asking what an art education practice means, the question becomes what does this art education practice set in motion do? There can be no being *a/r/tography* without the processes of becoming *a/r/tography*.



## **Reforming the curriculum of art education in Cyprus**

**Gavriel, George**

Art Inspector, Secondary Education  
Ministry of Education and Culture, Cyprus

**Genethliou, Genethlis**

Art Inspector, Primary Education  
Ministry of Education and Culture, Cyprus

**Lambrianou, Tereza**

Art Inspector, Primary Education  
Ministry of Education and Culture, Cyprus

**Soteropoulos, Tatiana**

Art Counselor, Secondary Education  
Ministry of Education and Culture, Cyprus

### **Abstract:**

The presentation will focus on the art curriculum reform in Cyprus, which followed a wider reform of the primary and secondary school curricula. Issues discussed will show how the curriculum reform aimed at responding to the challenges and opportunities of living in the 21st century (i.e., developing a coherent and adequate body of knowledge, critical thinking and key competences, promoting teamwork, participation, active citizenship, multiculturalism, environmental and cultural awareness etc.). Additionally, the main purpose of the new curriculum is the creation of conscious viewers - creators who actively contribute to improving the quality of life.

While the first step of the curriculum reform focused on the formation of the wider context (main objectives, content, pedagogical approaches and evaluation), the second step - which is currently in progress - focuses on the implementation of the new curriculum in teaching practice. Within this process one of the most important issues is teachers' professional development. Different strategies are used, such as conferences, seminars, training at schools and self-training through the Ministry website. Examples of projects undertaken by teachers and their students within the framework of the new art curriculum, will be presented, illustrating both the procedure followed and the final result.



## **“ART CARES”;**

### **Promoting cultural awareness and understanding through art teaching”**

Prof. Mantzalos, Costas

Dean of School of Architecture, Fine and Applied Arts, Frederick University

c.mantzalos@frederick.ac.cy

#### **Abstract**

The presentation focuses on the methods used for teaching art and design on tertiary level at an undergraduate cycle in the Applied Arts Department of Frederick University Cyprus. Teaching is mainly as well as primarily concerned with the delivery of visual, oral, and written intelligence. The Art and Design process is primarily concerned with the power and value of concepts and ideas in the dissemination of knowledge and messages, both persuasive and informative, to defined audiences. Visual intelligence, which is not easily assimilated as oral and written intelligence, is viewed as the acquisition of critical and intuitive visual discrimination in the process of mark making and the construction of imagery, the delivery of words and the underlying understanding of icons, symbols and visual triggers. Visual lateral thinking and appreciation of subliminal elements in Art and Design interpretation is seen in relation to how all forms of imagery are delivered, received, deciphered and understood by appropriate audiences and viewers.

Students are introduced to Art and Design with two major objectives. The first is an emphasis on professional skill development. This objective emphasizes the techniques, skills, methodology, and vocabulary necessary for the student to take her/his place in the professional community as a productive artist, designer, scholar, or practitioner. The second objective, without which skill development remains only a narrow range of technical training, is the development of the critical judgment and historical perspective needed in order to become an effective problem-solver. Here, art and design history, together with studies in the liberal arts and sciences, provide the context for stimulating intellectual and creative inquiry.

Furthermore an additional dynamism towards art and design education has been implemented in the department and has been practiced for some years now. This is the introduction of cross-course as well as cross-discipline teaching and learning methods, where the student is projected to multi-disciplinary issues and problem solving. Art and Design education has been juxtaposed with socio-political issues, which in return have provided a new dimension into the teaching and learning process, allowing not only the instruction of visual aesthetics but also the promotion of social, political and cultural understanding. This has been a great effort in achieving a better understanding against forms of ethnic, social and gender racism.

The presentation is illustrated with students' work, which serves the above statements.



**“Everybody experiences far more than he understands. Yet it is experience, rather than understanding, that influences behaviour.”**

McLuhan

## 1. Introduction

### i. Primary School

A critical investigation into the educational system starts with an autobiographical analysis of all my schooling years starting at the age of 5 when I enrolled into a public school. Memories are quite vague and there are not many significant moments that are at present worth mentioning. The most alive and vivid moment, concerned the then social behavior rather than the actual teaching and learning activity. I was a quiet, rather shy boy, who did not follow the ‘norms’. I never recall playing football in the schoolyard. The fact that I somehow did not fit in with the rest of my boy classmates made me automatically an outcast. This is the strongest memory I have from primary school. I never had a sense of belonging because I was thought to be different from the rest. A situation, which was followed as well as supported, not only by my classmates and teachers but also by my immediate family as well. Being stigmatized as different started working against my self-confidence and eventually worked against my enthusiasm to explore further. There were times that I became a victim of bullying. This is something that I was not much aware at the time but it is a feeling that I can easily recognize today. Exploration was somehow not a priority in the primary school every-day activity. No teacher showed the slightest interest to see into me and encourage whatever my aspirations were. All I had to do was follow instructions and do what everyone else had to do.

### ii. Secondary School

My secondary education followed after a very traumatic summer period, which was caused by the Turkish invasion in 1974. Still a quiet shy teenager I went through 6 years of secondary education very mechanically with the one and only vision that I had to finish this to ‘go’ somewhere else...whether this was tertiary education, employment or whatever. It was quite unfortunate that I had to spend my secondary school years in a period, which was very hard for everyone due to financial and emotional stress as the aftermath of a war and of course my family’s displacement from our home town to somewhere else. During my 6 years at secondary school I remained the outcast. I could not fit and even worse I could not have a sense of belonging. I still hated football but nevertheless I still wanted to explore whatever information came across me, but unfortunately the system did not allow for any explorative queries except from specific clarifications. I do remember once in my Religious studies I had a very big urge to ask what was there before God. I was 13 or maybe 14. We kept hearing about the creation of the universe, the presence of God the creator of all. In my mind there was this question...who created God? I raised my hand and asked the question and all I got was a feeling of disapproval for not being a good Christian. Furthermore to make things even



worst, I was asked to exit the class and be punished by staying for the rest of the day in the library. Being punished and be sent to the library was very common at that time. A very misunderstood and unfortunate understanding about the whole concept of the library. The library became a place which was directly associated with punishment...rather than studying books, or exploring, or researching or reading or even being entertained. The issue of entertainment was never in the agenda. My parents never approved. They always said that I needed to study and entertainment will come later. I think I am still cursed by this notion even today. All I had to do was study and study and study. And I did not. I was in the science section and was never interested in the mathematical equations nor the chemistry's reactions or physics' rules. Paper after paper and book after book I had to study and learn...learn by hard so that I can perform well in the class test or the final examination. We were studying hard so that we perform well in exams since our system was based on this philosophy. A philosophy well carried through today in secondary as well as tertiary education. The stress is given on to the performance of the final written examination, transforming teaching and learning into a 'one off situation'.

For nearly 12 years of schooling I cannot recall one person being interested in my mind. Did I have a mind? Did I have any vision? Maybe an existential question? What was the purpose of life or teaching or learning? The stress was once again put onto examinations performance. Nothing encouraged critical thinking or analysis. In fact I never knew what critical thinking was until well after I went to Art School. What a pity really? At secondary education art classes stop after the first 3 years. If anyone opted to take art classes he or she was immediately categorized as a weak student. It was evident that Art was meant for filling in gaps.

### iii. College Years

Fortunately I had not encountered any objections from my parents when I decided and announced that I wanted to follow an art education at tertiary level. So here I am at college in the UK following art and design. This is the period that I saw myself waking up. I gradually gained my self-confidence and started to develop self-respect. This is the period that I saw myself growing, breaking free from any preconceived ideas about the world. I started to analyze things and criticism resided well into my mind. I now have an opinion about everything and this helps me develop further. Throughout my college years I encountered situations completely opposite to my previous schooling years. Being different, or thinking differently did not mean an outcast but was actually received by both teachers and classmates as a blessing! Sense of belonging did not rely on location but within the mind. Creativity arrived in my life, and ever since anything that is not creative has no value. Creativity is a practice that is required not only within Art and Design but also in every aspect of life, whether this in a social, cultural or routine environment and behavior.



# **“teaching should be concerned above all with encouraging the development of personality in every individual, and helping students to travel the world...”**

De Angelis

## **2. Teaching Art and Design**

My teaching career followed my college years. As soon as I had finished my studies, I went into teaching. At first teaching seemed as an attractive profession. Pays reasonably well, you are in contact with younger people and most importantly long holidays over summer, Christmas and Easter periods. My first appointment, which now dates some 23 years, was at Frederick. Frederick University was established after a decision by the Council of Ministers of the Republic of Cyprus on 12th September 2007, following the forty-three year successful route of Frederick Institute of Technology, an Institution of Tertiary Education registered with the Ministry of Education and Culture, which is still operating. Frederick University operates from two campuses, the main campus in Nicosia, the capital of Cyprus and the other campus in Limassol. Art and Design is taught at both institutions at Undergraduate level – four (4) years for the Bachelor degree and two (2) years for the Diploma.

The initial Art and Design Department was set up in 1984 and has been established as an educational centre of excellence, in Cyprus. Teaching is mainly as well as primarily concerned with the delivery of visual, oral, and written intelligence. The Art and Design process is primarily concerned with the power and value of concepts and ideas in the dissemination of knowledge and messages, both persuasive and informative, to defined audiences. Visual intelligence, which is not easily assimilated as oral and written intelligence, is viewed as the acquisition of critical and intuitive visual discrimination in the process of mark making and the construction of imagery, the delivery of words and the underlying understanding of icons, symbols and visual triggers. Visual lateral thinking and appreciation of subliminal elements in Art and Design interpretation is seen in relation to how all forms of imagery are delivered, received, deciphered and understood by appropriate audiences and viewers.

Students are introduced to Art and Design with two major objectives. The first is an emphasis on professional skill development. This objective emphasizes the techniques, skills, methodology, and vocabulary necessary for the students to take their place in the professional community as productive artists, designers, scholars, or practitioners. The second objective, without which skill development remains only a narrow range of technical training, is the development of the critical judgment and historical perspective needed in order to become effective problem-solvers. Here, art and design history, together with studies in the liberal arts and sciences, provide the context for stimulating intellectual and creative inquiry.

Furthermore an additional dynamism towards art and design education has been implemented in the department and has been practiced for some years now. This is the introduction of cross-course as well as cross-discipline teaching and learning methods, where the student is projected to multi-disciplinary issues and problem solving. Art and Design education has been juxtaposed with socio-political issues, which in return have provided a new dimension into the teaching and learning





process, allowing not only the instruction of visual aesthetics but also the promotion of social, political and cultural understanding. This has been a great effort in achieving a better understanding against forms of ethnic, social and gender racism.

Teaching is more like a performance rather than a profession. It is one of the noblest tasks that a man can perform cause this is how culture and life are being transmitted from generation to generation. Teaching needs to be creative, exciting and inspiring. A good teacher needs to identify the individuality and personality of each student and appraise the uniqueness in each one rather than condemn against the mainstream. Over the 23 years of my academic career I have been experimenting with my teaching styles on a regular basis. In fact I still do experiment since I regard teaching as a performance, which develops with time and progress with humanity. My teaching so far mainly “concerned above all with encouraging the development of personality in every individual, and helping my students to travel the world, participating in its changing seasons. Helping them to understand the unity of process, and, at the same time the specific nature of every detail. To understand that time and space are irremovable parts of any design, at the heart of which humanity and life will always have a central role. To understand that beauty is not a category that belongs to motifs, but to our emotional sphere”.

As Norman Bel Geddes stated in 1932, “Design is not primarily a matter of drawing but a matter of thinkers”. This is what is really needed from education. To produce, thinkers above all. And to achieve this every primary school teacher, high school lecturer or University professor needs to employ some of the Art and Design teaching principles, which allow creativity, open up the mind, inspire process and teaches students how to teach themselves.



### 3. Case Studies

Recently I have been teaching an advanced level course entitled Advanced Applied Design. The code AGDS307. This is an elective course offered to 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> year Art and Design students. It is a course that offers student the opportunity to study both mentally as well as conceptually various problems or challenges that derive from personal research or from current affairs from the sociopolitical sphere. A simulation game, where design meets society. A complex but very effective way to introduce students, not only to design but also to areas of social awareness. To make them think and react to society. To engage them with the world. To alert them to become active concerned citizens.

Our first project involved the visual communication about political refugees who seek asylum in Cyprus. All students came across to a completely new situation, where they needed to investigate and seek solutions to create a greater awareness about these people. Their primary concern was how art and design can actually help create a greater awareness. Is art and design so significant that it can actually make such an impact?

Yes it is! Art and Design has aided societies to believe that AIDS was not sent by God to punish all homosexuals. Design has enabled Ms Thatcher to a second term of office. Art and Design has managed to overthrow governments, so why not help create awareness about political asylum seekers. In order to engage the students in this process, I had to change my teaching methods. During our first class I announced to all students that there would not be another class. "We shall all converse and meet digitally, via emails. No more physical contact. What ever we need to say, state or share will be carried out via email, allowing each and everyone to greater freedom of speech and expression". The class was transformed into an ideas forum, seeking to achieve a new dynamism as well as a new teaching and learning perspective, challenging traditional methods.

For a whole semester, there was a huge exchange of emails that had been transmitted throughout time. The conversation dealt with racism and discrimination as well as personal concerns. Each and everyone behind a screen expressed themselves quite openly and directly.

Andreas had said that we – Cypriots - are a 'tough' race and that we criticize and condemn everything non-Christian, concluding with images and words of an ideal place to live. He states: "I want to go to a place where there is warmth. There where comfort, is a pair of sleepers, there where families laugh, cry, love. I need a place to rest, a place where I can see the world free. I need a place where peace prevails and all people are positive. I want my home to be this place. The whole world must have this home. But I have no home, no peace. Only a dream, a small dream



- Myria and George believed in creating a 'political disruption' and dealt with antiracism symbols and graffiti as well as positive ambience by redesigning the actual housing units of the political asylum seekers.

- George had suggested portraying a ‘side of Cypriot life’ that we should not be so proud about, and concluded in comparing the profile of a Cypriot person with that of a political asylum seeker.



- Andreas wished to make a comparison between people and showed us objects of desire among various persons.



- Marios and Andreas set up a whole new campaign with fashion items and accessories in order to create a greater awareness about the political refugees, while while Theodoros had remained completely silent over the issues, before he started exploring slogans and burst out to shout “I love my Container”.



- Yiannos had come to the conclusion that “Impossible is Nothing”

The complete results of the course both in terms of visual production as well as the actual conversations were published in a special Sunday edition of ‘Phileleftheros’ newspaper, entitled “Ysterografo loves my Container”.

The following year, history repeats itself. AGDS307 – Advance Applied Design – is set up in a very similar manner like the previous year. The course commences with a briefing in class and then everyone disappears. Our only prerequisite is to engage in conversation via email. And it works much better than in class. All students take part. The conversation grows bigger and bigger and it was so good to see students thinking, debating and challenging each other. The conversation kicked off primarily on racism and discrimination but was lead to issues such as being different, tolerance and



ignorance. The visual images that complemented the conversation, portrayed issues on racism and the search of new or desired identity, issues on normality and on concept of the ‘others’. It also involved visuals on Alice in wonderful Cyprus, after interpreting and analyzing Alice in wonderland.



Once more the results of the course were published in a special Sunday edition of ‘Phileleftheros’ newspaper. A publication, that was titled “We are Different”. A title chosen by all to indicate and most of all celebrate the fact that we are different. Not part of the mainstream far away from stereotypes, we live and work in a society believing in equality and justice.

#### 4. Conclusion

Methodologies in education are going through a great shift lately. This has been an inevitable development running parallel to the technological advancements, the globalization as well as the role of the teacher who has become more like a facilitator to knowledge rather than an instructor.

For education to buy-in to these ideas, students need to be guided through multidisciplinary and multi-cultural activities if they are to understand how their work must suit a spectrum of needs and aspirations within the global market. The problem is that students, who have learned within traditional teaching and learning methods, tend to have a rather parochial viewpoint with little awareness of the variety of cultures and perceptions that are the real world. Thus the intention is to provide intensive multi-cultural cross-disciplinary experiences that will kick-start a change of attitude.

An additional and recent notion in education is the increased need for creativity in all spectrums of education. Creativity is sometimes associated with free expression, which is partly why some people worry about creativity in education. Critics think of children running wild and knocking down the furniture rather than getting on with serious work. Being creative does usually involve playing with ideas and having fun; enjoyment and imagination. But creativity is also about working in a highly focused way on ideas and projects, crafting them into their best forms and making critical judgments along the way about which work best and why. As “In every discipline creativity also draws on skill, knowledge and control. It is not only about letting go, it is about holding on!”.



I believe that no person on this earth is born to follow orders and be part of the flow. Each and every person has a unique mind that needs exploring, needs encouraging and needs to be open up to expression. All we teachers need to do, is allow this happen!

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## **Gender, Girl Power, and Issues-based Art Education: The Story of Little Red Riding Hood**

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### **Abstract**

Issues of gender can be part of a dynamic issues-based art education curriculum. This paper considers traditional feminist and neo- or post-feminist theories, and theories from Girls' Studies, a relatively new discipline that considers the cultures created by girls themselves, wherein girls become both the producers and the product. Girls' Studies encourages theorists, teachers, parents, and others to consider how girls are presented in cultural media and how patriarchal attitudes often drive these representations. Discussions about the gendering of visual culture, identity, and girls' design and art issues are important for contemporary art education. Focusing on gender issues in art education helps to make the concepts of the gendered nature of culture relevant to students, facilitates critical responses, and assists students' understanding about the multiple ways people organize and make meanings about their worlds. It also brings art education into some of the most important discourses of contemporary life. This paper uses the story of Little Red Riding Hood to illustrate issues central to the lived experiences of students and teachers and as a venue to merge gender issues into art education curriculum at all levels.

### **Key Words**

Gender, Pedagogy, Story telling

### **Introduction**

(T)he public should care about how girls are shaped by popular culture and how the stamp of femininity is pressed upon them. (Lipkin, 2009)

Stories told by elders, peers, and most recently, media, are some of the strongest vehicles for learning how to live with, negotiate, and play nicely with others. They teach us about love and danger, courage and collaboration. Stories are at the foundation of our beliefs, hopes, and fears. Stories can be verbal, textual, auditory, or visual through pictures, signs, or gestures. Stories are critical for good teaching and learning. They encourage communication, discussion, and debate. Stories teach us how to be gendered participants in cultures. Some stories have been told over and over again and across cultures.

One of the most beloved and often-told stories throughout the world has to do with a little girl who goes on an errand for her mother and encounters a big bad wolf. While the various versions of this tale have multiple details that may, or may not correspond exactly with other similar tales, the characters and plot make it just as viable today as it did years ago in the far corners of the world. As I am coming from an English-speaking geography, my story is called "Little Red Riding Hood." In this paper, I quote from The Brothers Grimm version (<http://www.eastoftheweb.com/short-stories/UBooks/LittRed.shtml>), first published, as Rotkäppchen and which was included in the first



edition of their collection *Kinder- und Hausmärchen* (Children's and Household Tales in 1812, currently available online at [http://worldoftales.com/fairy\\_tales/Grimm\\_fairy\\_tales.html](http://worldoftales.com/fairy_tales/Grimm_fairy_tales.html)).

I have used this story in teaching numerous classes from early childhood through graduate studies. In each case, my students have engaged with the story immediately. I have asked them to visually illustrate a section of the story as they re-write it (while keeping the general plot) in order to invite the characters into a contemporary time period. Looking at and talking about the images students create about the story invites discussion of important issues to not only art education, but to growing up female in any time period or in any geographic location.

As it is not possible for me to import all the photos I would like to import in order to visually share this story, I suggest that readers google "little red riding hood" to see the numerous images that represent this small victim/heroine. She is represented through drawings, photos, collages, and videos variously as naïve, vulnerable, childlike, adolescent, seductive, and in many recent renditions, as an adult woman with wolfish intentions.

As Joan Jacobs, in the forward to Joan Greenfield's photo journalist essay, *Girl Culture* (2002) explains:

Children] are able to expertly deconstruct and mimic what culture offers them, especially in terms of gender roles. Before they even abandon their teddy bears, contemporary girls embrace the erotic. They also understand that their power as women will come from their beauty, and that beauty in American culture is defined, increasingly, by a certain body type displayed in particular ways."

(Jacobs, [http://www.tufts.edu/programs/mma/fah189a/laura\\_beals/JBrumbergEssay.htm](http://www.tufts.edu/programs/mma/fah189a/laura_beals/JBrumbergEssay.htm))

Keeping this deconstruction and mimicry in mind, we consider how our Little Red offers students and teachers a chance to delve into big ideas, and issues of social justice as we glimpse at an episode in her young life:

### Once Upon a Time

Once upon a time there was a dear little girl who was loved by everyone who looked at her, but most of all by her grandmother, and there was nothing that she would not have given to the child. Once she gave her a little riding hood of red velvet, which suited her so well that she would never wear anything else; so she was always called 'Little Red Riding Hood.'

The emphasis on girls' appearance begins when they are shockingly young (Lipkin, p. 9)

[We] grew up believing that the most important thing about a female body is not what it does but how it looks. The power lies not within us but in the gaze of the observer. (Gloria Steinem, 1994, p. 94)

One day her mother said to her: 'Come, Little Red Riding Hood, here is a piece of cake and a bottle of wine; take them to your grandmother, she is ill and weak, and they will do her good. Set out before it gets hot, and when you are going, walk nicely and quietly and do not run off the path, or you may fall and break the bottle, and then your grandmother will get nothing; and when you go into her room, don't forget to say, "Good morning", and don't peep into every corner before you do it.'

It is always difficult for the family to regard the daughter otherwise than as a family possession. From her babyhood she has been the charm and grace of the household, and it is hard to think of her as an integral part of the social order, hard to believe that she has duties outside of the family, to the state and to society in the larger sense. (Jane Addams, p. 331)



The grandmother lived out in the wood, half a league from the village, and just as Little Red Riding Hood entered the wood, a wolf met her. Red Riding Hood did not know what a wicked creature he was, and was not at all afraid of him... 'Where does your grandmother live, Little Red Riding Hood?' [Red answers,] 'A good quarter of a league farther on in the wood; her house stands under the three large oak-trees, the nut-trees are just below; you surely must know it,' replied Little Red Riding Hood.

School officials issued an alert this week after a girl reported a man had tried to get her into his vehicle. The vehicle involved - a tan sports utility vehicle - matches the description of one involving a similar incident in Delaware last weekend. The girl, a St. Mary Elementary School student, told her parents what had happened to her Wednesday in the Fairview Street area after she got home from school. They reported it to Marion police. When the girl was dropped off by the school bus, she noticed a man watching her from a nearby SUV... [and] later when she went to the mailbox the same person was in the vehicle yelling at her to get in. Police are on the lookout for the man and the vehicle. No other incidents had been reported in the area. The girl described the man as a slender, white male in his early to mid-20s with short hair and tattoos on the left side of his neck and both arms.  
(<http://www.marionstar.com/article/20120922/NEWS01/209220301>)

The wolf thought to himself: 'What a tender young creature! what a nice plump mouthful - she will be better to eat than the old woman. I must act craftily, so as to catch both.' So he walked for a short time by the side of Little Red Riding Hood, and then he said: 'See, Little Red Riding Hood, how pretty the flowers are about here - why do you not look round? ... Little Red Riding Hood raised her eyes, and when she saw the sunbeams dancing here and there through the trees, and pretty flowers growing everywhere, she thought: 'Suppose I take grandmother a fresh nosegay; that would please her too. It is so early in the day that I shall still get there in good time.'

Gender is the remaining caste system that still cuts deep enough, and spreads wide enough, to be confused with the laws of nature. (Gloria Steinem, 1994, p. 25)

Meanwhile the wolf ran straight to the grandmother's house and knocked at the door.

'Who is there?'

'Little Red Riding Hood,' replied the wolf. 'She is bringing cake and wine; open the door.'

'Lift the latch,' called out the grandmother, 'I am too weak, and cannot get up.'

The wolf lifted the latch, the door sprang open, and without saying a word he went straight to the grandmother's bed, and devoured her. Then he put on her clothes, dressed himself in her cap, laid himself in bed and drew the curtains.

[Red] was surprised to find the cottage-door standing open, and when she went into the room, she had such a strange feeling that she said to herself: 'Oh dear! how uneasy I feel today, and at other times I like being with grandmother so much.' She called out: 'Good morning,' but received no answer; so she went to the bed and drew back the curtains. There lay her grandmother with her cap pulled far over her face, and looking very strange.

'Oh! grandmother,' she said, 'what big ears you have!'

'All the better to hear you with, my child,' was the reply.

'But, grandmother, what big eyes you have!' she said.

'All the better to see you with, my dear.'

'But, grandmother, what large hands you have!'

'All the better to hug you with.'





'Oh! but, grandmother, what a terrible big mouth you have!'

'All the better to eat you with!'

And scarcely had the wolf said this, than with one bound he was out of bed and swallowed up Red Riding Hood. When the wolf had appeased his appetite, he lay down again in the bed, fell asleep and began to snore very loud.

Decades of social gains have been made through the civil rights and feminist movements, but the world into which girls are born is still shaped by systematic sexism, homophobia, racism, classism, and ableism (Lipkin, 2009, p. 13).

The huntsman was just passing the house, and thought to himself: 'How the old woman is snoring! I must just see if she wants anything.' So he went into the room, and when he came to the bed, he saw that the wolf was lying in it. 'Do I find you here, you old sinner!' said he. 'I have long sought you!' But just as he was going to fire at him, it occurred to him that the wolf might have devoured the grandmother, and that she might still be saved, so he did not fire, but took a pair of scissors, and began to cut open the stomach of the sleeping wolf.

When he had made two snips, he saw the little red riding hood shining, and then he made two snips more, and the little girl sprang out, crying: "Ah, how frightened I have been! How dark it was inside the wolf." After that the aged grandmother came out alive also, but scarcely able to breathe. Red Riding Hood, however, quickly fetched great stones with which they filled the wolf's belly, and when he awoke, he wanted to run away, but the stones were so heavy that he collapsed at once, and fell dead.

Then all three were delighted. The huntsman drew off the wolf's skin and went home with it; the grandmother ate the cake and drank the wine, which Red Riding Hood had brought, and revived. But Red Riding Hood thought to herself: 'As long as I live, I will never leave the path by myself to run into the wood, when my mother has forbidden me to do so.'

## Reflection

After Red's rebirth, she describes the most significant thing she learned which to never to leave the path or to run into the forest when her mother has forbid her to do so. And for a child, perhaps this is a very good lesson. Obedience, especially when danger is a possibility is always the right answer. However, there are so many more lessons to take from this story, that go far beyond obedience to ones' parents. Lessons that involve self-sufficiency, self defense, development as a girl and a woman, as well as ways to negotiate the outcomes of a story.

Several of my students over the years have considered what they see as a lack of compassion for the wolf as Granny, Red, and the Wood Cutter "delighted" in Wolf's death. They argue that, after all, the wolf was only being his animal self, doing what came naturally in his own woods as Red a trespasser, came into his territory. This is an interesting argument when juxtaposed with newspaper headlines reporting on men's violence against women. Something to discuss.

Other students wondered if Child Services (a governmental organization for child protection) should have been called on the mother who so callously sent a little child into a dangerous space – and they usually wonder, "where is the father of this child?"

Others wondered why the hunter believed he could get Grandmother and Little Red out of the wolf alive by cutting open the sleeping animal. Of course, this is a fairy tale and as such, is a bit magical. I personally have always wondered what happened to the characters – this might be the opportunity to



create a new and more contemporary or relevant, though magical fairy tale of Teen Red and her adventure.

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## **Strategies for demonstrating the relevance of Art education: the Tuning approach**

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### **Abstract:**

Nothing can be taken for granted nowadays. Positions which were unchallenged yesterday are challenged today. The financial crisis developing since 2008 is affecting us all. It has also a tremendous impact on education as a result of a reduction of funding made available for it. Priority is given to short term employability strategies, to fields of which policy makers think can contribute significantly to economic recovery in the short run. Sacrificed in this endeavour are common good, personal wellbeing and social inclusion. It is undisputed that these are the topics to which arts education contributes significantly. Group and personal identities are related and based on common historical pasts, shared languages and cultures. Due to large scale migration, social and cultural tensions have become apparent in all European countries. Finding ways to cope with today's multicultural societies, to develop common understanding and appreciation for each other's cultures and its symbols should be paramount. Instead our political leaders have declared the multicultural society dead and are promoting the resurrection of the 19th century concept of the nation state. In a global society where everything is interrelated (as we are painfully experiencing with respect to the banking crisis) this looks as a road to disaster. It seems obvious that education, in particular in Social Sciences, Humanities and Performing and Creative Arts, should play a strategic role in counter forcing this development. If this position is accepted, this has far reaching implications for the ways we educate our students in these sectors. Today's tough world and the future require more. The more is related to the scope as well as the content of teaching and learning. This asks for effective strategies for reforming higher education in a highly innovative way.

The staff driven Tuning Educational Structures initiative, which is strongly supported financially and morally by the European Commission (<http://www.unideusto.org/tuningeu/>) offers a global platform for and in international cooperation and educational innovation. In the last ten years Tuning has become a worldwide process. The Tuning student centred approach is now developed, tested and/or implemented in some 125 countries around the globe. Its main objective is to prepare the 21st century student best - in terms of employability, citizenship as well as social responsibility - for his/her role in society. Tuning has developed a common language understood by all stakeholders, shared reference points and descriptors at subject area level, and a validated methodology -to design and deliver high standard degree programmes on the basis of key competences and learning outcomes - which allows for flexibility and diversity and individual pathways. Tuning facilitates (inter)national cooperation and offers a reliable basis for mobility and recognition. Its approach has also been applied by the internal networks Architecture, Polifonia /European Association of Conservatoires (EAC) for Music and the European League of Institutes of the Arts (ELIA) for Dance and Theatre and Art and Design. At present experts of these organizations are developing - in the framework of the Tuning SQF for the Humanities and the Arts (HUMART) project - a qualifications framework based on agreed reference points to position their fields and therefore their graduates better in today's societies.

This key note will address the relevance of the Tuning approach for higher education in general and the performing and creative arts disciplines in particular.



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## **PART 2**

### **Arts and Cultural identities**



## Developing a conceptual framework of a curriculum for Year Five Art Lessons in Kuwaiti Primary Schools

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### Abstract

The current art curriculum for elementary schools in Kuwait lacks any art history and has received little empirical study. I have been trying to develop a formal curriculum which gives Year Five students greater understanding of their own culture through lessons in art history in which they investigate traditional artifacts (here, Alsadu weaving). The action research that I am doing in three schools in Kuwait tests my experimental curriculum, which, over six lessons, focuses on this traditional women's craft. My action research runs in a four-part cycle: researching art education theory, policy and practice in England; developing a curriculum; testing and evaluating the curriculum, twice; and drawing conclusions. So far, I have completed two cycles. The preliminary review of the literature helped me to clarify the focus of the intended research and develop the research design. Action research was broadly adopted for the development, design and evaluation of the new curriculum. I have designed six lessons for the new curriculum and am collaborating with a small action team – three art teachers from different education authorities, an expert in Kuwaiti education and a graphic designer – which planned to implement and evaluate it twice. This paper presents the outcome of the cycle when I implemented the unit myself and discusses its formative evaluation. It appears that the students did begin to understand something of Kuwaiti Bedouin culture by investigating the history of its art.

### Keywords

Action research, art history, Culture, Artifacts, Kuwait

### Introduction

This paper describes part three of the cycle, which was the first implementation and evaluation of the curriculum unit in a Kuwaiti primary school. The purpose was to evaluate the curriculum unit. At the same time I sought to reflect on the appropriateness of the research design and action research method. As a practicing teacher and researcher, I welcome the model of the 'teacher as researcher' who collaborates with other teachers to implement and test a curriculum and analyzes and evaluates it with them. The first time it was put into action I taught the curriculum and collaborated with one art teacher in its formative evaluation. Then I improved and revised the curriculum and implemented and evaluated it again with the help of two other art teachers. The final step was a summative evaluation of the curriculum model in preparation for publication and further dissemination. In this part of the cycle, I taught the new curriculum unit with 17 students in Year Five, aged 10-11, at the Aien Jalot primary school for girls, in collaboration with the art teacher as observer; for help with the design, I consulted an expert from the College of Basic Education in Kuwait. All the data on the curriculum collected during part of the cycle (action research) are described and evaluated above. The aim of this part was to implement and evaluate the curriculum unit, with a view to revising and modifying aspects of the planned curriculum to develop and finalize the design. The experience of this part was helpful in the development of my thinking and led me to make great changes.

## Description of Lessons

In this six-week part of the cycle, I taught six lessons in collaboration with the class teacher as observer. In the following paragraph I describe each lesson and its evaluation.

### Lesson one

I taught the first lesson of the curriculum unit, called “Understanding the desert lifestyle”, which focused on understanding Bedouin society and culture.

At the beginning of the lesson the class teacher introduced me to the students; she told them that I would be teaching them for a few weeks and would implement and evaluate a curriculum unit, which aimed to increase their understanding of their own culture. The lesson content centred on art history and focused in particular on traditional artifacts (in this case, *Alsadu* weaving).

Next, I introduced the students to new ideas for using a sketchbook, which hitherto had been used in Kuwait schools only for drawing and painting. I explained its new purpose and offered some ideas of how it could be used for research to collect and reflect on information, make sketches, record their responses to what they could see, hear and read about in the lesson and make notes about developing ideas for their own artwork. I showed examples of pages of sketchbooks from the UK. I went on to say that we were going to use them in this way during my lessons; I had bought 17 new sketchbooks and distributed one to each student in the class.

Then the students watched the DVD “*Alsadu Art of the Desert*”, for 20 minutes. Before the film started, I had asked them to write notes and make sketches. I noticed that the students started to put their sketchbooks to use very quickly. When I started to run the DVD, they immediately wrote down information in their sketchbooks and drew sketches of what they had seen in the film and later made notes about the subsequent class discussion. They seemed keen at first to record the information and make sketches as they watched. The film had given them some information about the natural environment, the materials and tools used in the desert and weaving in Kuwait in the past. After the film was finished, I discussed with the students about what they seen and learnt from the film. During the lesson and more precisely the evaluation, classroom discussion provided some evidence of learning by those students who responded to the questions.

In this lesson, most of the objectives were fulfilled: the students acquired a little historical information about the society, the natural desert environment and the crafts which people in Kuwait had made for a very long time. The skills objectives were also attained, in that the students learned how to distinguish natural from man-made objects created by people in the past and how they had used natural objects and the materials around them to make them. The attitude objective is that students would begin to appreciate crafts and their importance to their makers and users.

### Lesson two

In the second lesson, I took the students, with previous permission, to the museum at *Alsadu House*, accompanied by their teacher acting as observer. The objectives were to explore and investigate examples of *Alsadu* weaving and examine their function, design and significance. It was hoped that they would acquire knowledge about people and culture through exploring different artifacts in detail.

I had already asked the students to use this visit to look at, touch and investigate the artifacts. Once we reached the museum workshop, which was a small open room used for teaching *Alsadu* weaving, I gave them each a worksheet prepared in advance and explained how they were to be used and the meaning of some of the questions.



Next, I showed the students around the whole museum. The **Alsadu** collection is housed in four of its six rooms. I identified the two rooms where I wanted them to study the **Alsadu** artifacts and asked them not to waste time studying exhibits elsewhere. [The museum's collection of artifacts was not labeled and the museum has no educators or curators on its staff to provide visitors with information or answer questions about the collection].

I asked them to choose one piece of **Alsadu** weaving to investigate, studying its materials, design, function and significance. When the students had made their choice they were to sketch it and write notes about it. Then I left them for 30 minutes to carry out their own research. Some students sat on the ground near their chosen artifacts and others stood next to them as they examined and drew them.

After this, I organized the students into four small groups to share their results with each other for 10 minutes. In these small group discussions they referred to tangible examples of **Alsadu** weaving, by looking, drawing and writing notes and talking about their colors, shapes, patterns and functions.

At the end of the lesson I asked for a 10-minute whole class discussion, in order to establish whether or not the general aims of the lesson had been met. I focused on augmenting the information that the students had discovered themselves about **Alsadu** weaving and its role in Kuwaiti culture, such as the appearance of the artifacts in the museum, the materials, sizes, patterns, meanings and function and details of the people who made them and their culture and society. By this time, the students should have begun to learn how to organize and present visual and verbal information about the images in their sketchbooks and demonstrated to me that they could talk about it in some detail.

When we returned to the school, I gave each student two blank cards for homework. On one, I asked them to write the findings from their research and class discussions about the artifact. On the other, they should draw the artifact which they had researched. I reminded them to use the information collected on the worksheet and in the sketchbooks. I went on to say that we would use these cards in future lessons to play an information game and anyone who came to class without them would not be able to play.

### Lesson three

On the third occasion, I taught the lesson called “Talking and presenting Artifacts”, to help the students to practice talking about **Alsadu** artifacts.

Since the lesson content was organized around and depended entirely on the results of the homework set the previous lesson, I told them all that they would play an “information card game,” in groups using their cards.

First of all, I organized the seating for group work, to accommodate the five students who had not done the homework I had asked the class to do.

In the “information cards game”, each student in the group had to put on the table the card on which they had drawn an artifact and hide the other one which carried information about it. One student began the game by withdrawing a picture card and then the card owner read the information on the hidden matching card. This continued until all the cards were drawn. In this way students exchanged all the information they had gathered in the museum.

As I walked around the groups I could see that the students were interested in the game and apparently enjoying it. They were listening to the information that the others read out as they showed the group their picture cards and were asked about them. The students recorded in their sketchbooks any information that they found interesting.

When they had discussed their picture cards, I asked all the members in each group to make a five-minute presentation of one artifact of their choice. As each student presented the card to the class, the others





asked questions about the artifacts. As a teacher, I gave them more information and I asked each presenter questions about points not so far mentioned.

At the end, I found that the students had all collected information during the students' presentations and sketched the artifacts in their sketchbooks as the lesson proceeded.

Then I gave the class more information about the **Alsadu** artifacts: materials, designs (motifs, patterns and color), functions and meanings. As I did this, I showed them more images that I had taken from the **Alsadu** museum to illustrate this content.

#### Lesson four

I taught the fourth lesson, called "Meeting a weaver and starting to weave", to help the students to learn from an authentic craftsperson, about their chosen craft, which showed the artist's interest in nature, imagination and everyday life, raised awareness of the artistic heritage and the role of craft in Kuwait society and conveyed the basic characteristics of the traditional art of weaving.

I began the lesson by introducing the local **Alsadu** weaver to the class, whom I asked to tell us about herself. In her talk, she told us stories about her weaving, women's roles in the past and her training, **Alsadu** craft materials past and present, the artifacts themselves and her experiences. The students were encouraged to ask her whatever questions they could think of. Next, she showed the students some of the materials used in weaving. She went on to describe what the materials look like in their natural environment and what the special qualities of each one are.

During the subsequent discussion, the students wrote notes and sketched the craft materials. From the discussion, they learned a good deal about her training (when, where, why and how she had learned to weave). After this, the weaver taught them some simple techniques using a small wooden loom. She showed them how to set up their own simple loom with its wooden frame and how to make the warp and weft. Then she showed them how to create a flat weave. They looked happy to be learning to weave and wanted to continue practising.

I concluded the lesson by consolidating what we had learned about women's roles in a traditional society, the function of **Alsadu** and the materials and techniques involved. Finally, I asked for some feedback on their feelings when they were weaving, whether they liked doing it and what they had liked or disliked about it.

#### Lesson five

I taught the fifth lesson, called "Weaving **Alsadu** patterns", which had been planned to help the students understand some basic processes of the traditional art of **Alsadu** weaving and to develop the requisite practical skills and learn through experience.

The weaver from the **Alsadu** Museum attended this class also; her role was to teach the students (i) the meaning of the patterns and (ii) how to weave the pattern **AIDallaha**.

The fifth lesson started with a Power Point presentation of **Alsadu** patterns, including **Dhurus el-khail** ('horses' teeth'), **Midhkhari**, **Hubub**, **Dhalla**, **Aein**, **Uwairjan**, **Dallaha** and **Shajarah**. The weaver explained to the students the names of the patterns, explained some of their symbolism and discussed the different designs with the class.

Next she demonstrated the **AIDallaha** technique to them all, first sitting at the table and explaining how the technique should be applied. She went from one group to another. Then she and I moved among them and gave individual feedback. I noted that it was difficult for the students to get started, but once they had completed the first row it became easier.



I concluded the lesson by asking a few questions; for instance, what the different *Alsadu* patterns were called, including the one that they had woven in this lesson and what the patterns represented to the weavers. A few students had not completed their piece of work by the end, but they had all learned the basic techniques of creating flat weave stripes and how to weave *AIDallaha*.

### Lesson six

I put into action Lesson Plan six, called: “Creating artworks based on the theme of Kuwait’s cultural heritage”, to help the students understand that the function and meaning of a traditional craft can change.

I began the lesson by telling the students a story that I had devised, called “Hanan and her grandmother’s gift”. Then I asked them what they had learned from it. Next, I asked them what they could use their own *Alsadu* pieces for and what functions they could think of for them. One student said “With our *Alsadu* piece we could make a lot of things – anything we like”. I showed them examples of small functional objects sold at the museum, such as a notebook, a pencil case, bags and purses with *Alsadu* weaving on the covers, to give them ideas about how to use their own designs to decorate contemporary artifacts.

To those students whose woven pieces were very small, I distributed readymade plain fabric bags, hair bands and plain fabric pencil cases. I asked them to think how they might decorate them with their pieces of *Alsadu* weaving. The students whose woven pieces were big enough were encouraged to create their own artifacts out of them.

I encouraged them to refer to their notes and the drawings in their sketchbooks to develop their designs and asked them to read what they had written, collected and reflected on in every lesson. At this point, they made notes about and drew the ideas that they were developing for their own designs and artifacts.

The students soon started to work on their artifacts; some of them used their small woven pieces to decorate pencil cases, small bags and hair bands. Others used larger woven pieces to make small bags and bracelets, thus creating new artifacts. I liked their ideas and designs and the students' completed artifacts were evidence that they had used their newly acquired weaving skills to make something which could be used today.

### Evaluating the Lessons

After each lesson, the teacher and I discussed and analyzed her notes from her observation of the lesson in order to evaluate it. I recorded our discussion in my notebook and the nine main areas that were covered.

- 1) The teacher thought that the lesson was biased towards the more theoretical side of art work; she pointed out that it had restricted practical and technical activities to collecting written information and sketching some things seen in the film. I did not wholly agree with her on this point, since I do not think art education is about drawing and painting only, but realized that the art teacher had drawn this conclusion because the students were used to practical activities alone in their art lessons. This was their very first lesson in Art History, so it was unrealistic to expect to change their expectations all at once, although over time it may be possible. They were accustomed to lessons in which only the first part (15 minutes) was theoretical and the rest of the time practical (as a rule, they made art work of some kind for about 65 minutes). But this structure differs a good deal from that of the lessons in the new curriculum unit.
- 2) The teacher thought that some students were confused or unclear about the word ‘culture’. I agreed with her. As Banks, an American educator who is a particular expert in multicultural education, has stressed (1988), students need to study the concept of culture in depth in order to fully understand its meaning and what it means to belong to a cultural group. One reason for the difficulty which these students had in defining and expressing the idea of culture could be the

sketchy covering of cultural issues in the Kuwaiti curriculum in general. Although they were Kuwaiti nationals, they had not learned about Kuwait's culture either at home or at school.

- 3) The teacher thought the idea of bringing a weaver into the class was a good one. The lesson was successful because of the way in which the interview with her had been organized. She said "I think the main reason it worked well was that the dialogue between the students and weaver was interesting and she gave the students a lot of information about weaving in an appealing way". I agreed with her that meeting a local artist or craft worker had been a successful strategy for introducing these students to their artistic heritage. As Chapman (1978) and Hickman (2001) point out, students should have first-hand experience of their built environment; it also gives students a chance to gain first-hand experience of techniques, since they can directly observe the production of a work of art. The students benefited from a hands-on demonstration of techniques by an expert in weaving, something which the class teacher and I could never be.
- 4) The teacher thought that the students' presentations had helped them to exchange their findings and led them to record new information and sketches in their sketchbooks. This idea of asking the students to talk and discuss had encouraged them to talk freely about the artefacts and had developed their understanding of ways in which to talk about crafts. The students had appeared attentive and shown respect for each other's opinions when sharing ideas with their classmates and me. I concluded that this way of working had been successful in this instance, because it gave the students the opportunity to express, to discuss and to justify their opinions. Although exchanging and sharing information is not a common practice in art classes in Kuwait and thus was a new experience for this class, this way of teaching had helped them to learn from each other about a past culture and art in their society.
- 5) We both considered it the sketchbook a fruitful device. The objective had been to encourage the students to draw examples of the materials and tools needed for *Alsadu* and to record information about them; and although this was new to them, they did learn how to use sketchbooks properly. I agreed with the teacher that the students had used them successfully to store the information that they had collected. As a researcher, I understood that this was the main purpose of sketchbooks, in contrast to the usual one in schools in Kuwait, where they are used merely as a kind of scrapbook. I was pleased that these students had succeeded in using their books for something different. As mentioned earlier, Robinson (1999) states that ownership of a sketchbook promotes a child's self-esteem and enables him or her to develop a positive attitude to work across the curriculum. .
- 6) We agreed that the questions on the worksheets had helped the students to undertake exploration in a sequential manner. It seemed that they were responsive to using them as an educational aid/resource. We knew that students in Kuwait who are taken on museum visits are not generally guided in methods of research and exploration and often do not take any writing materials with them. From the teacher's perspective, this visit was successful, mainly because of the work sheets.
- 7) We agreed that visiting the museum and investigating its collection was a successful tactic for cultural learning. This lesson established that the museum concerned is a good resource for teaching art history in Kuwaiti primary schools, because the students were allowed to pursue their own learning in privacy in the way they preferred.
- 8) We agreed that students' interaction in learning *Alsadu* craft techniques was excellent. When the looms were distributed they seemed willing and keen to create their artefacts. They looked happy to learn the craft of *Alsadu* which needed new skills and was a new experience for them and we agreed that the weaver was of great help in teaching the students this traditional craft.
- 9) We agreed that they had succeeded in finding new uses for their weaving that were relevant to their everyday lives, such as designs for bags, pencil cases, mobile cases, hair bands and bracelets. The results successfully communicated and displayed this aspect of the artistic heritage of Kuwait.



Most of the students gained a sense of satisfaction and self-confidence, which is widely recognized as one of the major benefits of engaging in art.

At the end of the evaluations, I decided to take into account all the above points in revising and developing the curriculum unit. I realized that the main issue I had to consider in revising this lesson was how to make the museum visit successful for all primary schools in Kuwait.

### Conclusions

After undertaking this part of the cycle– implementing the action research, which consisted of describing, analyzing and interpreting the data, I produced the findings and conclusions set out below. First I list the effects of the objectives on the students' learning. Then I draw some conclusions about the activities in the lessons, together with some about the strengths and weaknesses of each of the lessons in the curriculum unit. As a result of these, I have been able to recommend a list of changes to lesson plans which I hope will mitigate the negative features of the developing curriculum unit.

From testing and evaluating the curriculum unit in this cycle, I found some themes which seem to merit discussion, as follows.

I found four main points from the evaluation; that:

- 1) The students were expecting a largely practical lesson during which they could have time to pursue their artwork. These students are accustomed to lessons in which the first (theoretical) part is short and the remainder is set aside for practical skills, in the proportion of 15:65. However, the proportions in my new curriculum unit are somewhat different. Still, I agree with Hickman (2005) that it is advisable to have “a return to student-centred learning, but with an emphasis upon knowing about visual form rather than producing it” (p. 26). Because the structure of art lessons in Kuwait schools gives most of the lesson-time to practice and not theory, the students do not have very much information about art and culture. I can understand why the students seemed at first bored by theory, since they were used to practical activities in art lessons and it would have been hard to change this in a first lesson on art history.
- 2) However, I was convinced, on reflection, that the students should be introduced to a brief history of their country and basic information about its culture and the nature of their environment before I could go on to provide them, through *Alsadu* weaving, with a basic idea of the kind of life led by the Kuwaiti Bedouin. As noted above, Greer's view (1987) is that the best way of studying the culture of previous societies is to study their artefacts. By studying the traditional *Alsadu* crafts, my students learned how people in their culture had over time used natural objects and the materials around them in the environment of the desert and the impact of doing so people's lives.
- 3) It appears that the students did begin to understand something of Kuwaiti Bedouin culture by investigating the history of its art. They also learned what culture and environment might mean and how to personally communicate the meaning of these concepts in visual terms. Their responses to the two questionnaire sheets may also indicate that, like many other people, they were confused over the word culture and as a result a great variety of different responses were generated. As Banks (1988) stresses, students need to study the concept of culture in detail in order to fully understand their own. The difficulty which my students had in defining and expressing the idea of culture, therefore, could have been the result of the sketchy knowledge of cultural issues provided by the Kuwaiti curriculum. Although they were Kuwaiti nationals, they had not been encouraged to think about their culture.
- 4) In conclusion, I found that the sketchbooks were a successful strategy for teaching art history. In the following unit, I used an idea from Hickman and asked the students to use the sketchbooks as a resource throughout the lessons to help them to appreciate the nature of artworks and artists, investigate craft processes and products, collect information and develop ideas for their own artwork.



In a very recent book, *Think inside the sketchbook*, Robinson, Mountain and Hulston (2011) point out that, “As tools for gathering evidence, working through trial and error, asking and answering questions to reach a variety of conclusions, sketchbooks provide a way of learning which develops children as researchers”(p. 5). But it should be remembered that using sketchbooks in art lessons is new for Kuwaiti students; nevertheless, I found it a successful method of learning which the students enjoyed and used well. All in all, I can say that I found it an appropriate strategy for studying art history as a means of understanding the culture of Kuwait, specifically for Year Five students in primary schools.

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## Integrating the Multimedia Builder Software as an education tool to deliver Fairy Tales: promoting multiliteracies and multimodality

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### Abstract

As a way to respond to the contemporary challenges for promoting multiliteracies and multimodality in education, the current study proposes a theoretical framework – the multiliteracies model - in identifying, developing and evaluating multimodal material. The model was developed based on authors' past research work. More specifically, the paper examines, first theoretically and then empirically the promotion of multiliteracies in relation to the development of multimodal educational material through the use of Multimedia Builder (MMB). The example given is drawn from a larger study where pre-service primary school teachers were asked to develop digital fairy tales with MMB. Using the proposed blended pedagogical model the educational materials were evaluated in terms of their adoption of different literacies modes and their potential to develop multiliteracies. Finally, the paper discusses various educational and scientific implications regarding the integration of multimedia software within the teaching and learning practice as well as pre-service teachers' education and skills' development in multimodality and multiliteracies.

### Key words

Multimodality, multimedia builder, digital fairy tales, educational material development, multiliteracies model, blended pedagogical literacy

### Introduction

Being digitally, visually and linguistically literate are necessary skills that should be promoted, developed and taught, in order to lay the foundation for a successful personal and professional life in the Information Age (Riddle, 2009). A great necessity for students (future citizens) is to become multiliterate. The students (future citizens) are already dealing with knowledge in multiple forms and will be asked to represent their knowledge in an equally complex manner often using such combinations in a multimedia environment (Cope & Kalantzis, 2009; Komis, 2004; Tan, 2012). In order for students to meet the multiplicity and complexity of the textual, visual and digital forms, there is a necessity for a new repertoire of skills (Carrington & Robinson, 2009) and for new approaches to literacy pedagogy a move to a more blended literacy instruction using a variety of modes and media (Ajayi, 2010). Along the same lines, Matthewman et al., (2004) argue that "...multimodal literacy is becoming increasingly important

across subject boundaries” (p.165). Such a broader conceptualization of literacy as multimodal and multiliteracies (Jewitt, 2005; Marsh, 2006; Rowsell, Kosnik & Beck, 2008) poses special challenges to teachers and students. Are teachers adequately prepared to teach multimodality and multiliteracies in their classroom practices? Teachers are already challenged to provide richer and more complex learning experiences that go beyond the traditional print-based materials for their students (Ajayi, 2010; Carrington & Robinson, 2009; Rowsell et al., 2008). Unfortunately, teachers are ill-prepared to teach even the decoding of multimedia and multimodal texts, much less their encoding and production (McGee, 2007). Consequently, various concerns arise regarding the role of the school in appropriately preparing students in developing these literacies and become more active in developing and interpreting the new forms of meaning (Gomez et al., 2010). Our students live in a world of multiliteracies and that they are already dealing with knowledge in multiple forms and will be asked to represent their knowledge in an equally complex manner often using such combinations in a multimedia environment (Cope & Kalantzis, 2009; Duncum 2004; Komis, 2004; Tan 2012).

Having in mind the above, the review of literature highlights three areas where further research is needed regarding the fields of multimodality and multiliteracies:

- a) there is lack of pre- and in-service teachers’ training in developing multimodal material, designing learning environments where multiliteracies are achieved/ developed,
- b) there is a need for a model to define the criteria and dimensions of the various communicative modes (multimodality) as well as how they (the modes) interact with each other in order to develop various literacies (multiliteracies), and
- c) there is an urgent need to evaluate the degree of multimodality in students’ work as well as to evaluate multiliteracies development.

The current paper acknowledges the lacking elements in the literature and identifies the urgent need for addressing the aforementioned points. It focuses on the second issue mentioned above and proposes a theoretical framework – the multiliteracies model - in identifying, developing and evaluating multimodal material and multiliteracies. More specifically, it examines, first theoretically and then empirically the development of multiliteracies in relation to the development of multimodal educational material through the use of Multimedia Builder (MMB) by pre-service primary school teachers.

Next, several theoretical issues are presented, followed by the presentation of a specific digital educational material which exemplifies the theoretical issues discussed. In particular the first issue next discusses the need to train teachers to prepare/develop multimodal education material. Then current developments in understanding literacy and multiliteracies are presented. Having in mind the first two issues a multiliteracies model is proposed and criteria are presented for evaluating educational material. Then the context within which the educational material of the example was developed is presented. The context includes issues related with fairy tales and digital storytelling and issues related to the software used, that is the multimedia builder software. Finally the example is presented, which includes the evaluation of a digital fairy tale (MMB educational material) based on the proposed multiliteracies literacy model.

#### Training teachers to prepare multimodal education material

The pressure on teacher education to appropriately prepare pre- and in-service teachers to bridge the gap between the traditional literacy and multiliteracies/ multimodality (Rowsell, Kosnik & Beck, 2008) has already being greatly intensified. It is a great necessity for both pre- and in-service teachers to be appropriately prepared, since it goes without saying that the acquaintance of educators with the utilization of software like MMB, increases their ability to meet the modern educational requirements. This broadly conceived notion of literacy requires the development of new frameworks for knowledge in teacher education, new curriculum and instructional practices that are consistent with the changes in literacy since pre- and in-service teachers are being prepared to teach (Ajayi, 2010; Luke 2003). Consequently, it is a



necessity to provide teachers with greater pedagogical understanding of multimodality and multiliteracies (Maher, 2011). It is imperative to avoid ‘teaching a limited literacy’ (Domingo, 2012). Ajayi (2010) recommends new literacy teacher curriculum where teachers will learn to teach around the broadly defined concept of literacy and specifically associated with multimodality and multiliteracies (Ajayi, 2012; Luke 2003). Educators are charged with significant responsibilities of equipping students with multiliteracy skills needed to successfully participate, contribute and succeed to the multimodal, Information society. To teach for multiliteracy, they need to teach with multimodal material.

### Literacy and multiliteracies

Literacy has traditionally been described as the ability to read and write as well as to "...identify, understand, interpret, create, communicate, compute and use printed and written materials associated with varying contexts. Literacy involves a continuum of learning in enabling individuals to achieve their goals, to develop their knowledge and potential, and to participate fully in their community and wider society" (UNESCO, 2005, p.21). In other words literacy can be defined as the ability to effectively function in various environments and situations of communication using not only written and oral texts but also other forms of representation or meaning making (images, sounds, video) (Mitsikopoulou, 2001).

As reading and writing move from page to screen, we must understand literacy not just as a matter of language but also as motivated multimedia design since it is becoming a complex convergence of various media (Fransman & Andrews, 2012). Along the same lines, it is suggested that the rise of digital technology and the changes in people’s interactions with texts prompted attention to multimodality (Banks, 2008; Domingo, 2012; Jewitt, 2009; Kress, 2010; Tan, 2012). Multimodality is one of the characteristics of the Information Era which is defined as the integration and use of various range of modes in communication (i.e. text, image, sound) (Fransman & Andrews, 2012) as well as other forms of human communication (e.g. body and oral language, and visual representations) (Domingo, 2012).

According to Kalantzis and Cope (2001) because of to the nature of the modern communication technologies, meaning is formed in a more multimodal way, where the meaning of the written text is intertwined with other meaning patterns which could be audio, digital, visual (Kress & Van Leeuwen, 1996), action (Martinec, 2000) and its (meaning making) potential is extended (Domingo, 2012). Jewitt (2008, p. 246) suggests that “multimodality attends to meaning as it is made through the situated configurations across image, gesture, gaze, body posture, sound, writing, music, speech.” Consequently, literacy cannot be approached as the sole or the major means for representation or communication, since in many environments other modes may be even more prominent or more significant (cf. Cope & Kalantzis, 2009). Every mode corresponds to different literacy (i.e. mode of image – visual literacy; mode of language – linguistic literacy) since multimodal design defines patterns of interconnection of other modes (Maher, 2011, p. 236).

To make sense of the various meanings, and understand the intertwined modes, it is important for various literacies to be integrated and developed. In other words, as Kress and van Leeuwen, (2001) mention (in Ajayi, 2010) multimodality and multiliteracies are considered to be the ability to interpret and construct different possibilities of meanings made available by differing textual forms associated with multiple multimedia and multimodal texts. Having in mind the multimodal, digitalized, interconnected world where the students are expected to function, the New London Group (1996) introduced the term multiliteracies to highlight two related aspects of the increasing complexity of texts of our era: 1) the proliferation of multimodal ways of meaning making, where the written word is increasingly part and parcel of visual, audio and spatial patterns, and 2) the increasing salience of cultural and linguistic diversity characterized by local diversity and global connectedness. A few years later the New London Group (2000) proposed a pedagogy of multiliteracies model in an attempt to broaden the understanding of literacy and capture the rapidly changing landscape of literacy as well as the complexity and diversity of our era. Specifically, the authors report:

We seek to highlight two principal aspects of this multiplicity. First we want to extend the idea and scope of literacy pedagogy to account for the context of our culturally and linguistically diverse and increasingly globalised societies; to account for the multifarious cultures that interrelate and the plurality of texts that circulate. Second we argue that literacy pedagogy now must account for the burgeoning of text forms associated with information and multimedia technologies (New London Group, 2000, p. 9).

#### Proposed multiliteracies model

Authors' past research work (Eteokleous, Pavlou & Tsolakidis, 2010; Eteokleous, Ktoridou & Tsolakidis, 2011; Eteokleous, Tsolakides & Pavlou, 2011; Tsolakidis & Eteokleous, 2012) developed and tested a number of criteria to separately evaluate the utilization of three literacies in the development of multimodal educational material by pre-service teachers: linguistics, visual and digital. These allowed the researchers to explore whether there was evidence of (a) knowledge of the pedagogy that is applicable to the specific contexts (e.g. Greek language, science education, health education, etc.), (b) knowledge of how technology (in this case, the use of MMB software) can support pedagogical goals and (c) knowledge of how the subject matter is transformed/visualized by the application of the technology (Jimoyiannis & Komis, 2007). The studies demonstrated that the MMB software could support pedagogical goals that were set by the pre-service teachers given that attention was given to how the content was transformed and visualized through the technology. Clearly pre-service teachers' technical knowledge was important but not sufficient to achieve learning outcomes using the MMB software. A description of the evaluation criteria for each literacy follows.

Digital literacy was evaluated as a tool integrated within a specific learning context (beyond the development of digital literacy skills), in relation to the achievement of the learning goals set by the teachers and whether the integration of the advanced technology promoted and enhanced the development of multimodal material and multiliteracies. Specifically, the digital literacy criteria developed were used to evaluate if the various technological tools and features were used for to achieve specific goals, within a particular educational context. The digital literacy criteria were categorized into 6 parameters. Each parameter consisted of several sub-parameters to assist in the detailed evaluation of digital literacy integration. The 6 parameters and some indicative sub-parameters are given below: 1) Word processing, (i.e. write and format text/ paragraph; format page; insert, format and edit an image, graph, table; copy and paste various objects), 2) Spread-sheets (i.e. enter and format data into a spreadsheet; use basic formulas; create a graph/ table; insert and edit an image; copy and paste content, images, graphs, tables, objects; import and export data from other sources), 3) Internet use (i.e. email; use the advanced search features of search engines; access information through online resources including encyclopaedias, libraries, education and government websites, and electronic catalogues or use specific website that provide information on the subject under investigation; download and/or upload various kinds of documents from the Web), 4) Presentation and Graphics (i.e. develop a presentation; create new slides; input and format, and copy and paste: text, image, graph, table; insert a video clip, a sound file), 5) Essential Operational Skills, File Manipulation and Software Use (i.e. create a new file; locate and open a specific file; rename a file; save a file in any storage device; print out a document; demonstrate practical keyboarding skills; use/ adjust the keyboard, icons, windows, bars, menus; work between two or more open software applications), and 6) Other - Multiple Software Integration (i.e. integrate other educational software - Word, Excel, Power Point, Internet, Paint, Inspiration). The digital Literacy criteria were developed based on the following: past Literature (ST2L – Student Tools for Technology Literacy by Hohlfeld et al. 2009 and GCSE- Greek Computer Self-Efficacy scale by Kasotaki and Roussos 2006), and researcher's own experiences.

Visual literacy refers to a group of largely acquired abilities that enables people to understand (read/decode/interpret), and to use (write/encode/create) images (visual statements), as well to think and learn in terms of images (Sandell, 2009). The educational materials were evaluated in terms of two point views: a) whether they required the use of visual literacy abilities by the students and b) whether they



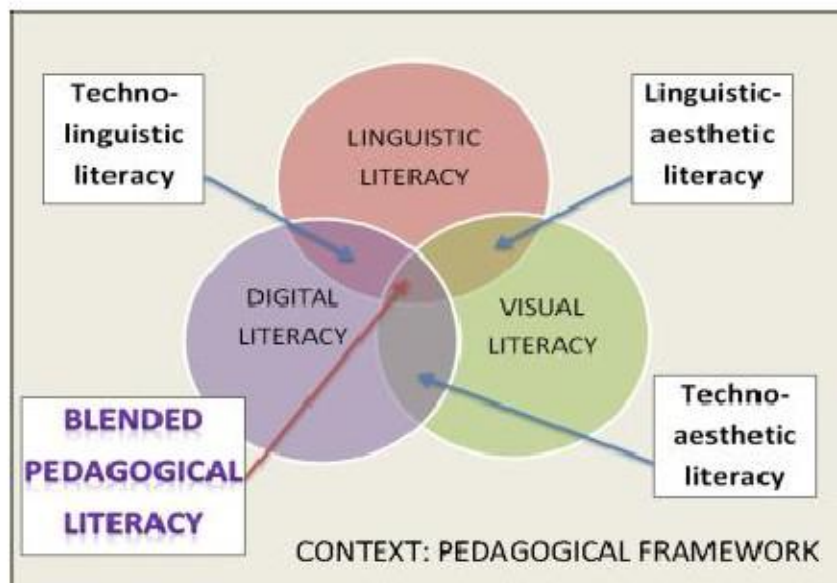
were aesthetically pleasing (aesthetics of the information presented). The aesthetics of the design was considered to be very important as it can influence the perceived usability of the materials and increase their effectiveness and efficacy (Manovich 2001; Lau & Vande Moere, 2007). In particular, when it comes to designing educational digital material, info-aesthetics (Manovich 2001) is connected with the quality of the feelings that can be provoked, such as increase of interest or increase of students' confidence (Laurel 1991, Mirdehghani & Monadjemi 2009), since it is thought that something that looks nice or beautiful, also works better or more satisfactory (Kurosu and Kashimura 1995, Tractinsky et al. 2000) or that in some occasions, it is easier or more efficiency to understand elements that are likable due to familiarity and previous experiences (Cawthon & Vande Moere 2007).

Therefore it was evaluated how the educational materials were visualized in terms of the following five parameters: a) colours (categories of colours, intensity, variation and balance), b) images (harmony, position, and function), c) unity of aesthetic qualities in all pages of MMB, d) Simplicity vs. complexity of visual elements, and e) variation of visual elements (images, colours, maps, videos, font type, size and colour). Further, it was evaluated whether the materials included activities that mobilized the following visual literacy skills: understanding of visual conventions, turning information into pictures (visual thinking), thinking by means of images (visual reasoning), critical viewing of images, being sensitive to verbo-visual association (the ability to link verbal messages and their visual representation to enhance meaning), and constructing meaning of visual messages (Avgerinou, 2007). Overall the criteria mentioned here were developed on past research (user interface aesthetics evaluation, Ngo et al, 2003; evaluation of aesthetic quality in data visualization, Cawthon & Vande Moere, 2007, and webpages, Mirdehghani & Monadjemi, 2009) and researcher's own experiences.

The linguistic literacy criteria are presented below: 1) Linguistic literacy is related with the expression, not only with the content. Given the above, pre-service teachers' interest and ability in composing texts that were correct concerning various aspects of the expression (spelling, stress, grammar, syntax, punctuation etc, was examined. Additionally, it was investigated to what extent the pre-service teachers were aware that the texts they produced influenced students' text production, 2) the opportunities given to students in order to get more familiar with (especially by composing) various kinds of texts (in the frame of a genre based approach for teaching Modern Greek) were examined, and 3) the opportunities given to students in order to critically analyze various texts (in the frame of the critical literacy approach that is currently being applied to the Modern Greek language teaching according to the new Greek-Cypriot curriculum) were investigated. The aforementioned criteria were developed based on past literature (Hadzilouka-Mavri, 2008, 2010; Kostouli 2001), modern Greek language curriculum guidelines (Cypriot and Greek educational systems), and researcher's own experience.

In a new study (Eteokleous, Pavlou, & Tsolakides, forthcoming) the three lists of criteria were further tuned and a new list of criteria was added. In particular having in mind the need for an integrated model to identify, develop and evaluate multiliteracies and multimodal educational material, it was decided to aim at an overall evaluation of the educational material along with a separate evaluation of each mode of communication. The updated theoretical framework of that study is presented next, which takes into consideration the existence of overlapping criteria within the three literacies (linguistics, visual and digital). This article suggests the need to acknowledge and evaluate blended literacies, named as: techno-linguistic literacy, linguistic-aesthetic literacy, and techno-aesthetic literacy, and the techno-linguistic-visual literacy. These blended literacies are schematically presented in figure 1 and definitions of each blended literacy are given next.

Figure 1: Theoretical Framework – The Multiliteracies Model



The techno-linguistic literacy is defined as the integration of various means of technology (computer applications, educational software, mobile devices, internet, web 2.0 tools) as tools within the teaching and learning process in order to: 1) read, develop and appropriately present text, and 2) present, express and discuss teachers' and students' thoughts, views and ideas through text within a specific learning context in relation to conducting the assignments and exercises designed by the teachers and to achieving the learning goals set by the teachers. The second blended literacy, the linguistic-aesthetic literacy is defined as the integration of linguist and visual modes of communication for learning-teaching purposes; when images and text are working together as a mode of representation and communication. Finally, the techno-aesthetic literacy is defined as the integration of digital and visual modes of communication for teaching-learning purposes. In particular it refers to ways of using various means of technology (computer applications, educational software, mobile devices, internet, web 2.0 tools) for finding, selecting, and editing images, for image making (construction and deconstruction of images) but also to ways that aesthetics as the artistic influence on the technical implementation affects the development of digital educational materials that include data visualization (Lau & Vande Moere, 2007). Finally, the integration of digital and visual modes are employed to present and express teachers' and students' thoughts, views and ideas through images, pictures, posters, etc within a specific learning context in relation to conducting the assignments and exercises designed by the teachers and to achieving the learning goals set by the teachers.

The above three mentioned "literacy blends" are very important if we consider the contemporary forms of meaning making in our era as increasingly multimodal, with linguistic, visual, audio, gestural and spatial modes of meaning becoming increasingly integrated in everyday media and practices. As a consequence, the traditional emphasis on alphabetical literacy (letter sounds within words within sentences within texts in literatures) would need to be supplemented in a pedagogy of multiliteracies by learning how to read and write multimodal texts which integrate the other modes with language (Cope and Kalantzis, 2009).

#### Blended pedagogical literacy (techno-linguistic-aesthetic literacy)

Digital literacy was never exclusively digital. It always included other modes of communication, being linguistic (e.g. written texts) or visual (e.g. images). While linguist and visual modes of communication have unique characteristics and exist as unique ways of knowing our world and contain a unique body of knowledge, to view them just as that is to ignore their social practice. Blended pedagogical literacy (see

figure 1) is defined as the integration of linguist and visual modes of communication in a digital environment for learning-teaching purposes. More specifically, the blended pedagogical literacy is described by the integration of various modes (i.e. text, picture, sound) in order to produce certain meaning or meanings. In addition, the pedagogical literacy model takes into consideration the fact that multimodality does only concern the information and data given to students by teachers (teaching), but it also concerns the exercises that the students are expected to develop (learning).

The proposed model mentioned above was tested with the evaluation of educational material developed by pre-service primary school teachers within the Educational Technology module. Pre-service teachers were requested to find traditional fairy tales, and to transform them in digital tales using the Multimedia Builder MMB software (Eteokleous, Ktoridou & Tsolakidis 2011). More specifically, they were expected to teach and deliver the messages of the fairy tale by integrating the MMB software. In other words, they were required to develop multimodal educational material combining the fairy tale's texts with other semiotic modes such as images, music, etc. Thus, the following section focuses on issues connected with fairy tales and digital storytelling. Next the MMB software is briefly explained. Finally, a digital fairy tale is presented to exemplify the theoretical model presented above.

#### Fairy tales and digital storytelling

Fairy tale or in other words storytelling is the original form of teaching (Pedersen, 1995). Throughout history, storytelling has been used to share knowledge, wisdom, and values (The Digital Storytelling Association, 2002). Researchers conclude (Bruner, 1990; Gils, 2005) that storytelling is a simple but powerful method to help students to make sense of the complex and unordered world of experience by crafting story lines. Fairy tales have been a great and well-known method of communicating numerous messages to kindergarten and elementary school students (Angelopoulos & Brouskos, 1994). According to Vygotsky, storytelling promotes the development of memory and logical thinking (Bodrova & Leong, 1996) and is also beneficial for language development and creativity concerning both oral and written speech. Thus, teaching a fairy tale provides flexibility in integrating numerous subject matters within the various activities and take advantage of every opportunity in engaging students in discussing values and perceptions regarding the subject under investigation (Abrazi & Bouras, 2007). Generally, following Dell Hyme's approach of narratives, are considered not only as means of experiencing and making sense of the world but also as culturally shaped ways of speaking that has special place in the repertoire of a community's sociolinguistic genres. Although storytelling is not new, the idea of digital storytelling was only recently put into practice (Meadows, 2003). The Digital Storytelling Association (2002) describes Digital storytelling as a modern expression of the ancient art of storytelling. The digital storytelling provides the opportunity to the students to become active learners by interacting, shaping, recreating and crafting the stories, and go beyond being merely viewers (Dorner, Grimm & Abawi, 2002). The delivery of an animated fairy tale can liberate children's memory, logical thinking, imagination and self-regulation. The animated story enhances children's interest, attention and memory as well as enriches their imagination (Ktoridou, Dolapsakis & Yiangou, 2005). Finally, Lynch and Fleming (2007) indicate that "...the flexible and dynamic nature of digital storytelling, which encapsulates aural, visual and sensory elements, utilizes the multitude of cognitive processes that underpin learning-from verbal linguistic to spatial, musical, interpersonal, intrapersonal, naturalist and bodily-kinaesthetic" (p. 7).

#### Multimedia builder software for educational material development

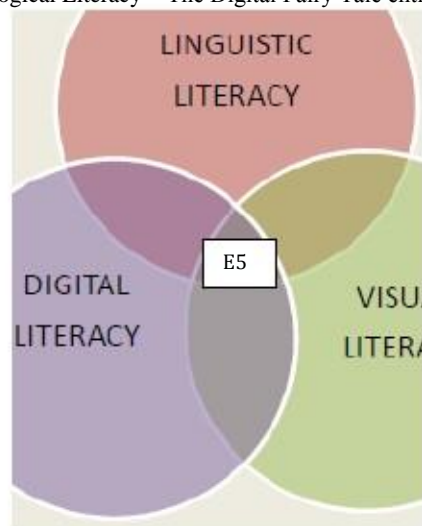
The Multimedia Builder (MMB) is an open source software providing educators the opportunity to develop multimedia educational material to be used by students within the teaching and learning process (Raptis & Raptis, 2004). As reported by Abrazi and Bouras (2007), MMB is an easy to use software that provides the tools to create multimedia applications in a graphic environment, while at the same time it is strengthened by its own program language which is really easy to use and it does not require high

programming knowledge and skills. It also supports the introduction of various types of documents (pictures, sounds, flash and html). Along the same lines, Lim and Tay (2003) strongly argue that multimedia authoring and presenting tools, such as Power Point, MultiMedia Builder, HyperStudio, and MovieMaker, have proved to be good constructive tools to learn through production, collaboration and project management. The greatest advantage of a multimedia environment is that it functions as a diagnostic tool helping the perception and expression of a child, and it activates students' intellectual thinking. The educators have the flexibility to design themselves a teaching environment based on the curriculum, the learning objectives and their students' needs and demands. Students have the opportunity to interact, participate in group work as well as to develop digital educational material having opportunities to revise and edit them (Abrazi & Bouras, 2007; Gilje & deLange, 2007; Tan, 2012). Additionally, it is argued that multimedia software positively impact the process of multimodal meaning making (Domingo, 2012; Matthewman et al., 2004) and digital media offer possibilities for getting access to semiotic resources and creating multimodal products (Erstad, 2007). Finally, Matthewman et al. (2004, 155) argue that "... range of modes of communication is made available which can extend, enhance, counterpoint or even replace language".

#### The digital fairy tale example

In this section a digital fairy tale is presented, out of the 21 MMB digital fairy tales developed in collaboration by pre-service teachers in the context of an Educational Technology Module (for the full results of this study, see Eteokleous, Tsolakides & Pavlou, forthcoming). The selection of this digital fairy tale was based on the high score that it received during the course evaluation process. As it is a good example of a well-integrated mode of blended pedagogical literacy (see figure 2), it can better exemplify the proposed theoretical model.

Figure 2: An example of Blended Pedagogical Literacy – The Digital Fairy Tale entitled “The Rich and the Poor”



#### Description of the digital Fairy Tale: The Rich and the Poor

The digital fairy tale entitled “The rich and the poor” was evaluated highly as a good example of blended pedagogical literacy, where all three literacies were present and integrated. For better understanding of the evaluation process, four snapshots-pages of the digital fairy tale are presented below (the text is in the Greek language as the study took place in Cyprus). The digital fairy tale had a total of twelve MMB pages. The first snapshot (see figure 3) was the introductory page of the digital fairy tale, where the students were presented with a background picture that conveys to students the meaning of the fairy tale (linguistic-



aesthetic literacy). Additionally, there were twelve images (that included pictures and symbols) which represented various activities/ exercises that students needed to go through. Each image briefly revealed what each activity was all about. Rolling the mouse over each image a bubble was appearing guiding students for the action to be taken. This was an example of good fluid links; fluid links helped users (students) to get a preview of the destination while still in the source context, which also enabled them to manage when to follow a link (Zellweger, Chang & Mackinlay, 1998). For example, at the snapshot (figure 3) the bubble appeared asked the students to visit a particular blog to provide their opinions (blended pedagogical literacy). At the upper row of the twelve images, the second image from the left showed a student reading and when the bubble appeared, the students were asked to click on the icon in order to read the fairy tale (blended pedagogical literacy). At the lower row, the fourth image from the left showed internet symbols and when the bubble appeared, the students were asked to click on the icon in order to visit specific internet sites to read articles related to the fairy tale (blended pedagogical literacy). Overall, in the first MMB page the blended pedagogical literacy was strongly revealed, since technology (digital literacy) was used as a tool to select, edit and provide images that convey particular meanings (visual literacy), and language (linguistic literacy) was used as a tool to read, write and express thoughts and opinions.

Figure 3: Introductory page from the digital Fairy Tale, the Rich and the Poor



The second MMB page (see figure 4) asked students to carefully observe the picture and described it and at the same time requested students to guess the main theme of the fairy tale. The students were also asked to select the icon at the right-hand corner of the page in order to go to the next page to write their thoughts (blended pedagogical literacy). The image showed a student writing on a notepad – revealing the action that the students were required to take when clicking the icon and moving on the next page (fluidness). At the next MMB page a text box was presented to the students in order to write their thoughts. The students could use an electronic text box to write and edit a text expressing their thoughts. Once more all literacies were apparent (techno-linguistic-aesthetic) since the students were required to critically view a picture, try to derive meaning and then use an electronic text box to write and edit a text expressing their thoughts.

At figure 5 we view another MMB page of the same digital fairy tale where students were directed to carefully observe three pictures revealed at the particular page, and develop a short story in the Cypriot dialect. The brown button at the bottom right-hand corner of the page reads “Write”. When the students clicked on the brown button a word processor document opened (M.S. Word), where students could write

and edit their story based on the pictures. As above all literacies were integrated (techno-linguistic-aesthetic) since the students were required to observe three pictures and then use a word processor application (technology tool) to write and edit a story.

Figure 4: Another snapshot from the digital Fairy Tale, the Rich and the Poor

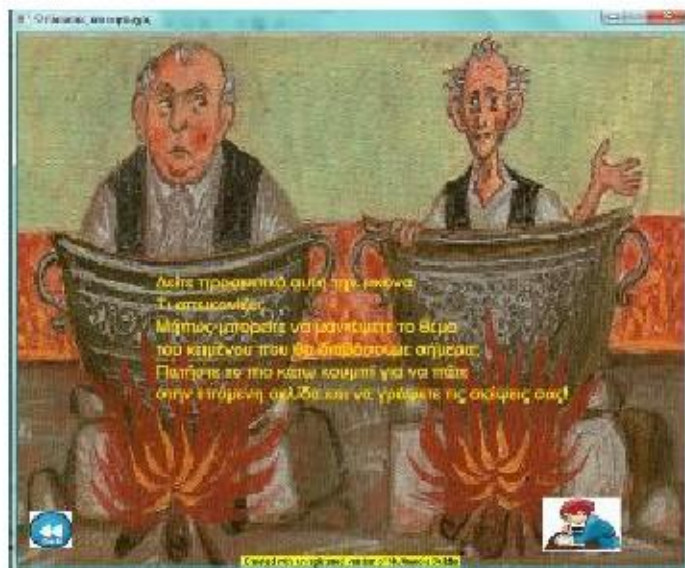
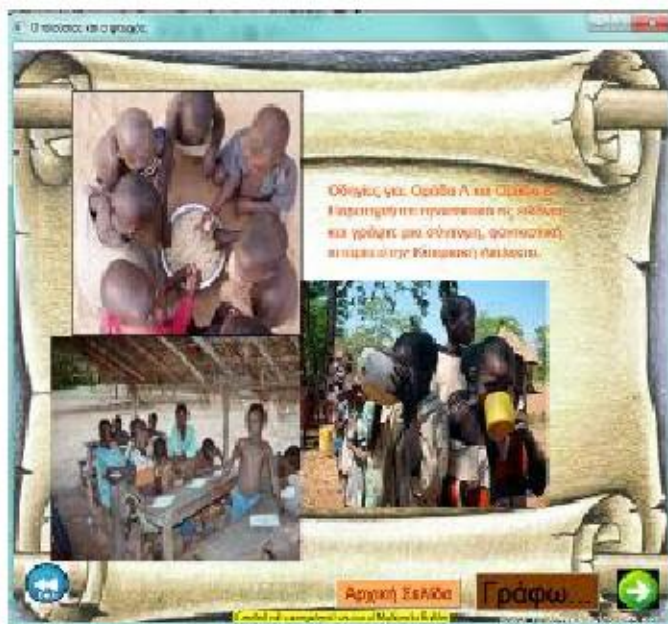


Figure 5: One more MMB page from the digital Fairy Tale, the Rich and the Poor



At figure 6 another snapshot of another MMB page is shown. Here students were given directions for developing a poster using M.S. Paint. The students were requested to integrate all information given and skills developed throughout the digital fairy tale in order to develop a poster entitled “All different, all equal”. By the completion of the poster the students were expected to visit a particular blog and post their posters. Once more the blended pedagogical literacy was present since the students were requested to

employ all literacies (techno-linguistic-aesthetic) to conduct the final assignment - develop and post their poster.

Figure 6: Developing a poster - snapshot from the digital Fairy Tale, the Rich and the Poor



## Conclusion

The example presented reveals that MMB is a tool that encourages multimodal production, where a traditional fairy tale can be transformed to a digital fairy tale and delivered through the employment of various technology tools. The integration of the MMB changes not only what is taught, but how is taught. Overall, it can be supported that the use of MMB to develop and deliver a digital fairy tale promoted multimodality and the design of a more student-centered environment. Having in mind the aforementioned points, in accordance with our digital-multimodal world, it can be supported that the integration of such multimedia tools help students to better understand the material structure or at least the intertwining of its elements. The process of analysis and evaluation of the MMB material (digital fairy tale) employing the multiliteracies model revealed to be extremely useful. Specifically, it provided the foundation in order to revise, redefine, and further update the unified list of criteria for identifying, developing and evaluating multimodality and multiliteracies. Detailed explanation of the various literacy groups and the evaluation criteria are presented in a forthcoming paper (Eteokleous et al, forthcoming). The current paper and specifically the proposed multiliteracies model holds important educational and scientific implications. The study adds to the relatively new body of literature related to multiliteracies and multimodality. It provides the foundation for a model and criteria to be developed in order to identify, develop and evaluate multimodal material and multiliteracies. Additionally, the study holds important implications for educational systems and educators. It reveals that it is a great necessity to appropriately prepare pre- and in-service teachers in developing multimodal educational material and students' multiliteracies. Gaining such knowledge and skills, teachers' ability to meet the modern educational requirements will increase. Educators are charged with significant responsibilities with equipping students with the necessary knowledge and skills needed in order to survive to the demanding information society. Future research will also need to focus on pre- and in-service teachers' attitudes towards the necessity of developing multimodal educational materials and their knowledge of developing these materials. Further, students' evaluations of the usability of multimodal educational material will provide important pedagogical insights into their development and usability. Thus, one of our forthcoming pieces of research includes the application of digital fairy tales with elementary school children and their evaluation by the students.



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## Enhancing Cultural Education to Students of Different Ethnic Minorities: A Path to Achieve Individual Identity and Multicultural Understanding among the Students in the Primary Education.

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### Abstract

In our days, everybody can easily see that humanity is facing multiple, complex problems that are interdependent at all levels: local, national, regional and global. Every problem or issue has multiple interlinked dimensions that may be political, social, economic, technological, environmental or cultural, and cannot be solved simply from one perspective. We are now experiencing the consequences of this imbalanced approach, in terms of environmental degradation and increasing social conflict, both within and beyond territorial borders, accompanied by economic turmoil due to greed and excess. Standards of behavior were well known and were transmitted consistently to children both at home and at school; the situation is very different today, as children are exposed to other cultures constantly within their own community and through the presence of the media, necessitating education in intercultural understanding to strengthen their own culture and to gain deeper understanding of others. The kindergartens and schools must change.

There are many ways in which to understand culture and diversity. Kindergarten and schools must reflect on what they mean by being an intercultural institution. If a teacher or an educator has negative attitudes towards children or people from other cultures or religions, or the diversity between children and parents are not appreciated, then no national action plans or laws have a real effect to make this kindergarten or school an intercultural institution.

Social changes such as economic globalization and international mobility have led to an increase in the number of people who spend substantial periods of time in more than one cultural context.

### Keywords

Culture, intercultural understanding and communication, cultural identity, multicultural competence, cultural stereotype

### Introduction

The study of intercultural communication has tried to answer the question, “How do people understand one another when they do not share a common cultural experience?” Today, living in multicultural societies within a global village, we all face the question every day. We now realize that issues of intercultural understanding are embedded in other complex questions: What kind of communication is needed by a pluralistic society to be both culturally diverse and unified in common goals? How does communication contribute to creating a climate of respect, not just tolerance, for diversity?

If we look to our species’ primate past and to our more recent history of dealing with cultural difference, there is little reason to be sanguine. Our initial response to difference is usually to avoid it. Imagine, if you will, a group of our primate ancestors gathered around their fire, gnawing on the day’s catch. Political, economic, and religious missionaries sought out opportunities to impose their own beliefs on others. The

thinking seemed to be, “if only people were more like us, then they would be all right to have around.” It is difficult for many people to believe that any understanding at all is possible unless people have become similar to one another.

Monoculture communication is similarity-based. Common language, behavior patterns, and values form the base upon which members of the culture exchange meaning with one another in conducting their daily affairs.

When people anticipate doing something cultural of an evening, their thoughts turns to art, literature, drama, classical music, or dance. In other words, they plan to participate in one of the institutions of culture—behavior that has become routinized into a particular form.

For instance, interculturalists are concerned with language use in cross-cultural relationships, rather than in linguistic structure. They study how language is modified or supplanted by culturally defined nonverbal behavior, how cultural patterns of thinking are expressed in particular communication styles, and how reality is defined and judged through cultural assumptions and values. In the following pages, examples in each of these areas will illustrate how understanding subjective culture can aid in the development of skills in cultural adaptation and intercultural communication<sup>1</sup>.

#### Understanding Culture – But what exactly is Culture?

Culture<sup>2</sup> is reflected in our language and colloquial expressions, dress, food, laws, heritage, history, technology, and the values or attitudes that are reflected in our conversations and relationships, in the ways we relate to each other as family and friends, and in the way we do things. It is also expressed in the arts, music, dance, theatre, architecture, literature and in the festivals we celebrate. It is reflected in our ways of knowing, doing, being and living together. Culture is a total way of life and is so inextricably woven into our identity and who we are in everyday life, that we are often unaware of it.

For this reason, it can sometimes be difficult to understand those who are different from us, to the extent that we may even fear them or perceive them as a threat to our cherished way of life.

To integrate Intercultural Understanding within curricula, a broad definition of culture is adopted which includes the whole experience of life in all its dimensions, as follows:

- physical – cultural practices and what people do
- intellectual – traditional knowledge and diverse ways of knowing
- emotional – diverse ways of expressing emotions (e.g. grief )
- spiritual or religious – beliefs, practices, cosmology
- Aesthetic – art, music, dance, concept of beauty, etc.
- linguistic – languages spoken
- social – social issues faced by diverse cultures, equity/inequity, human rights,

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<sup>1</sup> Intercultural communication—communication between people of different cultures—cannot allow the easy assumption of similarity. By definition, cultures are different in their languages, behavior patterns, and values. So an attempt to use one’s self as a predictor of shared assumptions and responses to messages is unlikely to work. Because cultures embody such variety in patterns of perception and behavior, approaches to communication in cross-cultural situations guard against inappropriate assumptions of similarity and encourage the consideration of difference. In other words, the intercultural communication approach is difference-based.

<sup>2</sup> UNESCO’s Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity (2001) defines culture as “the spiritual, material, intellectual and emotional features of a social group” including the values, beliefs, attitudes, behaviors, customs, traditions, practices, identity, lifestyle, language and religious faith of diverse peoples.



- disadvantage, discrimination, experience of social conflict and harmony
- political – diverse political systems
- historical – the history of cultures, migration, colonization, experiences of
- disadvantage and marginalization, war, conflict and peaceful co-existence
- power relations - disadvantage, injustice, minorities, marginalization
- moral/ethical – differences and similarities in values across cultures

In the past, it may not have been as important to foster intercultural understanding or to affirm, strengthen, celebrate and develop pride in one's own cultural identity and heritage through schooling, because learners were surrounded by their culture in every aspect of their lives. Cultural values at home, in the community, in places of worship and at school were consistent. Cultural artefacts were familiar and were a part of daily life. Standards of behavior were well known and were transmitted consistently to children both at home and at school. In this situation, children in dominant cultures were secure and confident of their culture due to limited exposure to cultural difference. Like creativity, culture is a term that is used in many ways in different contexts.

There is, then, in the sense set out above, a strong association between the arts and culture. Practicing and understanding the arts in all their forms are essential elements of creative and cultural education. But the definition of culture must, in our view, go beyond an exclusive association with the arts in general and high art in particular. The importance of these can only be fully recognized in educational terms within a more general social definition of culture: a definition which embraces the importance of other significant fields of creative activity. Accordingly, we define culture as:

“The shared values and patterns of behavior

That characterize different social groups and  
Communities”.

Most national communities, including our own, are a complex mix of ethnic, generational, religious, ideological and political cultural groupings which overlap with and affect each other. Many young people live in, and move among many different cultural communities, each of which might contribute more or less to their individual sense of cultural identity, or lack of it.

Understanding the complexities of cultural experience and identity is essential in many fields of study: in social history, sociology, cultural anthropology and in the emergent disciplines of cultural studies. For our purposes, we want to point to three features of the social cultures of the late twentieth century which are significant for our proposals for creative and cultural education: they are dynamic, diverse and they are evolving.

### Reports Relevant to Intercultural Understanding

For over 60 years, the United Nations have encouraged global dialogue on common goals and shared values, beginning with the establishment of the United Nations Charter and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights<sup>3</sup> (UDHR). These were followed by numerous international declarations, conventions,

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<sup>3</sup> The maintenance of culture, with all that this entails, including language, faith, values and practices, is a human right that is

repeated in all human rights documents. It may be found in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (Article 27, UDHR, 1948), which states that “everyone has the right to freely participate in the cultural life of the community, to enjoy the arts and to share in scientific advancement and its benefits.” It may also be found in the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (Article 15), which recognizes everyone's right to take part in cultural life; and in the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (Article 27), which states that ethnic, religious or linguistic minorities have the right to profess and practice their own religion, and to use their own language.



reports and treaties on issues ranging from human rights, social and economic justice, equality, peace, tolerance, diversity, international understanding, environmental conservation, sustainable development and climate change among many others. From this dialogue has emerged an international consensus around a set of shared, or universal global values, that are repeatedly expressed in these documents and which contribute to building a peaceful, just, humane and sustainable world. The most prevalent among these global values is that of “respect”, which is essential for intercultural understanding and central to education for sustainable development, and is common to many cultures. It is possible for both local and global values to co-exist in complementary ways, especially since respect for diversity is accepted as a shared global value. Among these documents are many international agreements which acknowledge the equal rights of all peoples to practice their culture, language and religion.

Education systems, schools and teachers are therefore responsible for strengthening the child’s cultural identity and values, while also promoting respect and understanding for the culture of others.

Teachers should particularly familiarize themselves with the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, since there are many provisions in the Convention that are relevant to their work, and which emphasize the rights of the child to:

- be protected against all forms of discrimination;
- preserve identity, freedom of expression, thought and religion;
- have access to information and material from diverse sources;
- ensure safety and social, spiritual, moral, physical and mental well-being;
- continuity of ethnic, religious, cultural and linguistic background; and
- Equality of opportunity and equal access to education.

Article 29 of the Convention further states that education should prepare the child for “responsible life in a free society, in the spirit of understanding, peace, tolerance and friendship among all peoples, ethnic, national and religious groups and persons of indigenous origin.” This represents the essence of education for intercultural understanding.

### What is Education for Intercultural Understanding?

Having established the rationale for the importance to teach intercultural understanding and having placed it within the context of education for sustainable development, this section describes and summarizes

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Article 26 of the UDHR also outlines the role of education in intercultural understanding, stating that “Education shall be directed to...respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. It shall promote understanding, tolerance and friendship among all nations, racial or religious groups.” This is re-endorsed in Article 13 of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, which states that: “Education shall be directed to the full development of the human personality and the sense of its dignity, and shall strengthen the respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. Education shall enable all persons to participate effectively in a free society, promote understanding, tolerance and friendship among all nations and all racial, ethnic or religious groups.”

The right to freely practice one’s culture is emphasized in all human rights documents. For example, Article 4 of the UN Declaration on the Rights of Persons belonging to National, or Ethnic, Religious and Linguistic Minorities (1992) calls upon states “to take measures enabling persons belonging to minorities to develop their culture.” Most relevant for teachers is the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989), which affirms the rights of children to respect their own cultural identity, language and values, and to enjoy their own culture, practice their religion, and use their own language (Articles 29 and 30). Article 29 (c) of the Convention states that education should be directed to the “development of respect for the child’s parents, his or her own cultural identity, language and values, for the national values of the country in which the child is living, the country from which he or she may originate, and for civilizations different from his or her own.” This principle is expressed even more strongly in Article 30 of the Convention which states: “In those states in which ethnic, religious or linguistic minorities or persons of indigenous origin exist, a child belonging to such a minority or who is indigenous, shall not be denied the right, in community with other members of his/her group, to enjoy his/her own culture, to profess and practice his/her own religion, or to use his/her own language.”



education for intercultural understanding and outlines its core content and learning processes as a guide for teachers and teacher educators. At first glance, it would seem obvious that intercultural understanding<sup>4</sup> involves awareness, knowledge and understanding of many aspects of other cultures, for the purpose of living together peacefully and harmoniously. However, changing attitudes and behaviors towards those who are different from ourselves involves much more than raising cognitive awareness, which we know does not by it change actions. An understanding of our own culture, a deep exploration of our personal and cultural values, and the experiential development of respect and compassion for the rights of others, translated into positive action, are also required. This means that the processes of teaching and learning intercultural understanding are just as important, if not more so, than its content.

The four overlapping and interconnected pillars of learning, which the report says should receive equal attention in education, are:

- Learning to Know;
- Learning to Do;
- Learning to Be; and
- Learning to Live Together.

While many refer to “learning to live together” as the pillar that relates to education for intercultural understanding, in fact all four pillars are relevant, as discussed below.

This pillar also lends itself to developing skills for putting values into action, through positive behaviors and relationships, living harmoniously and collaborating with others of diverse cultures.

Table 1: Principles to form the basis for education for intercultural understanding

Identity, language and cultural heritage	It upholds the rights and freedoms of all to retain, express and enjoy their culture, language and religion, and to retain and strengthen their cultural heritage, even if this differs from the majority culture in their country. This involves teaching and modeling the value of respect for difference as the basis for all social interaction and providing opportunities for all learners to learn, strengthen and express their culture, language, heritage and religion.
Social justice, equity and human rights	It entails promoting freedoms, rights <sup>5</sup> , equality, equal access and opportunities for all, to participate fully in economic, social, cultural, educational and political life in their country, ensuring that every person has equal opportunity regardless of their race, culture, language, religion, gender or disability. Education should therefore enable

<sup>4</sup> UNESCO considers that quality education includes education for intercultural understanding. The UNESCO Ministerial Round

Table defined quality education as the knowledge, values, competencies and behaviors needed for a globalized world, balancing local, national and global aspirations, reflecting cultural and linguistic diversity for equity, equality and quality of life, and for peace, freedom, solidarity, democratic citizenship, human rights and sustainable development (UNESCO, 2003). This statement appropriately captures the breadth and scope of education for intercultural understanding.

UNESCO’s 1996 report of the International Commission on Education for the Twenty-first Century identifies four pillars of learning as the foundation of education for lifelong learning and for drawing out the full potential and latent abilities of learners as individuals and as members of society, while learning to live together for sustainable human development (Delors, 1996).

<sup>5</sup> This principle may also be covered in topics within human rights education and may also involve taking special measures to reduce disadvantage, eliminate discrimination and exclusion, and correct past injustice, as well as create opportunities for all learners to reach their maximum potential. Education should also promote a human rights and human relations approach for countering racism and discrimination by, for example, fostering awareness of racism and discrimination, developing strategies for countering stereotyping and racism, and by developing skills in critical analysis to understand the structure of power that leads to injustice. It should also strive for equitable access to education and equitable learning outcomes for all learners.



	learners to participate effectively at local, national and global levels.
Valuing diversity and creativity – social and economic benefit for all	It entails actively promoting the value, benefits and contributions of others cultures and languages to the community so that all are valued in the country for their diversity, rich creativity, and social and economic benefits that diversity brings. Education should ensure that all learners have the opportunity to benefit from recognizing, appreciating and understanding the cultural diversity in their community.
Unity and solidarity in diversity	In order to avoid potential social fragmentation, education should also foster civic responsibility among all learners, encouraging them to commit to their country first and foremost, while also respecting the rights of all to their own culture, language and faith. Education should strengthen civic values and commitment to one’s country, while respecting the rights of all others, based on a common civic platform, and allowing diversity through freedom. It also entails acting in solidarity with others of diverse cultures when one sees that they are being treated unfairly.
Fostering tolerance, peace and social harmony	Since the purpose of education for intercultural understanding is to promote peace and social harmony, both within countries and more broadly, learners need to develop understanding and knowledge <sup>6</sup> about other cultures, and learn the values of mutual respect, tolerance, a peaceful and accepting orientation towards others, care, compassion and empathy, by experiencing themselves in the shoes of others, flexibility, as well as openness and generosity of spirit.

Educational institutions and educators need to model appreciation for diverse cultures by demonstrating cultural inclusiveness throughout the institution and in class by, for example:

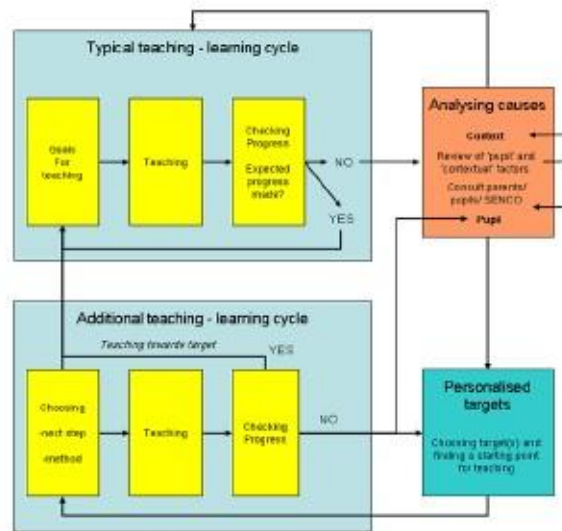
- basing learning experiences around the cultural and linguistic diversity of the community, school or class;
- incorporating a range of diverse cultural knowledge, experiences and perspectives across the curriculum (including indigenous and gender sensitive perspectives);
- celebrating, valuing and learning about the histories and lives of diverse cultures and indigenous peoples, languages, faiths, achievements, and issues past and present, including through the stories and perspectives of those cultures;
- valuing and including in the learning the cultural and linguistic knowledge, experiences and skills of diverse learners, either in the class or in the community, visiting culturally significant places if possible; and
- Enabling learners to recognize acknowledge and engage in positive, diverse, cultural learning experiences wherever possible.

Educational institutions and educators also need to ensure that all education is historically accurate, unbiased, culturally appropriate, and culturally and gender sensitive, and that content is not inadvertently offensive to some cultures or faiths.

Figure 1: Plan of a typical teaching process

<sup>6</sup> It may also involve promoting positive interactions among learners of diverse cultures, learning conflict resolution skills, fostering understanding and forgiveness for past wrongs, and actively participating in reconciliation, healing and forgiveness processes. It also builds a society that lives and works together with others harmoniously for a shared future, in which all people are treated with respect and dignity and may also be covered in topics within peace education.





Some of these approaches may involve consulting with cultural experts or local indigenous communities, elders and custodians, where appropriate and possible. In some cases, it may be possible for learners to learn directly from local members of diverse cultures and indigenous communities. Intercultural Understanding in the Arts (dance, theatre/drama, media, music, visual arts)

The definition of subjective culture also provides a base for defining “diversity” in a way that includes both international and domestic cultures at different levels of abstraction. National groups such as. While cultural difference at a high level of abstraction provides a rich base for analyzing national cultural behavior, there are significant group and individual differences within each national group that are concealed at this level. These differences provide a diversifying force that balances the unifying force of national culture. At a lower level of abstraction, more specific groups such as ethnicities can be described in cultural terms.

Figure 2: Integrating Intercultural Understanding across School Curricula



Learners will:

- understand that the arts shape and represent cultures and identities;
- explore roles, purpose and meanings of diverse cultural art forms through time and the importance of arts to cultural identity;
- develop and adapt performances and art works that represent the perspectives of diverse and marginalized cultural groups;



- use or adapt art forms from other cultures (e.g., indigenous dot paintings), understand their meaning, sacred significance and history (e.g., rock art and cave paintings) and what they reveal about cultures;
- explore the diverse media, elements, approaches and technologies used in arts across cultures that reflect the time, place and cultural setting;
- trace the influence of the cultural works of other peoples to inform one’s own arts practice; and
- Explore how the arts connect people throughout the world.

**Intercultural Understanding in the Sciences (earth and space science, physics, biology, chemistry)**

Learners will:

- appreciate the contributions of diverse cultures to the sciences through history;
- become aware of traditional indigenous knowledge (e.g., nature, flora, fauna, survival, herbs for medicines);
- become aware of culturally diverse ways of constructing knowledge;
- discover that science builds on cultural traditions of observation and inquiry;
- become aware of diverse cosmologies across cultures and faiths, as well as the sensitivity of some debates (e.g., creationism and evolution);
- view phenomena through diverse cultural lenses to broaden and deepen understandings in ways that are not possible from only one cultural perspective; and
- Learn that the observations, data and interpretations of scientists are influenced by cultural experience, understandings, values, economics, power and relationships.

Intercultural Understanding	
Mathematics	Language(s)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• acquire a socially constructed body of knowledge with roots in many different cultures using universal symbols;</li> <li>• understand that there are many culturally diverse forms of mathematical knowledge;</li> <li>• learn about the contributions to mathematics of various cultures throughout history;</li> <li>• become aware of the diverse role of mathematics across cultures;</li> <li>• understand the culturally diverse relationships to number;</li> <li>• explore the history of diverse cultural forms of measurement; and</li> <li>• Become aware that diverse cultural spatial abilities are shaped by one’s environment.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• understand the interdependence of language, culture, identity and values, how cultural concepts and perspectives are reflected in language, and the cultural principles and practices that influence communication;</li> <li>• learn about the history and culture of the people whose language is being studied;</li> <li>• learn about the culture when engaging in language practice;</li> <li>• analyze cultural texts, poetry, literature, stories, film and theatre; and</li> <li>• Make connections between language use and cultural values.</li> </ul>

However, for a truly integrated and trans-disciplinary approach to education for intercultural understanding and sustainable development, teachers need to do more than address relevant topics through separate subjects as demonstrated above. Schools need to allocate time in the curriculum for learners to bring together the various themes associated with education for intercultural understanding and sustainable development, and to foster critical, integrated thinking and creative problem-solving in learners. These activities require holistic systems thinking to draw in the social, cultural, environmental, political and economic aspects of the issue, and the causes and consequences of various decisions and courses of action.

#### Pedagogical techniques for human rights education

These techniques have proved especially appropriate for human rights education because they encourage critical thinking, both cognitive and affective learning, respect for differences of experience and opinion, and active engagement of all participants in ongoing learning. Many teachers are committed to bringing the subject into social studies through community, societal or global issues, and strive to match good resources with sound pedagogy. Their focus is often on teaching about children's rights, based on the belief that these will best engage young children's imaginations and their growing sense of empathy and connection with others. I agree. These teachers also want to find the right balance between realism and hope in teaching a subject that can overwhelm young audiences.

Brainstorming	<p>This technique can be used to seek solutions to problems that are both theoretical and practical. It requires a problem to be analyzed and then solutions to be developed.</p> <p>Brainstorming encourages a high degree of participation, and it stimulates those involved to maximum creativity.</p>
Case studies	<p>Case studies should be based on credible and realistic scenarios that focus on two or three main issues. Case studies can be used to set up debates, discussion or further research.</p>
Creative expression	<p>The arts can help to make concepts more concrete, personalize abstractions and affect attitudes by involving emotional as well as intellectual responses to human rights.</p>
Discussion	<p>To create an environment of trust and respect, students might develop their own "rules for discussion".</p>
Field trips/Community visits	<p>Students benefit from the extension of school into the community, learning from places where human rights issues develop or where people work to defend rights or relieve victims.</p>
Interviews	<p>Interviews provide direct learning and personalize issues and history.</p>
Research projects	<p>Human rights topics provide many opportunities for independent investigation.</p>



Role-plays/Simulations	A role-play is like a little drama played out before the class. Role-plays have particular value for sensitizing students to the feelings and perspectives of other groups and to the importance of certain issues.
Visual aids	Learning can be enhanced by the use of blackboards, overhead transparencies, posters, displayed objects, flip charts, photographs, slides, videos and films.

### The Arts and Technology

There is a powerful relationship between science, technology and the arts. Artists make things: new tools and materials generate new forms of creative practice. In 1980, the House of Commons Select Committee defined the arts in this way: “ The term Other arts includes, but is not limited to music, dance, drama, folk arts, creative writing, architecture and allied fields, paintings, sculpture, photography, graphic and craft arts, industrial design, costume and fashion design, motion pictures, television, radio, tape and sound recording, the arts related to the presentation, performance, execution and exhibition of such major art forms and the study and application of the arts to the human environment “.

The relationship between the arts and technology has always been dynamic. Technology makes new forms of expression possible: artists drive technology to new levels of sophistication. This is happening now with digital technologies. At one level, the new technologies are making existing processes of creativity easier. There is software for musical composition, for choreography, theatre design and architecture, and this facilitates many existing forms of work. But new technologies are also generating new forms of creative practice Ñ in computer animation, sound synthesis and digital graphics. Some of the most adventurous developments in the arts are taking place at the boundaries of the new technologies: in multimedia and cyber-technology. The new technologies are providing for new languages and methods and modes of creativity in the arts, now as they have always done. A further example is the interaction of design and technology and their interactions in industry and economics. Throughout industry designers and technologists work together; they create new product systems and services. Britain, because of the diversity of its population and its tradition of freedom of expression, has been, in the past, one of the primary sources for this type of innovation.

### Why Cultural Education?

“I call on schools, teachers, students, parents, and community leaders to promote understanding of our nations and cultures by encouraging our young people to participate in activities that increase their knowledge of and appreciation for global issues, languages, history, geography, literature, and the arts of other countries.”

President George W. Bush<sup>7</sup>

Against this background, we see four central roles for education in the cultural development of young people.

- a) To enable young people to recognize, explore and understand their own cultural assumptions and values.
- b) To enable young people to embrace and understand cultural diversity by bringing them into contact with the attitudes, values and traditions of other cultures.

<sup>7</sup> From an address given at International Education Week, 2001



- c) To encourage an historical perspective by relating contemporary values to the processes and events that have shaped them.
- d) To enable young people to understand the evolutionary nature of culture and the processes and potential for change. Taken together these suggest key principles for the balance of teaching and learning in schools and for the balance of the school curriculum. We will come to these shortly but first let us comment briefly on each of these roles.

### Multicultural Strategies in the Curriculum

1. Multiperspective teaching of American, Canadian, Mexican, and World History
2. Culture-oriented Current Events Reporting by Students and Teachers
3. Untracking
4. Tolerance/Anti-Racism-Oriented Teaching
5. Gender-Fair Instruction
6. Teaching Conflict Resolution Techniques
7. Mastery Teaching and Mastery Learning
8. Cooperative Learning
9. In-depth Interview with Parents and Ongoing, Gradual Ethnic and Cultural Self-disclosure by Teachers and Students
10. Design and Implementation of Environmental Multicultural Units
11. Specially designed Academic Instruction in English (Also Known as Sheltered English Instruction)
12. Positive Predictions Regarding Students' Future Academic and Occupational Success
13. Self-esteem-oriented Education (as in Word of the Week and Child of the Week Programs)
14. Student-Specific Pedagogy (Learning-style-informed Teaching)
15. Teaching toward Self-directed Learning

Bilingual Education and Strategies Designed to Recruit More Bilingual Teachers and Teachers of Color. High quality educational experiences will not exist if some ethnic groups and their contributions to the development of U.S. history, life, and culture are ignored or demeaned (Gay, 2000). Gay also explains, "Much intellectual ability and many other kinds of intelligences are lying untapped in ethnically diverse students. If these are recognized and used in the instructional process, school achievement will improve radically. Culturally responsive teaching is a means for unleashing the higher learning potentials of ethnically diverse students by simultaneously cultivating their academic and psychosocial abilities. Information about cultural responsiveness informs the teacher of his/her roles and responsibilities and how to utilize culturally responsive caring and teaching.

### Conclusion

In most cases, language learners see themselves benefiting from an increasing awareness of cultural practices different from their own. They usually become more open minded and tolerant to dissimilar ways of doing and perceiving things. However, the influence of having contact with foreign cultural realities may also have a negative impact on the learners' own identity. Even though research has shown that most learners react positively towards cross-cultural contact in the classroom and other settings, it has



also been acknowledged that some people may experience psychological blocks and other inhibiting effects of contact with second language culture, (Brown, 1994). In this case, it is necessary for the students to be provided with tools to help them overcome cultural alienation in second language learning (Stevick, 1976). Donahue and Parsons (1982 as cited by Brown, 2000) examined the use of role-play in the language classrooms as a tool to help students succeed in cultural understanding. They explained that the use of role-plays is very useful to promote the process of cultural dialog in language learning, while, at the same time, it provides opportunities for oral communication. Brown also mentions techniques such as, reading, films, and simulation games as ways of aiding the students to have a positive vision of the foreign culture. To sum up, the present cross-cultural contexts in which we all interact have created the need for becoming interculturally competent. Nowadays, it is not just a matter of knowing the foreign language that can enable us to successfully interact in foreign cultural contexts and conditions; it is also a matter of being open minded to different ways of behaving and perceiving reality. We have to broaden our horizons and understand dissimilar ways of conceiving and doing things. In this sense, language teaching should provide spaces for learners to deepen insights into the culture that is implicit in the language they are taught. Research has shown that in so doing, people develop a capacity to deal with subsequent cultural differences when interacting in alien conditions.

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## Female Clowning: The Place of Women in the Clown World

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### Abstract

This work is part of my PhD project in the Arts and Education program at the University of Barcelona. It consists of a brief state of the question about the recent history of female clowning on circus, theater and social intervention. It also presents a critical exercise about the theme, from a postfeminist position. A literature review about clowning and laughter is being made, as well as a documental and ethnographic research about women clowns' performances and gender identity politics. With this work, it is possible to see a contemporary movement of women taking place in the clown world, which has been historically dominated by men, patriarchal and humanist traditions on laughter and comedy. A type of feminist movement on clowning is being created and/or reinforced, especially in the last decade, through festivals, courses, discourses and performances on a variety of themes such as: female universe, gender roles, gender oppression, female identity and women's body. Female clowning appears with a strong potential to inquiry about gender and sexual discourses and politics. But a historical isolation from feminist art, performance and theory is observed as a point that should be overpassed so that both women artists and clowns could improve their pedagogical and political labor trough critical collaboration. That's why this work also aims to contribute with a dialogue with some (post)feminist artists and theorists, trying to build interdisciplinary bridges and fostering collaboration that can be powerful instruments to female clowning and (post)feminist artists' pedagogy and politics.

### Key words

Female clowning, gender identity, politics, comicality

### Introduction

This paper is a result of my studies during the first year in the PhD program in Arts and Education, which is being held at the Faculty of Fine Arts, University of Barcelona. In my thesis project, I try to construct plural genealogies of women clowns, at the same time analyzing how women construct themselves as female clowns, and reflecting about the singularities of woman's laughter. To start this research journey, I made a brief state of the question about female clowning, with the main objective to know their recent history in circus and theater, and get a general overview of women clowns' performances and politics.

As a Brazilian woman clown, I realized too late that all my references about clowns and arts in general were all men references. Embracing for the first time feminist theory and the specificities of women's art is being a powerful experience for me, a medium class white woman from Fortaleza, Brazil. In the provincial capital of Ceará, I grew up practically without any education on gender and sexuality, and the few times I remember having listened the words feminism and feminist was in a derogative manner. All that contributed to my actual engagement to write a little part of women clowns' stories and genealogies, getting a comprehension of women's laughter and comedic performances, through a critical reflection on female clowns' pedagogies and politics.

This paper shows the result of a documental research and literature review about female clowns that is being developed in my thesis project. Since woman clown is a recent figure in the history of circus, theater and performance art, little have been written and registered about them. Thus, some sources of this work



were found in internet, in blogs and webpages of women clowns' festivals and electronic cultural periodic and journals.

Together with the literature and documental research, I also present a critical exercise about female clowning, related to their late appearance in modern circus and history, an issue that, mandatory, involves gender and sexual problematic. By the end, I present my actual reflections and questions that are now guiding my thesis project. This is being made from a (post)feminist position, with dialogues between feminist and postfeminist artists and theorists.

The expression clown world used to illustrate the title involves a popular expression used by various clown performers to describe the upside down world guided by principles of social hierarchical reversal rituals, such as carnival, to indicate a world particular point of view and a kind of life style of clown performers. For this work, the clown world will be indicating not only this virtual comic reality, but also the historical, theoretical and physical space in which clowns move, such as circus, theater and contexts of social intervention.

### The woman clown

The history of modern clown is written as a Eurocentric genealogy, inserted within a patriarchal culture. The clown figure represents primarily a male archetype, and with few exceptions, women have always been an object of laughter, but rarely acted as subjects of comedy and parody. In fact, the clown world was based upon the absence of women's humor.

In modern circus, clown characters were played always by men. According to Brazilian researcher Sarah Monteath, women have historically been given classical roles, related to the beauty and technical abilities of the body. This way, their roles were generally related to the aristocracy, as amazons, dancers and acrobats. The beauty attributes and physical abilities were really welcome, mainly by men's voyeuristic eyes, a situation incompatible with the origins of clown characters, based on rudeness, grotesqueness and foolishness.

Even though today the number of women clowns is probably equal to or greater than men clowns, the visibility of female clowning is more evident at festivals and programs especially organized by women clowns. For one of these festivals, Joan Minguet, Professor of Contemporary Art History at the Autonomous University of Barcelona, wrote:

Indeed, in the history of the circus the clown figure was essentially patriarchal. Few women had access to that function in the past. At least, few had done without adapting to male stereotypes that already exist. It is said that in the history of American circus, Amelia Butler was the first woman that, in 1858, created a clown character recognizable by its femininity in a tour of Nixon's Great American Circus. Subsequently, in 1939, the legendary Ringling Brothers and Barnum and Bailey Circus present a show announcing the presence of "The only woman clown in the world". In Europe, we must go back to Paris of the belle époque and the creation of the character of Miss Loulou. Or, of course the nearest reference point that is Annie Fratellini, a clown that, embedded in a famous circus saga, built a character of great and rich nuances. Traditionally, then, the woman has been a recurring comic object, but rarely had become the subject of comedy. (Minguet, 2003)<sup>8</sup>

Joan Minguet believes that the poetic and social transgression that clowns have carried implicit in its definition since ancient times has now been twice enlarged and renovated by women clown performances. The professionalization and consolidation of women clowns is a recent phenomenon. Although in the history of clowns it is possible to find some reference to women like Amelia Butler, Lulu, Peggy Williams, Amelia Adler and Annie Fratellini, it was only from the nineties that women came to

<sup>8</sup> Original text in Spanish. Translation to English made by the author.



consolidate themselves as professional clowns dedicated to performance, pedagogical practices and social work intervention, such as hospital clowning, clown therapy, community development and peaceful missions in war and conflictive zones. The last decade, especially, observed the emergence of a kind of movement of female clowning, which is possible to see through the increasingly large number of women clowns, and some groups, courses and festivals dedicated to develop women art in clowning.

One of the main political actions that women clowns are engaging in the last ten years is the organization of festivals dedicated to visualize, promote and form female clowns. The main festivals of women clowns are the Festival de Pallasses de Andorra<sup>9</sup>, idealized by Catalan clown Pepa Plana. This festival was the first one dedicated to women, and had a total of five editions, held from 2001 to 2009. After this festival in Andorra, it was also developed: The festival *Esse Monte de Mulher Palhaça*<sup>10</sup>, in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, which started in 2005 and got its 4th edition in March 2012; the Women's International Clown Festival<sup>11</sup>, in Vienna, Austria, inaugurated in 2006, this festival celebrates its 4th edition in November 2012; the *Encontro de Palhaças*<sup>12</sup>, in Brasília, Brazil, counts with two editions, the last one held in 2010, and the *Palhaçaria, I Festival Internacional de Palhaças de Recife*, also in Brazil, inaugurates in September 2012. Also important to mention, is the circle *Very Important Women*<sup>13</sup>, a space dedicated for women comic artists, promoted by the cultural center *Almazen*, in Barcelona, Spain.

Another important political issue that marks contemporary female clowning is the increasing number of courses and workshops dedicated to develop women comic performances as clowns, as well as researches related to female clowning. In Brazil, we have the course *Estudos Práticos em Comicidade Feminina*<sup>14</sup>, offered by actress and clown Felícia de Castro, and the course *Qual é sua graça, palhaça?*, promoted by actress *Adelvane Néia*.

Besides festivals and courses, some researchers are starting to develop studies and registering the work of women clowns. The Brazilian clown *Michelle Silveira* has just inaugurated the first edition of the journal *Palhaçaria Feminina*, which presents and registers the work of eight-two women clowns from Brazil. Graduate students are also engaging in research about female clowning and women clowns. Some of them are the Brazilians *Sarah Monteath*, *Mariana Rabelo* and *Virginia Maria de Souza Namur*. This last one got the CAPES<sup>15</sup> prize for better PhD thesis in Arts, with her research about the Brazilian comedian *Dercy Gonçalves*<sup>16</sup>, intitled *Dercy Gonçalves: O Corpo Torto do Teatro Brasileiro*.<sup>17</sup>

In the last years, a new generation of women clowns started a kind of movement that seems to result in the consolidation of a differentiation of male dominant comicality. This seems to be reflected in the accent put on costumes and scenarios in general, which became more feminine, dominating the flowers, nature motifs, girls' ties, hearts and others stereotypes related to woman; the creation and development of a gestural comicality more delicate and less grotesque; the visibility, emphasis and exploration of woman's body; the told stories, more connected to women universe; and as told before, the courses and festivals of feminine comicality.

If in this process we can find a reinforcement of gender stereotypes, woman fixed identity and femininity; we also find parodies of woman roles and critical topics on female body and identity. The Australian

<sup>9</sup> <http://www.festivalpallasses.com/>

<sup>10</sup> <http://www.essemontedemulherpalhaca.com.br/2012/>

<sup>11</sup> <http://www.clownin.at/>

<sup>12</sup> <http://encompalhacas.wordpress.com/>

<sup>13</sup> <http://www.almazen.net/Almazen.net/>

<sup>14</sup> <http://palhacosparasempre.blogspot.com/>

<sup>15</sup> CAPES: Coordination of Improvement of Higher Education Personnel in Brazil.

<sup>16</sup> Although *Dercy* was closer to the buffoon comic type, a research about her as a Brazilian comedian indicates the actual interest in female comedy and women artistic transgression trough laughter.

<sup>17</sup> Title in English: *Dercy Gonçalves - A devious character of the Brazilian Theater*. Available in:

<http://pct.capes.gov.br/teses/2009/33003017059P0/TES.PDF>



mime and clown Nola Rae, for example, already deconstructed the gender in the eighties; with her solo sketch Nola's Nasty Mime. Spanish clown Virginia Imaz has at least two shows dedicated to female universe and women issues, like the shows *La Modelo Clowtrapublicitaria* and *Moléstias Clównicas*. American Laura Herts satirizes beauty stereotypes with her *Wow Woman Show!*, and Brazilian clown Ana Luísa Cardoso, in her solo show *Margarita vai à Luta!*, provides to the audience a very opened dramaturgy, through which is possible see alternatives femininities in female clown performance, ones that can go beyond the dominant constructions of female and male clown characters.

Women clowns emerge within a gender mark. Comedy and laughter has long been a male dominant territory, both in rituals, festivities, arts and theory. Women clowns, as women artists did and continue doing in visual arts, start to face historical omissions and cultural prohibitions related to women's creativity and their critical production inside comedy. But female clowning appears within a deeper complex dynamic of marginalization. A dynamic that historically marginalizes women clowns not just from circus, theater and performance art, but that marginalizes women clowns also in feminist art and theory.

Female clowning comes with a strong political potential to inquiry not just about gender and sexuality in the male clown world, but also to inquiry about laughter and comedy from a (post)feminist position. As Rowe (1995) points out, feminism has long been preoccupied with melodrama, leaving aside women's laughter and female comedy. Indeed, although feminist theorists use a wide range of comic categories such as grotesque, parody, abjection, irony and carnival, they did not take into account fundamentals relations between women and laughter, a task that women clowns invite to do both artistic and theoretically.

#### Gender and sexuality in the clown world

Besides the collaborative process between women clowns to promote female clowning through festivals and courses, it is possible to see a preoccupation with gender and sexuality inside the very forms of performances that are being developed by women. But although female clowns are increasingly gaining space in circus, theater and society, it is still observed some problems related to comedy made by women. Some of these problems are pointed by American French clown Laura Herts.

In an interview in 2007, Herts recognizes that discrimination actually improved greatly in recent years, but points out to the appellant machismo that still persists not only between artists, but in the general audience. Laura Herts reminds the exotic condition that still permeates the placing of women clowns in a mixed program of clowns. According to her, between several clowns of the same quality, people choose just few women to fulfill the program, to be politically correct. And talking about comic performances made by women, she adds:

The problem that up to now there have not been too many female clowns is because for women there is a very limited comic space, without falling into vulgarity. The female comic must make people laugh but moving like a juggler on a wire. There is a lot of prejudice by the public, and the field of action is minimal. The center of all problems is the shame related to sex, where all locks begin, both in actresses, and in the public. People are very puritanical and your words and gestures can fit very badly. People stop laughing and you have to take care. It's difficult. Sometimes I acted on the street, as a woman, and there are always the typical guys in the corner that look you in a certain way. One must know how to play with your own sex appeal to get around this. It's gonna take long way so that women clown may be accepted naturally. Have we come a long way when it can be accepted a Leo Bassi or Jango Edwards, as women, although they'll have another personality. Women that express themselves as they want and don't have to be so depending on



the public, and are even able to insult, theatrically, the public. That's exactly what I do now, breaking down barriers, and risking...I try it and I do it. (Herts, 2007) <sup>18</sup>

In a text called *Palhaças, Bem Vindas sois Vós!*<sup>19</sup>, Felicia de Castro explains that one of the great difficulties in the development of women performance as clowns is the lack of referents, because clown constitutes a male archetype. The Brazilian actress and researcher believes that this is reflected on the themes commonly explored, as well as on corporal expression, movements, gags and jokes. "While men explore shamelessly the grotesque and obscenity, which are part of a symbolic ancestral repertoire, women explore more the delicacy, fearing to fall into vulgarity." (Castro, F., 2010)<sup>20</sup>

The problematic related to sex is also pointed by actress Franca Rame (in Fo, 2004), wife of Italian actor and author Dario Fo. Rame tells us about the dilemmas of clown actresses related to sexuality. For her, while some women exaggerate in the eroticism, to prove and show they are disinhibited, other ones override completely the sexual component in their performances. The Italian actress seems to be very radical when the issue is female clowning. For Rame, women clowns should represent a feminine character and explores their female condition as clowns.

The transvestism of women as clowns represents a very important issue that should be comprehended in a complex way. There are a lot of women whose clown characters are a male type, some of them: The Brazilians clowns Angela de Castro<sup>21</sup> (O Souza) and Yeda Dantas<sup>22</sup> (Doutor Giramundo) are examples of pioneering women clowns in Brazil who developed male types. And the actresses of the company *The Business*<sup>23</sup>, from Australia, are all of them male types: Glynis Angel (Ray), Kate Kantor (Paul), Penny Baron (Barry) and Clare Bartolomew (Pierre).

The Brazilian researcher Alice Viveiros de Castro explains that it is a very personal decision to develop or not a male clown type, and that it is very common for a woman to find a male character while searching for her comic personae.

Many women, when they begin to search their clown, they encounter a male type. A very normal fact, easily explained in a world still so dominated by men, and where men references are so abundant and strong. (...) When searching for her comic persona, it is very likely for a woman to see emerge a very strong masculine type, and the acceptance and decision to develop it is very personal, intimate, and that should not claim neither criticism nor interpretation or judgment. (Castro, A. V., 2005, p. 222)<sup>24</sup>

Indeed, if women clowns should have the obligation to prove their female condition, that would presuppose a universal condition, biologically determined by sex in an ahistorical and universal female identity, a woman without specific ethnic, geographic, socio-cultural, economic and sexual differentiation. Without proper attention to a historical, cultural and localized sense of laughter and comedy, the discourse of some women clowns is printed in a patriarchal regulation as severe as that imposed by patriarchal comedy, that legitimizes, values and gives visibility to only a small part of the comic world, one of the clowns, and by that I mean male clowning, male laughter and hegemonic comic masculinity.

Judith Halberstam (1988) explains that, as well as femininity exists without women, masculinity also exists without men. According to her, female masculinity can perform alternatives masculinities which not

<sup>18</sup> Original text in Spanish. Present translation to English made by the author.

<sup>19</sup> A possible translation could be *Welcome Women Clowns!*

<sup>20</sup> Original text in Portuguese. Present translation to English made by the author.

<sup>21</sup> Angela de Castro leaves today in London, where she manages and teaches clowning in *The Why Not Institute*: <http://www.thewhynotinstitute.com/>

<sup>22</sup> Yeda Dantas is the founder of the carnival block *Gigantes da Lira*, a traditional one made for kids in Rio de Janeiro: <http://www.gigantesdalira.com.br/>

<sup>23</sup> <http://www.thebusiness.net.au/>

<sup>24</sup> Original text in Portuguese. Present translation to English made by the author.

necessarily reinforce dominant masculinity. Unlike, female masculinity also may represent a place of contestation of both dominant femininity and masculinity, indicating others desires that do not fit in the heterosexual and heteronormative one.

The clown character has long been associated with the performer's own personality. While actors interpret roles created by an author, clown develops its character based on the physical and psychological characteristics of the performer. (Burnier, 2001; Bolognesi, 2003; Caminha, 2006; Peacock, 2009) This particularity, the most pointed by clowns to explain the differences between a clown and a comic actor, became stronger in the last decades. Therefore, clown circus figure was definitely appropriated by theater schools as a kind of discipline for the actor's technical training and personal development. Some of the schools and theater groups which inherited this principle of clown pedagogy came from students of French actor and director Jacques Lecoq. For Lecoq (2009), clown character is based on the performer's own personality, physical body and subjectivity.

This belief in a clown character that should be loyal to the truth of the self leads some artists to an unproblematic searching process of comic identity, that deals with complex structures of subjectivities. Several clown teachers all around the world inherited this personal or psychological clown as the main clown pedagogy not just for actors' technical training in theater schools, but also as clown therapy and empowerment tool in diverse programs of social intervention, including some dealing with the development of female clowning.

In this sense, female clowning brings to comedy new and complex problematic, related to comic identity and subjectivity construction mediated by clown pedagogy and gender identity politics. While some teachers seem to encourage students' searching for a woman clown with feminine essence, others engage in the development of a more flexible comic identity. Thus, clown dominant femininity and masculinity needs to start being objects of inquiring, so that female clowning can provide a more powerful experience on critical performance, pedagogy and politics.

Women clowns also invite the study of historic exclusion and omission of women in laughter and carnival social practices, aesthetics and theories. As some feminists remind us (Russo, 1995; Rowe, 1995), comic social theories based on the category of carnival, such as Bakhtin's (2002), fail to incorporate gender social relations in its approach.

Russo tells us that feminists question the utopian discourse of carnival in what it, for being inside a dominant culture, brings of danger and violence especially experienced by women and others excluded groups. Pointing out limitations of theories such as Bakhtin's, which uses the metaphor of the pregnant old witch to draw the ambivalence of the symbols of the realism grotesque, Russo explains:

But, for the feminist reader, this image of the pregnant witch is more than ambivalent. It has all the connotation of fear and aversion about the biological processes of reproduction and getting old. Bakhtin, as others social theorists of nineteenth and twentieth centuries, fails to recognize and incorporate gender social relations in his semiotic model of politics of the body, therefore, his notion of Female Grotesque keeps repressed and sub developed in all senses. (Russo, 1995, p. 80)<sup>25</sup>

Violence, misogyny, machismo and prejudices against female clowning and women comedians in their diversity are important issues that claim for a critical inquiry and research in the fields of comedy, visual culture and art education. Gender and sexuality have long been used to prohibit and marginalize women in taking part in the aesthetics and politics of laughter and comedy. The contemporary female clowning movement that women have been promoting in the last years comes to reveal a continuous and systematically oppression suffered by lot of women round the world, the one of being put aside of the power of laughing.

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<sup>25</sup> English translation by the autor, from the Brazilian edition of 1995.



## Conclusions

Woman clown emerges within a gender mark. Clown, by itself, indicates a male archetype, and that still seems to be the general imaginary of audiences all over America and Europe, where modern circus had spread since eighteenth century.

As women artists, that have long been fighting to show no official History of Art, women clowns have been fighting to visualize, promote and consolidate their place in the clown world. But as some feminists, as Griselda Pollock (1988), reminds us, women artists should speak not just of including and adding women artists in the patriarchal tradition of History of Art. For her, women should better speak of feminist interventions in the official History of Art. That would mean more than consider women as artists according to male aesthetic rules and norms. It would mean to deconstruct and get a critical production about the modern fundamentals of Art and its misogynists' categories, prejudices and omissions.

I think the same project is up to be made by women clowns. To get a critical production, both artistic and theoretical, about the fundamentals of comedy, laughter and humor, is something necessary. Not just clown constitutes a male archetype, but all the contemporary literature on comedy, laughter and humor were most of them made by men, with gender questions being systematically hidden and forgotten<sup>26</sup>.

To write a part of women clowns history, their lives and works, it's necessary not as a way to add material to an already existent official history, within the methodological, ontological and epistemological approaches of modern history. But primary, as a way to understand clowning history as a gendered one, marked by social processes of sexual difference and gender construction. As Pollock (1998) reminds us, when she deals with feminists interventions in the History of Art, the question is not just about rescuing references and dates about life and work of women artists; the question should also include a deconstruction of History of Art discourses and practices – in the case of visual women artists -, and a clowning history deconstruction, in the case of women clowns and comedians.

Thus, to write genealogies of female comic performance is a complex task. Although the word clown indicates a very specific research focus, and although female clown is a very recent figure in circus and theater history, a deep approach of this theme should pass for a complex social and historic inquiry that question why woman clown came too late to be an artistic and political comic type. This inquiry should pass also for the cataloguing of female comic types that do not fit in the female clown aesthetics, but that save similar strategies of laughing and parody practices, as female buffoons and drag kings, for example, and which are so important to problematize the categories of woman and femininity in the clown world.

It is also important to remind that clown and female clowning constitutes a Eurocentric archetype, a very symbol of white laughter and comicality. Black and Indian laughter, as well as Oriental laughter and comicality have each ones their singularities that should not be put into the same box under a universal presupposition about laughter properties and principles. Indeed, clown performers and theorists tend to consider laughing and clowning a universal cultural expression. In this process, much of the localized laughing practices and principles are obscured or misunderstood by Eurocentric clowns, these ones getting to fix a dominant and hegemonic imaginary about comicality and laughter.

To analyze female clown figure should include, thus, a comprehension of the category of woman as a comic local subject, as a person able to laugh and promote laughing, what demands, between other properties, power concession and power appropriation to make the ridicule and recognize the personal

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<sup>26</sup>One of the few studies about gender social relations and carnival was the one made by Nathalie Davis. In her article *Women on Top*, Davis (1978) explores the sexual symbolic inversion in early modern Europe, bringing examples of how and when women had been on top on arts, literature, social rituals and popular festivities. Rowe (1995) also analyses the category of women on top in some contemporary television shows and popular media.



ridiculous; to present publicly as grotesque, deformed, ridiculous, wrong and mistaken; to feel liberty and pleasure in the dissidence, in chaos and play; to make the otherness a place of subversive and productive pleasure; to move from a laughter object-object position to an active subject position, a creative and productive one; to go beyond the shaming and ironic smile, to get the total laughter, joyfully incorporated and conveyed through the body.

To construct genealogies of women as comic subjects, besides placing comicality inside a gender and sexuality approach, also inquiry about the dynamics of marginalization that operate in the practices and studies of visual arts and theater, cinema and performance, related to the laughing and laughable woman, as a comic object and subject of laughter. The woman clown as an eccentric type not just in the clown world, but in arts in general, and feminist art and theory in particular.

Women clowns find themselves placed in a complex dynamic of marginality, both in the artistic and aesthetic realm as in the social one. For women it was not given the right to laugh and make laugh. Women have long been deprived to laugh, to make people laugh and to invert the social sexual order as men did. As well as rationality and seriousness had been long a privilege of men in art, religion and science, also laughter and comicality had long been a patriarchal tradition, not just in the artistic field, but also in the intellectual realm and everyday social life.

Laughter, as it has been theorized by diverse philosophers since Aristotle, is an element constitutive of human being. Such philosophers tell us that animals cannot laugh. Just mankind has this capacity, propitiated by its physical, biological and social body. Laughter and comicality had been constructed as theoretical and practical spaces about men freedom, but the male one, in their patriarchal humanity, modern and Illustrated. For men had been given the power to construct and impose the norm, as well as to free themselves through laughter. For women was left only the right to contemplate the contradictions of the patriarch: his seriousness and dignity at home, in the home private space, and his profanity, libertine and ridiculous side in the streets.

Private and public dichotomy - that some feminists reveal as a fundamental category to understand heterosexuality -, also seems to have operated with laughter and humor, as soon as these were related with the ideals of freedom of bourgeois men and modern artist. This does not mean to affirm that bourgeois women have always been serious and did not laugh at all, but that these joyful acts and ironic subversion for long probably had been kept restricts to women relations in domestic spaces, mother and children relations and in popular festivities such as carnival. In this sense, it is interesting to imagine the domestic space as a place of prohibited laughter, a space where women had some liberty to play with themselves, tell jokes and secrets fulfilled with joy and irony, without the presence of man who was husband, boss and home leader.

To write genealogies implies to inquiry about origins, omissions, indifferences, visibilities and invisibilities processes. Therefore, one of the main topics to write genealogies of female clowning and their performances leads to the question that long before was formulated by some feminists to talk about the absence of "great women artists" in the History of Art. Following Pollock (1998), I am trying to think about the absence of women clowns or female comic subject in art and life, through the figure of the flâneur or modern artist. As this author explains, the modernist paradigm dominant in the History of Art was constructed based in concepts such as artist, genius and creativity. All of them fabricated according to a process of sexual differentiation, by which to women was given domestic and maternal labor inside home, while men was given the public life. In this sense, it is also possible to think private life as the place of seriousness and monotony of everyday life activities, while the outside streets presented diverse scenarios to move, including the scenarios of bohemia, parties, entertainment, fantasy and carnival. All these scenarios related to the construction of identity of bourgeois man and modern artist as well.

Modern clown figure was constructed in consonance with the figure of modern artist, its myths and ideals. That also explains why modern clown was one of the great motifs that served as inspiration for modern artists, musicians and writers, many of them having told that clown was one of the very symbols of





freedom and fantasy. This relation of clown with modern artist, which had being drawing since eighteenth century, allows women clowns to deconstruct the clown world by the same tools as some feminists deconstructed the myth of the artist.

Taking into account feminist contributions on arts and theory, my thesis project is right now engaging not only in the written of women clowns specific stories and genealogies, but also in a critical production that can inquiry how women construct themselves as women clowns, how they place themselves in circus, theater and social work and what are their political and pedagogical potential to inquiry about gender and sexual politics trough laughter and comedy.

Thus, to place women in the clown world means more than register their life and work as women clowns. To place female clowning means to visualize, to legitimize and to recognize female clowning, writing stories about the life and work of women clowns. But it is also important to promote pedagogical spaces to develop female sense of parody, comedy and clowning as critical practices. But the other main problematic related to gender and sexual politics trough clowning and comedy should include the understanding of clowns as modern artists, so as to deconstruct modernist assumptions on clowning and humanistic laughter; to analyze the specificities of women as comic subjects under historical and social constructions on gender and sexual difference, as well as differences on class and ethnics.

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## Curating the critical mediation

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### Abstract)

For the last five or more decades too many ideas have become rules. Art as science brought along some needs, like special roles to play by individuals. These roles set an out growing number of specialists defining right and wrong in art and its mediation. Actually creating mediation where there was none. Curators in the 60's and 70's, according to Obrist, developed an important role in arts as they were naming artist and somehow arts, overhauling the boundaries among artists, critics and art keepers. These very same curators set a way of mediating spectator and exhibitions, which is more than understandable; however it was the beginning, again, of setting rights and wrongs. The mediation processes gained a new direction – or not so new one – establishing ways of interpreting art.

About the mediation process, it is commonly confused with the curating process. It is very expected to have, in a museum or an art event the curators team working, supposedly, along with the pedagogical team. A good example is the team created for the last 'bienal do mercosul' in which was created a team of pedagogical curators that tried to minimize this distance between impressions and speeches. Part of the success was the 'casa m' a house where anything was possible, where the mediation was minimum. This essay is the first part of a major research in curatorship in new media art, therefore this paper should pin point mediation as part of the curatorship.

### Key words

Curation, Mediation, Contemporary Art, Media Art, Interactivity

### Through time

Polemics around curating, the professionals and their functions is still overwhelming, especially when it comes to the way it has been developed without a proper characterization or even an orientation. Obrist was not the first one trying to clarify the subject, though nowadays he is a reference to be considered.

The process itself goes far back to the Cabinet of Curiosities from the European Renaissance, mixing several types of objects with antics and art pieces, wherein the curator had the solely function to keep and conserve for later exhibition. This function however evolved or was at least embedded of new responsibilities. Nowadays the curator is, most of the time, responsible for an aesthetical, conceptual, didactical and why not authorial point of view. In the wake of authorship arise a number of curator modalities. This generates questions and experiments. Artists starts their own curating – Ricardo Basbaum's Etc.- Artists – either for refusals on major expositions, like the Salon des Refusés of 1863, or for trying to emphasize the independent characteristics of the pieces. However it is in the sixties that the role of the curator more similar to the known nowadays was forged. In A Brief History of Curating, Obrist interviews ten curators who thinks and acts distinctively, gathering certain peculiarities to the action of curating that confuses even more the role or function expected to be performed by the one in charge of.

‘Thus, how is the position of curator supposed to be defined? John Cage said that curating should be a “public service”; when I talked to Walter Hopps, he quoted Duchamp: a curator should not stand in the way. Félix Fénéon used to say that the curator should be like a pedestrian bridge (...)’ – Obrist (2010, p.219)

That said, remains a question still: Is there an absolute definition for the role of the curator? According to several Obrist’s contemporaries authors, as Carin Kuoni, Ulo Oguibe, Ute Tischler e Cristoph Tannert, there is an enlargement of the function originated from the marketing actions now perpetrated inside museums, galleries and exhibition halls. Oguibe (2004, pp. 6-17) categorizes curatorship into four distinctive practices, naming them very adequately; bureaucrat-curator the one who acts like a manager; connaisseur-curator who acts like an enthusiastic art-collector; cultural-broker-curator who ends up dealing and managing everything as a marketer; and the facilitator which by the definition is the one with a closer approach to the idealized curator. In general it is expected that beyond the tasks already set like catalogs, exhibition and the course, it is up to the curator, quite often actually, fundraising, administration and onlending of funds not mentioning the time administration of it all. But once again, all of this does not set rules; it just points solutions accordingly to the dictates of the market. These trends are easily observed on the so-called blockbusters, which carry their own curator, responsible for total accomplishment.

‘Contemporary curators create and contribute to public dialogues about ideas and art strategies that address the world in all its complexities. They also create opportunities for artists. The curator’s work is derived in large part from the practice and production of visual artists, but she/he can also draw on intellectual and creative contributions from other disciplines in the arts and from many other areas of exploration in society.’ Love (2010, p. 5)

Nevertheless, a romantic (!) view wherein the curator is the one who plans the pieces selection, sets the dialogs among the artworks as well as among the artists, finds the exact point of mediation developing an unique and yet captivating language, not only for the catalogue but also for the visitors, establishes the goals for the visitation and hits everyone’s interests... still persists pattern superficial thoughts about the subject.

## Education

The project started discussing the ways to see new media art within a curatorial parameter, often confusing the specific functions of mediation and curating. For this matter it is understood that curating is a way of mediation, therefore taken as two different functions with specific goals inside a bigger proposal. However not excluding each other, i.e. both need to communicate and engage. Mediation was then the beginning of the investigation, although informally. The primary results, though requiring further development, show an abyss between the ones involved in curatorship, described previously, and the ones facing the public in the mediation. For mediation being heavily involved in the momentum of the visitation, it is, therefore, more attached to the public expectations, compromising the curatorial strategy set, villainizing, quite often, the curator, complexifying a dialogue inherently critical or even didactical.

Recurrent theme has been the pedagogical curatorship, wherein mediators work closely to the curating team. A good example was the 8th Mercosul Biennial, in which Pablo Helguera, pedagogical curator, along with a team of curators [The team was formed by José Roca – general curator; Pablo Helguera – pedagogical curator; Aracy Amaral – invited curator; Cauê Alves, Alexia Tala and Paola Santoscoy – deputy trustees; and Fernanda Albuquerque – Assistant Curator] sought to get even closer to the mediators in the most didactical way possible, creating approaching tactics for shortening the mediator speech. A critical mediation! The biennial case, resulted on the release of a book – Pedagogy in the Expanded Field – where critic-pedagogical curating is presented as a pedagogical methodology, making it clear, even in the interviews presented, the curatorial research characterization.

However it was very easy to realize the distance between the teams. At the closure of the 8th Biennial, on November 12th of 2011, there was the International Seminar Pedagogy on the Expanded Field, wherein among lots of thanks and remembrances, Aracy Amaral made a reference to the mediators saying that the moment was not about curators but about mediators, for they were responsible for the exhibition, for creating a real dialogue from the research to the established, then to the worked upon and finally to the public. At the end of her speech there was ovation and some negative comments at the same time; complaints about work condition, conflicts of interest and over all egos.

A constant saying in the battle between mediator and curators is that 'the curator, for being an intellectual, highly specialized, does not realize that the public is, most of the time, different from them' [Mediator at 'Museu da Língua Portuguesa', personally interviewed. It is suitable here an explanation. The interview was a single question asked to several professionals and researchers on art that at least is in contact with contemporary art, mediation, art-education or curatorship. The goal of this interview came quite in handy with this paper even if it was not the initial idea. The question was: How can we define contemporary curatorship if we still mediate as proto-modernists? Or curatorship and mediation are independents from each other?] The idea of critical mediation must be very clear in this situation for it deals different aspects of the same goal.

### Critical Mediation?

When comparing mediation to interface [Following the definition that interfaces are the exact point where two systems, subjects, organization etc, gets together and interact between each other.], a reference to the Museum as interface of Martin Grossmann (2011) raises up a wider view of mediation possibilities. Therefore on the academic environment, according to the Psychologist Lev Vygotsky, mediation is a way of sharing a determinate content with an interested group of common backgrounds, aiming the construction of knowledge through a repertoire minimally known.

'Human learning presupposes a specific social nature and process by which children grow into the intellectual life of those around them.' (Vygotsky, 1991:88) Therefore it is expected that in a process of mediation there is a minimum understanding of the language until the subject itself to be mediated.

The journey of knowledge mentioned above corroborates with the complex thought, forming a dome of pre-existing know-how, verging on pre-established concepts – and why not prejudices? – but this is the dawn of a critical thought that emerges from the existent and new ones, transforming or at least troubling the status quo. It is then very often, the term critics as pejorative.

Elaborating a little further the idea of mediation along to the teaching process, reinforcing critical mediation, it is possible to realize the a problematization that strengthens itself in the pragmatic romanticism of an outdated conception, the tiering between master and pupil, wherein the stigma of mediation relies solely on a teacher-figure. The idea of interface is then established inadequately, where a full translation is done without margins for interpretations.

According to Janaina Melo, on her mediation on Bruguera and Camnitzer during the debate at Panoramas do Sul – Art as terrain for citizen formation, it is essential the absence of tiering in this learning process. A simple and instigating relation between the public and the mediator is a must. The critical thought arises from the disquiet and from the questioning, not only from the answers obtained (2011).

Experimenting and challenging of the repertoire was part of the mediation on the 8th Biennial of Mercosul, as explained during the seminar Pedagogy on the Expanded Field, what resulted in the transformation of many experiments into successful results. Taking the biennial as an example one can realize that the critical experience was about the reality of the public. It was stipulated that the mediators should stimulate, the most possible, the integration of the public towards their own references, creating an experimental field for understanding the artwork and all of its influence. It is obvious that every



experiment results in unique situation, however the matter of an educational curatorial program based upon pedagogical practices overthrowing the divergence between art and education.

Following on Vergara's (2011:pp. 57-60) proposal, the three times – piece, artist and public – is part of critical mediation, which demands a self-repertoire to establish a conscience of the look. The position of a critical mediator becomes even more complicated, because, in the words of Milene Chiovato (2011:p62) 'to be mediator is to be in between (...) because he is responsible for helping during the process of significance of the contents' (sic).

With this in mind, one must understand that the critics process is to set dialogical parameters that encourage and instructs a thinking way rich in possibilities and facts enabling significance in multiple angles, not excluding the conceptual nor poetical potentiality.

It is important to reinforce, though, that seeing significance is part of the self-understanding (enjoyment) and not of the mediation, because interpretation is personal and therefore must not suffer interferences of a trendy or preconceived repertoire, it should only be presented to different paths.

Boldly, it is possible to affirm that a critical mediation is an interface where the translation takes place on multiple choices, without rights or wrongs, just choices. Maybe, romantically – conservative – one can explain critical mediation as the act of questioning and complexifying aesthetical pleasure, leading to a contextualization of the trilogy piece-artist-public by a real experimentation.

Regarding a possible question this whole argument my have placed, if every mediation is critical, the answer is NO! There are a lot yet to be discussed, treated, modified or even understood, specially when it comes to pedagogy in the universe of arts, for that mediation is effectively critical. There is still an huge gap between academy and the art institutions.

Maybe it is too much to expect that the visitor will be able to have a real aesthetic experience without the guidance of a mediator that leads him towards the lights of art.

Maybe what lacks is an acceptance by the institutions that the experience might happen in a non-programmed way, which will grant new perceptions outside the sacred space of art. The actual spaces also contribute for a distant mediation, for a less deep experimentation.

It is also possible that critical mediation should be possible only for the expressions that came after modernism. Perhaps this is the picture of a reality wherein modern man can perceive his own knowledge – or lack of – as a way of growing, of expanding their acting field and to perpetuate the concept of the influence circle of the social atmosphere only takes place with experimentation.

## Spaces

After this many maybes and perhaps and towards new medium appropriated by the arts, wouldn't it require a new way of thinking the curatorial process?

Once one returns to the basis of space, of architecture, and to the foundations of the white cube, one obtains the notion of temple to the masterpiece, isolating it from any interference, allowing free observation. From this point on some queries come up, because quite often, new media art requires an approach, an intervention or interaction.

The conception of museums as thought traditionally is already in review.

'A museum is a non-profit, permanent institution in the service of society and its development, open to the public, which acquires, conserves, researches, communicates and exhibits the tangible and intangible heritage of humanity and its environment for the purposes of education, study and enjoyment.' ICOM (2007)





This definition is still related to perpetuation by collecting as raised previously. There is also a more poetic version of the Brazilian Institute of Museums that states:

‘Museums are houses that keep and display dreams, feelings, thoughts and intuitions that gain bodies via images, colors, sounds and shapes. Museums are bridges, doors and windows that connect and disconnect realms, times, cultures and different people. Museums are concepts and practices in metamorphosis.’(sic)

The challenge of the temple of the muses grow continuously and it is not just a rhetoric to be discussed and kept as it is, it must also inquire utility beyond shape, especially when facing the advents of digital characteristics and the changes it requests.

‘Museums are about real estate — who owns it, who controls it, who shares it, who is allowed in but not made to feel welcome. Anyone who has ever worked inside a museum, particularly on an exhibition, recognizes this essential territoriality.... Metaphorically, that is where the virtual museum also resides — squeezed between publications, collections management and education, living on borrowed real estate.’ — Thomas (2010:192)

As artistic spaces expand widely and constantly the distance between mediation and curating winds up shortening or even disappearing. In a dynamic space as Internet, webart wipes this distance. According to the portuguese researcher Inês Albuquerque (2011) ‘to mediate the access to the artwork is something that might happen without a person thinking this mediation if we refer to the environment of the network’ [Personal interview]. Once stumbling upon digital interfaces and even technological devices one can understand from there the mediation process, for there is a dialogue between artwork, organization and public. However the matter of that being pedagogical or not will depend directly on the artist/curator who forcefully must have thought about the independent mediation that would occur. Inês (2011) also brilliantly brings up another approach that is already a fact:

‘The user may become a mediator of artistic experiences, disseminating the information presented as relevant and even proposes new ways of reading this same artistic information. With the development of different roles for those involved in the artistic process, these are necessarily work, public artist, but acquire different characteristics that enables one to rethink this context’

## Conclusion

This paper, as mentioned initially, aims to respond no question so far, but making another ones. Although, after all the facts here exposed remains a question, that actually appeared during the interviews that could be responded. Is it necessary do establish a contemporary curatorship? The answer is YES! If society adapts itself consistently and the learning curve is adequate and if the spaces expand, then it is essential to update and match with the contemporaneity all the dialogues of interpretations, as well as all the methodology concerned.

New media art is now and is happening right now therefore it demands a different thinking. A way out of the white cube, out of the temple of the muses and even out from the collectors. Though it is hard to foresee all theses possibilities from within the actual system.

This is the problematization of a project that aims to establish a curatorial thinking for this new media art. Is it possible to set new parameters for a different thinking? It worth trying!

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## The Bank of Cyprus Cultural Foundation 20 Years of Educational Activity

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### Abstract

From as far back as the dawn of its foundation, in 1984, the Bank of Cyprus Cultural Foundation has been well aware of the significance of educational programmes as a basic means of initiating young people into culture, history and artistic creation. Therefore, it is only natural that the development and implementation of such programmes make part of its solid policy.

A long series of educational programmes has been carried out since 1994. Either organized in the context of periodical exhibitions or incorporated in the activities of the Foundation's two Museums – the Museum of the History of Cypriot Coinage and the Archaeological Museum of George and Nefeli Giabra Pierides (a collection donated by Solon and Clio Triantafyllides) – these programmes continue to enrich the Cultural Foundation's educational activity. All of them have been implemented upon the approval of the Ministry of Education and Culture, to which we are grateful for the unwavering support.

Such programmes are ultimately intended to cultivate a kind of education that is essential, and firmly based on the foundations of our cultural tradition – whilst being open to the contemporary world, modern technology and present-day forms of creativity.

### Educational activities of the BOCCE Museums

The Cultural Foundation's two Museums have been designed according to modern museological specifications, wherein not only researchers but also the wider public takes center stage. What is more, the use of new technology has enabled the Cultural Foundation to create innovative multimedia productions that are accessible both on the grounds of the Museum and on the Internet.

#### Museum of the History of Cypriot Coinage

The Museum's educational programmes have been running uninterrupted since its foundation in 1995. Meant to stimulate children's interest in coins, they approach coinage through a variety of themes, such as history, mythology, and art, but also explore their use as means of transaction.

#### The George and Nefeli Giabra Pierides Archaeological Museum

The general title of the educational programme is "The dancing statue" and features three different sub-programmes. The programmes aim for children to become acquainted with specimens of Ancient Cypriot Art by recognizing appealing shapes, sketches and forms they can identify with and which allow them to eventually grasp the common thread that runs through the island's history.

### Educational activity in periodical exhibitions

The Cultural Foundation has to date organized more than 45 exhibitions in Cyprus, Greece and other European cities. For the most part, these exhibitions touch on historical, artistic and environmental themes. In Cyprus, periodical exhibitions are always complemented by special educational programmes, which have been proven very popular among thousands of youth and children of Elementary and Secondary Education.

### Key words

Bank, Cultural, Education, Cyprus

### The Bank of Cyprus Cultural Foundation

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The Bank of Cyprus Cultural Foundation was established in 1984 by the Bank of Cyprus (founded 1899). The projects and activities undertaken by the Foundation concern the archaeology, history, art and literature of Cyprus and, more generally, the island's cultural and natural heritage. The Cultural Foundation is a non-profit making organization, governed by its own statutes and administered by an independent Board.



The Cultural Foundation is housed in the old administrative building of the Bank of Cyprus, which was built in 1936 and is situated in the historical center of Nicosia near Phaneromeni Church.

The Cultural Foundation maintains today:



- Six collections the Numismatic Collection, Map Collection, Manuscripts and Rare Books Collection, Engravings, Old Photographs and Watercolours Collection, the Collection of Cypriot Antiquities, and the Collection of Contemporary Cypriot Art. Each collection is linked to a long-term programme which includes research, publications, educational programmes, specialised lectures, seminars, temporary and permanent exhibitions.



- Two museums: the Museum of the History of Cypriot Coinage and the Archaeological Museum of the George and Nefeli Giabra Pierides Collection (donated by Clio and Solon Triantafyllides).



The Cultural Foundation Collections have been enriched over the years by a number of donations: In 2008, by the archive of photographs of Manuel Baud-Bovy and Aristeia Tzanou Baud-Bovy, in 1999, by the Archaeological Collection of George and Nefeli Giabra Pierides, donated by Clio and Solon Triantafyllides, in 1993, by the Map Collection of Antonakis and Laura Georgiades, in 1988, by the Map Collection of Mikis and Agnes Michaelides, in 1987, by fifty-one of Elektra Megaw's watercolours under the general theme "Wildflowers of Cyprus".



The Foundation periodically organises exhibitions, lectures and scientific conferences devoted to these areas. In addition to the above, the Cultural Foundation has expanded its activities overseas, collaborating closely with major organisations and museums, both in Cyprus and abroad. The Foundation has organized more than 45 exhibitions; in a number of European cities and in February 2000 it opened a branch in Greece

The Cultural Foundation has developed a significant publishing programme and has to date published more than 220 books and folios, each serving to enrich the bibliography of Cyprus and furthering research in the fields of Cypriot archaeology, art, cartography, history, numismatics and literature, including literature for children and young adults. The Cultural Foundation also publishes exhibition catalogues, guides to archaeological sites and Byzantine monuments, publications on the environment, as well as CDs and video productions.

The Cultural Foundation very early has showed a special interest on the education of school children. The Cultural Foundation was among the first institutions in the island to implement a consistent and multidimensional programme, by means of specialised educational programmes, workshops, multimedia productions, sponsorships, competitions and donations.





The educational programmes are being organised for both museums, and temporary exhibitions, during school hours and always in coordination with the Ministry of Education and Culture. By 2011 more than 75.000 students have participated in the programmes.

The educational programmes of the Museum of the History of Cypriot Coinage will be presented by Eleni Zapiti, the Curator of the Museum and of the Archaeological Museum of the George and Nefeli Giabra Pierides Collection as well as of other art exhibitions by Maria Loizidou, Artist, associate of the Foundation. The programmes of the temporary exhibitions will be presented by the Curator of Collections Christodoulos Hadjichristodoulou.

The Cultural Foundation gives also special interest on the use of advanced technologies to the presentation of its Museums and exhibitions. Over the last ten years we have created five interactive programmes: For the Museum of the History of Cypriot Coinage the programmes: "From electron to Euro" and the game OPSYS, for the Archaeological Museum of the George and Nefeli Giabra Pierides Collection, the Archaeological Explorer SPYRA and two other interactive programmes for the exhibitions "Aromatic and Spicy plans in Cyprus" and "110 moments in our History".

The Cultural Foundation since its establishment in 1984 sponsors the annual literary competition of the Cypriot Association of Children's and Young Adults' Books. More than sixty works have being granted with awards and appraisals. Since 2000 the Cultural Foundation undertakes the editing and publishing of the awarded work while since 2002 it announces an annual Illustration Competition for the awarded book.

The Bank of Cyprus Cultural Foundation has been the sponsor of the Pancyprrian School Competition of Contemporary Theatre and Ancient Drama in memory of Panayiotis Serghis for the past fifteen years, thus enhancing its own contribution to education. The competition is organised in memory of Panayiotis Serghis, who served as founding member of the Cultural Foundation Board who has also greatly supported this annual event. The Competition is organised by the Ministry of Education and Culture and by the Cyprus Theatre Organisation.

As part of its overall contribution to education, the Cultural Foundation donates each year part of its publications and digital productions to primary and secondary education schools. In 2011 a publication on the environment and a DVD presenting the history of Cyprus and of the Bank of Cyprus for the last 110 years were donated.

Both Cypriot and foreign institutions have recognized the incessant, multifaceted activities of the Cultural Foundation. Some of the awards garnered by the Foundation are indicative of its recognition: The Republic of Cyprus "Archaeology Award" (2008); Benaki Museum (2007); The Historical and Ethnological Society of Greece (1991); The International Map Collectors' Society – IMCoS (1990).

Educational programmes pertaining to the periodical exhibitions of the Bank of Cyprus Cultural Foundation from 1995 to the present day

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In the framework of its various periodical exhibitions, the Bank of Cyprus Cultural Foundation has launched a series of educational programmes, each corresponding to a different event. These programmes, addressed to students of primary and secondary education, aim at enriching their knowledge and imbuing them with specific elements of culture bound to prove useful in course of their lives. Apart from educational workbooks, participants are offered memorabilia connected with each different event, or participation certificates.



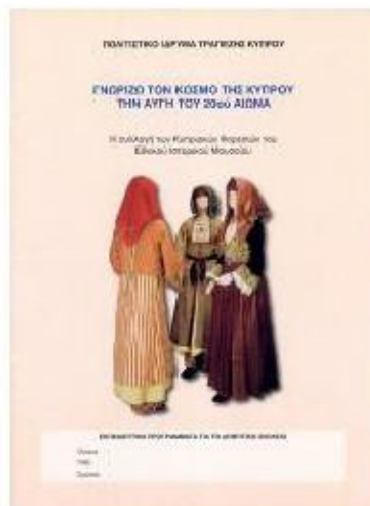
In March 1991, in the context of the exhibition entitled “Relics of the 1821 Greek Revolution”, organized in Nicosia by the Bank of Cyprus Cultural Foundation and the Historical and Ethnological Society of Greece, a series of educational visits to the exhibition took place. Students had the opportunity to delve into the history of the Greek revolution and observe significant relics, which belonged to the heroes of 1821. The impressions gained by the students in their tour around the exhibition were nothing short of soul stirring!



In 1995, forming part of “The Jewelry in Greek traditional costumes of the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries” exhibition was the educational programme “A journey into the wonderful world of traditional jewelry from Pontus to Cyprus”, addressed to primary education pupils. The programme ran for the duration of the exhibition, which was jointly organized by the Historical and Ethnological Society of Greece and the Bank of Cyprus Cultural Foundation, between 1 March and 14 April 1995.

Lefki Michaelidou, then Head of Educational Programmes, edited the workbook. Students were given a 24-pages workbook with texts supplemented by pictures, exercises and drawings, but also games such as a crossword and a word search, and a Glossary, and were asked to answer questions and identify jewelry from various parts of Hellenism.

In 1998, the large exhibition “Queen in the East, Regina in the West” was jointly organized in Nicosia by the Bank of Cyprus Cultural Foundation, the Greek Ministry of Culture, the Museum of Byzantine Culture in Salonika and the Nicosia Municipal Arts Center in collaboration with the Pierides Museum of Contemporary Art, between 23 March and 17 May 1998. In the context of this exhibition, the homonymous educational programme was launched for high school students. The workbook was divided in two parts. The first part included short texts on the history and civilization of Cyprus in Byzantine and Post-Byzantine years, and a chronological table, whilst the second part featured exercises that the students were invited to solve, by observing specific exhibits. The workbook was enriched by selected bibliography and a Glossary to facilitate the understanding of terms. At the end of the programme, students were offered a Certificate of Participation.



Two years later, in 2000, the Bank of Cyprus Cultural Foundation and the Greek National Historical Museum between 11 May and 28 October jointly organized a magnificent exhibition. It was entitled “Cyprus at the dawn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The collection of Cypriot costumes in the National Historical Museum”. The programme was addressed to primary school pupils. The compilation of the workbook and presentation of the educational programme were undertaken by myself, in collaboration with Eleni Zapiti.

Each pupil was given an educational, richly illustrated 24-pages workbook. The introduction included a reference on the donation of the collection to the National Historical Museum in 1900, whilst in the following pages, texts and exercises afforded pupils the opportunity to learn about Cyprus’ traditional costumes and the habits of the time. Participants in the programme received a Certificate of Participation, along with bookmarkers and stickers.

In 2001, the Cultural Foundation and the Holy Bishopric of Morphou co-organized the exhibition “Holy Bishopric of Morphou. 2000 years of Art and Holiness”, which has since become a landmark. Two homonymous educational programmes, one intended for primary education pupils and the other for high school students, supplemented the exhibition, which ran from 20 December 2000 to 30 June 2001.



Participants were given an 8-pages workbook, texts, pictures, a map and a chronological table. To be able to answer the questions, students were required to observe the exhibits. Eleni Zapiti and myself were responsible for the texts and overall presentation. At the end of the programme, participants were offered memorabilia.

In celebration of the International Museum Day on 18 May 2001, students were invited to draw themes from the vegetable and animal kingdoms, represented in Byzantine art as tokens of the Christians' love for the natural environment, a Godly creation.

Between 14 October 2003 and 11 January 2004 the exhibition "Cyprus of the European Cartographers (16th – 20th centuries). Rare maps from the collections of the Bank of Cyprus Cultural Foundation" was held in the premises of the Bank of Cyprus Cultural Foundation. In the context of the exhibition, the homonymous educational programme was initiated. Students were given a relevant brochure, which they were invited to fill in by observing the maps.



In 2007, the Cultural Foundation, the Benaki Museum and Photododos organized in Nicosia the exhibition entitled "The photographer Voula Papaioannou (1898-1990). From the Photographic Archive of the Benaki Museum". For the duration of the exhibition, which lasted from 24 October to 30 November 2007, an educational programme ran, entitled: "The German occupation through the lens of Voula Papaioannou: the photographer who did not close her eyes". The programme was addressed to high school students. Ioanna Hadjicosti was head of the educational programme and also the editor of the accompanying workbook. Through the unique photographs of Papaioannou, students learned about the harsh years of the German occupation of Greece, but also about the Greeks' passion and yearning for a new beginning after the liberation.

In that same year, the educational programme "Let us know Cyprus' aromatic and spicy plants" ran for the duration of the exhibition "Aromatic and spicy plants in Cyprus. From antiquity to the present day", namely between 18 April and 30 June. Students were given a single piece of paper with exercises to be solved, whilst having the opportunity to arrange pictures in cubes in a way that combines each aromatic plant with its proper product and corresponding recipe. They could also see pictures through dioramas and touch and smell aromatic or spicy plants and products alongside learning their names. Georgios Hadjikyriakou had overall responsibility for the programme.

In 2008, the Bank of Cyprus Cultural Foundation, in collaboration with the French Embassy in Cyprus and with the support of the Cyprus Tourism Organisation organized the exhibition entitled "1962. A photographic record of Cyprus by Manuel Baud-Bovy and Aristea Tzanou". A series of educational

programmes of that name were realized in the span of the exhibition, from 24 November 2008 until 28 February 2009, addressed to elementary and high school students. Ioanna Hadjicosti and myself were responsible for the education programme and the editing of the relevant workbook.

In 2009, in the context of the exhibition “110 Moments in our History” held in the premises of the Cultural Foundation in Nicosia, students of primary and secondary education participated in the relevant educational programme. Students were offered a workbook entitled “110 Moments in our History”, along with the supplementing leaflet “110 years of the Bank of Cyprus and the History of our Land”.



In 2010, the educational programme “You too can become the creator of Guernica!” was launched on the occasion of the exhibition entitled “Pablo Picasso, Guernica: the story of a painting”. The programme was accompanied by a children’s album, which was intended to allow children to recognize the code or rather the symbolic system employed by Picasso in creating Guernica. Having toured the exhibition, children would copy various images from the painting in order to create their self-portrait upon the painting’s style and technique. ARTos Foundation was responsible for the educational rationale underlying the programme, whilst sharing general editing of the album with the Bank of Cyprus Cultural Foundation.

In 2011, the Bank of Cyprus Cultural Foundation and the Numismatic Museum in Athens co-organized the exhibition “Our daily bread... how much does it cost? From ancient to modern times”. The educational programme of that name was launched in the framework of the exhibition, during which students had the opportunity to learn about the cost of nourishment from antiquity to the present day. For each different period spanning Ancient Greece, Rome, Byzantium, and Foreign Dominion, coins and nutritional habits alike were presented in their historical context. Students were invited to complete the workbook by answering questions pertaining to the exhibition’s topic. Eleni Zapiti edited the booklet.

Since 22 March 2012, when the exhibition “Our Lady of Lefkosia. Phaneromeni and its relics” was inaugurated; the homonymous educational programme has been running for students of primary and secondary education. The programme includes a guided tour of the exhibition, of the church of Phaneromeni and of the monuments standing in the church’s surrounding area. Students are given a workbook and various tokens of remembrance, e.g. the exhibition brochure and a laminated picture of Our Lady Phaneromeni.

## Museum of the History of Cypriot Coinage

### Educational Programmes

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Education is a primary issue in the mission statement that defines the establishment of the Museum of History of Cypriot Coinage, the only museum of its kind in Cyprus.

The museum was established in 1995 and until 2008 was housed at the headquarters of the Bank of Cyprus. Since 2009 the museum is housed in the premises of the Bank of Cyprus Cultural Foundation in the old town of Nicosia.



Educational programmes were organised well before the permanent display of the numismatic collection in the museum. The first educational programme took place in 1992 under the title "Cypriot Ancient coins from king Evelthon to Alexander the Great".



Since the establishment of the museum in 1995, educational programmes were organised and delivered consistently. The programmes are addressed to primary school students during school hours and are under the hospices and approval of the Ministry of Education.

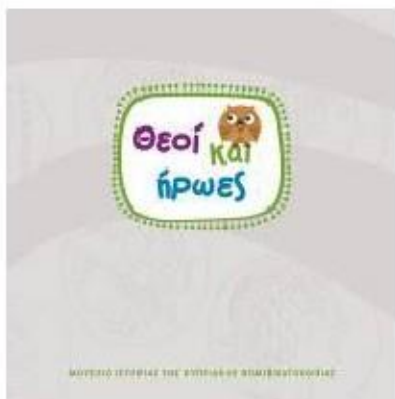




The programmes are entirely prepared by the curators of the Cultural Foundation according to the latest concept of the museum educational role and approach.

The success of the programmes is based on the fact that they manage to handle a difficult subject, the coin, in a way to fascinate and attract students to elaborate on it, interact in a creative way and eventually learn and acquire inspiring experiences. The collaboration, therefore, with the schools was imperative.

The programmes approach the subject under a series of themes related to the schools' curriculum and to the particular interests of the young audience they are addressed to. The themes are basically related to the history of Cyprus from the time of the ancient kingdoms of Cyprus to the Roman period and from the Byzantine to the Mediaeval era.



Mythology is a fascinating and attractive subject that stimulates the imagination and develops the narrative skills. A programme dedicated to the Cypriot Goddess Aphrodite ran for two years and since 2010 a programme entitled "Gods and Heroes" is running with great success.



Other programmes' themes were associated with current events like the introduction of euro in Cyprus or to everyday life. A programme was developed within the context of a temporary exhibition entitled "Our Daily Bread. How much does it cost from ancient to modern times". The exhibition was organized in collaboration with the Numismatic Museum in Athens and its was presented in the premises of the Cultural Foundation in Nicosia for a period of six months, 10/10/11 to 26/2/12.

The programme was prepared and presented by the Cultural Foundation. It elaborated the use of money in everyday life from ancient to modern times.

#### Main concept and aim of the programmers

The programmes are realised with the main aim to educate our youth in appreciating our tangible and intangible cultural heritage and its importance in our every day and future life. To appreciate the works produced by mankind through the ages and in extend to cultivate themselves mentally and aesthetically.

The programmes are always designed so as to actively involve the students during the oral introduction to the subject, as well as when they visit the museum with the guidance and use of the specially designed workbook.

The pupils are asked to observe specific, selected objects, and subsequently to compare and to relate each other. Through this exercise they develop skills such as the insight observation, critical thinking, imagination and creativity. The interactive exercises also use the exhibit as a vehicle to recall knowledge and relate it to every day experience. Moreover organising the students in various groups encourages issues like teamwork and the spirit of collaboration.



The programmes always include creative activities inspiring students to approach themes related to the environment, the art, the actuality and everyday life. Children usually create their own drawing inspired by the programme.

The Cultural Foundation encourages teachers who accompany the students to develop a follow up of the programme at school. Within this context the Cultural Foundation receives an encouraging feedback in the form of school newsletters, role-play activities report, small essays or handicraft objects.

Furthermore the Cultural Foundation organises events, exhibitions or proceeds with the production of material or editions based on the work produced by the students during the programmes. Specialised editions were produced under various themes like, "The symbol of Cyprus on euro coins", "Olympic figures and Olympic values", "Important figures", "Goddess Aphrodite" "God and Heroes".



In 2006 an innovative presentation was realised by the well-known Cypriot artist and collaborator of the Cultural Foundation Maria Loizidou. Maria Loizidou inspired by the material produced by the students she set up an interesting and interactive construction entitled "Through the eyes, through the hands, through the soul". The construction included coin drawings presenting proposals for the Cypriot national side of the euro coin with many being surprisingly imaginative. The other drawings presented the Cypriot Goddess Aphrodite as developed by the students further to the artist's guidelines and also important historical and global figures like kings, knights and athletes.

The Cultural Foundation has always demonstrated a particular interest on the use of advanced technologies and of multimedia productions.

In 2000 an innovative multimedia game, entitled "OPSYS" was produced with the aim to attract young audiences on Cyprus coins.

This game was built on a scenario that all coins from the Museum of the History of Cypriot Coinage were mysteriously vanished. The mission was to travel back in time with the Time Machine and recover all 100 missing coins. It offered:

- An enhanced immersive player experience with full 360-degree panoramas.
- Non-linear game offering freedom of navigation throughout the game and
- 10 different exciting periods to explore in [hyper] real graphics.



It was a mind challenging game of mystery and adventure with original soundtrack and sound effects. It was in English and Greek versions.

In 2006, with the pending introduction of the euro in Cyprus, a campaign to inform schoolchildren about the new currency was to be introduced in the schools, and the Museum decided that a related educational programme could offer excellent support to the campaign launched by the Ministry of Education and Culture. The Bank of Cyprus Cultural Foundation believed the Museum would be the perfect place to develop a programme about the history of Cypriot coinage and about the importance of common coinage



throughout history. We therefore developed and executed a project, which included: the presentation of a relevant subject in the thematic showcase of the museum and the preparation of a new educational programme.

A year later, in 2007, given the positive impact of the educational programme, we decided to enrich it further and develop it beyond the Museum, in order to reach the broader public. We produced a multimedia application, entitled, "From the electrum to the euro. A journey into the history of coins". The concept of the application was to present examples of strong European currencies throughout the history of coinage and in parallel to present the history of Cypriot coinage through a selection of coins from the Numismatic Collection of the Cultural Foundation.



The application becomes even more educational and interesting when users open a window giving them access to 50 interactive exercises. These exercises were designed with the help of the Cultural Foundation's associate teacher, in order to challenge users to search for information and test their knowledge in an appealing format.

The exercises set students to a number of tasks, including observing and putting in the correct order the minting procedure, to describe and classify the depictions on coins, to decipher an inscription, to specify the place of minting or even to calculate denominations and purchase goods. The application is accessible on the Internet, [www.boccf.org](http://www.boccf.org) and through a touch screen in the Museum of the History of Cypriot Coinage.



It is worth mentioning that Hypermedia Company produced all the multimedia applications presented by the Bank of Cyprus Cultural Foundation. In 2011 the company produced an interactive application entitled "Spyra" that is installed in the Archeological Museum of George and Nefeli Giabra Pierides Collection. Spyra is an innovative digital archaeological explorer, made specifically for the museum. Visitors select a potsherd or a fragment from a limestone statue (an imitation of the original) from a special case before them. Then they place the object in a circular base. The base will read and recreate the object on a big screen. Using a small touch screen visitors gain access to information that pertains to the object. In this manner, they can both touch and get a sense of the objects, while at the same time logging on to a wealth of information.

## Educational Programmes 2004 – 2013

Loizidou Maria

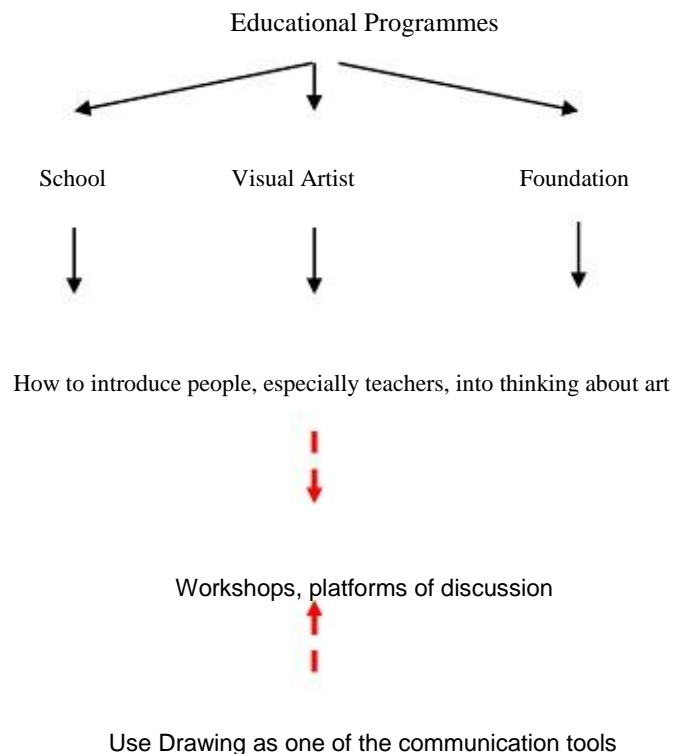
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Maria Loizidou, artist and collaborator of the Bank of Cyprus Cultural Foundation since 1984, proposed and materialised the following educational programmes:

1. Giorgos Mavroides: “Through the eyes, through the hands, through the soul”, 2004.
2. Joan Barbara: “Empuries, a journey of return”, 2005.
3. Yiannis Tsarouhis 1910-1989: “Thank you butterflies”, 2010, (animator: Theodora Papachrysostomou).
4. Archaeological Museum of George and Nefeli Giabra Pierides Collection: “The Dancing Statue”, 2011-2013 (animators: Theodora Papachrysostomou and Lara Alphas).

The aim of the programmes is to urge children to love art, trust artists, connect the historical dots between different times, in a way that everything is made possible, based on the experience of the “encounter”.



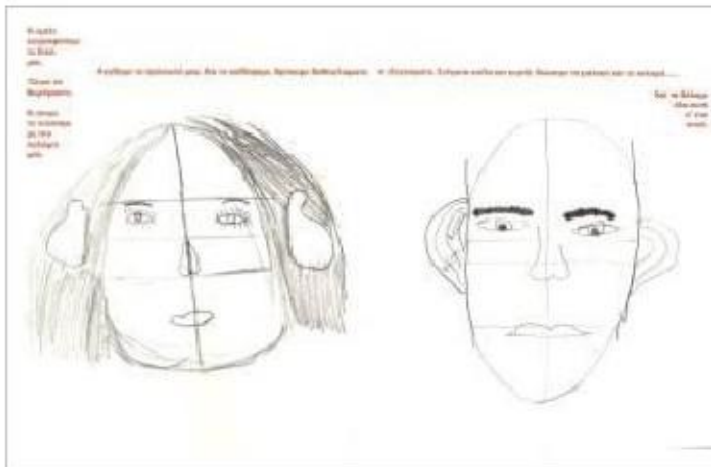
1. Giorgos Mavroides: “Through the eyes, through the hands, through the soul”, 2004.

This programme was delivered during the exhibition “George Mavroides. A ‘process’ of thunderstruck affirmation”, 18 February – 31 March 2004.

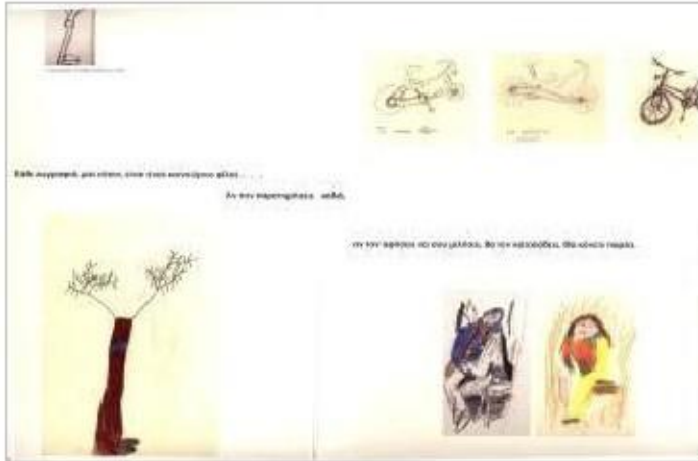


The main activity of the programme encouraged children to draw their own face as they remembered it and as they felt it with their palm. They touched their face; then caressed it. They discovered hollows and bulges, shapes, concave and convex alike. They felt the soft and the harsh. And then they reproduced everything on an egg...

Their tools were an exercise book a pencil and colour pencils.







Children observed every drawing, tried to understand and made it their friend.

## 2. Joan Barbara: “Empuries, a journey of return”, 2005.

This programme was delivered during the exhibition “Empuries, a journey of return. Text by Eudald Sola. Drawings by Joan Barbara”, 9 November 2004 – 15 March 2005.



Through the voyages, the texts of Alexis Eudald Sola and the painter’s landscapes, the children described their own route from the school to the Cultural Foundation and the itinerary from their house. Then they guided a person by using pictures and features.



They traced ink in water to make their own landscape. They looked inside the vessel with the water and ink and then they correlated things in order to write their own story.



The children worked in groups and they tried to understand the difference between knowledge and memory, by placing emphasis on the latter as a clearly personal matter.



They climbed high and looked as far as their eyes could see; they framed their own landscape and traced it on paper.

3. Yiannis Tsarouhis 1910-1989: "Thank you butterflies", 2010, (animator: Theodora Papachrysostomou).

This programme was delivered during the exhibition “Yiannis Tsarouchis 1910-1989: Painting and Theatre from the Collection of the Yannis Tsarouchis Foundation”, 14 April – 27 June 2010.



“Thank you butterflies”, painter Yiannis Tsarouchis used to say, alluding to the freedom of flying and nature’s wisdom through its mathematical arrangement. Our own butterfly follows us during the programme, as we head towards understanding the work of this particular painter. Invisible and ethereal, she moves from one shoulder to another, listens to what we are saying, collects colours, shapes and forms from the output of Yiannis Tsarouchis and rearranges them on the pages of our exercise book.



In our turn, divided into groups, with an eye to crafting our own story, based on the painter, we need to find whence the butterfly had collected each different piece and complete in our exercise book the images in our own, special way.





We will make our own story, an imaginary yet very similar tale, featuring heroes just like us, just like those shown on the paintings; a story which could evolve into a short play. Dialogues, sets, costumes and masks – everything made by us, in the company of the Painter Yiannis Tsarouchis.

4. Archaeological Museum of George and Nefeli Giabra Pierides Collection: “The Dancing Statue”, 2011-2013 (animators: Theodora Papachrysostomou and Lara Alphas).



The programme is addressed to elementary education pupils and is aimed at offering our young friends the opportunity to become acquainted with specimens of Ancient Cypriot art through a private collection. By recognizing figures, designs and forms, children may identify with them and eventually grasp the common thread that runs through the history of a land. In the programme, the first role is reserved for the children. After all, it has been created especially for them whilst special care has been taken so that the time children invest in it is above all pleasant and effective.

The programme is divided into three different theme programmes:



a. **The Pattern:** The pattern, intended for 4th grade pupils aims at developing the skills of observation, contact with the object and recognition of the object’s characteristics. The programme evolves around the pattern that covers the surfaces of the museum’s exhibits. Each child selects a pattern and uses a brush and colours to paint his/her own white vessel.



b. **The Form:** The form, intended for 5th grade pupils aims to cultivate knowledge of the object and to foster the personal relation that may be developed between child and exhibit. Making their own choices in terms of scale, shapes and colors, children transpose three-dimensional figures from the two-dimensional surface of the paper to their pop-up exercise books.



c. **The Vessel, my own story:** The Vessel, my own story, intended for 6th grade pupils covers the history of the art of ceramics and contemporary ideas submitted by artists and ceramists alike. Through it, children work out their own vessel, making their own story. Breathing life into statues, they build a substantial relation with the ancient object.



A gift and a wish, wrapped in love and respect from the children's creations.

The Bank of Cyprus Cultural Foundation produced wrapping paper and greeting cards featuring children's drawings produced from the "The dancing statue" educational programme of the Museum of the Collection of George and Nefeli Giabra Pierides.

## Cultural identity and visual multiliteracy

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### Abstract

The framework of my article consists of broad definitions of visual culture and cultural identity. According to them, different micro cultures are represented in the products of material culture. I ask how constructive dialogue between different cultural groups can be built through studying works of art and other visuals. How can students' understanding of themselves and others be supported through the interpretation of visual culture using artistic production as its main tool? I start by presenting a model of multicultural identity and defining the concept of visual multiliteracy. The concept is then connected with research projects Experiential art understanding and Multiculturalism and integration. Visual multiliteracy in the context of interdisciplinary curriculum is discussed. Through integration, art teacher's professional identity changes from a teacher of skills to that of a cultural worker.

### Keywords

Visual culture, cultural identity, multiculturalism, multiliteracy, interdisciplinarity.

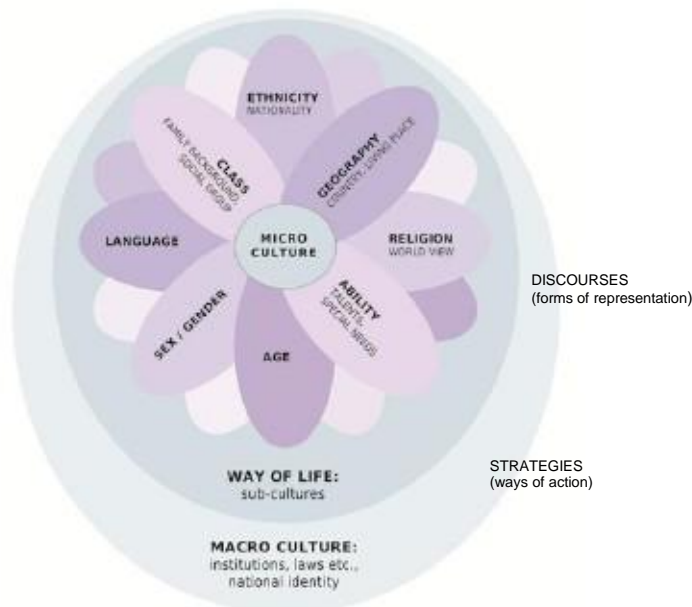
### Multicultural identity and art

Art makes us see ourselves and our relation to the world where we live. Art education helps to observe differences in human cultures and promotes an ethical attitude towards the unfamiliar. In order to understand other individuals and cultures, we have to have skills to interpret the art they make. Ways of making and experiencing art are always linked with broad cultural contexts. The artist's and the viewer's identities consist of personal and social dimensions which cannot be separated. Art education involves identity construction where students build bridges between these aspects. The factors affecting cultural identity can be illustrated by a flower in which the petals represent the micro cultures which together form a person's way of life (see Figure 1). They are ethnicity, geography, religion, age, gender, language, class, and ability. (See Johnson, Musial et al. 2005 in Gollnick & Chinn 2009.) Each of them is involved in different ways of action and forms of representation.

In the flower of multicultural identity, an individual is seen as a member of several reference groups. Each person in a society belongs to a common macro culture consisting of the micro cultures represented by its members. Macro culture thus does not refer to the dominant culture but to the society which is formed in cooperation with various micro cultures. An individual's cultural identity keeps changing during the whole life time and so does the importance of different micro cultures. Religion and geographical background are commonly seen as primary micro cultures. In addition to or instead of them, people may be connected or separated for example by their socio-economic status. An outsider's definition of one's cultural identity may be totally different from one's own definition. The institutions and laws of each country set the constraints of the activities of an individual or a group (Gollnick & Chinn 2009).

Figure 1. The factors affecting cultural identity





The goal of art education emphasizing multiculturalism is to create, study, and understand products that make the borderlines between mainstream cultures and micro cultures visible and appreciated. The flower of multicultural identity helps a teacher to recognize the multiple dimensions of identity and possibilities to affect them. Seeing your own identity as a combination of constantly changing characteristics makes it also possible to face the “other” with an open mind. The multicultural flower approaches each student as different from another and claims that meetings between people always contain meetings between cultures. Its petals help us to see the subjectivity of similarities and differences and show that our cultural identities are both unique and situated. Seeing the views of your own community as only one possible truth makes it possible to accept other views as well. The flower also demonstrates that identities are open to multiple interpretations. Mediating this consciousness to students helps to stop the vicious circle of prejudices that they may have. Growing up to multiculturalism means getting free from ego- and ethno-centric attitudes towards the world. (See also Chalmers 1996.)

The flower of multicultural identity is based on the broad concept of culture including all those ways we use to create meanings, to communicate, and to organize our social lives. The identity consists of an individual’s relationship to cultural material. During his or her whole life, a human being keeps asking *Who am I? With whom and where do I live?* Answers to these questions are made up by constructing narratives which help us to define relationships with others and the world around us. A broad definition of the concept of narrative refers to all verbal, symbolic, or social expressions that a person uses to explain life to his or her self and others. Cultural identity is based on verbal, artistic, and other stories created in a certain time and place. Rituals, clothing, and images mediate traditions which connect an individual to a group. (See Geertz 1973, Hall 1997.) These visual narratives of self and others are studied in art lessons. By making and interpreting art, a student is studying and constructing his or her self and its relationships to culture.

In addition to narrativity, representation is a useful concept for understanding the relationship between the individual and culture. It is used to study how and from what perspective visuals build meanings and form our everyday lives and identities. Representation refers to all verbal and spoken language, visual

presentations, and combinations of words and images. It means something that represents a thing, a person, an object, or a phenomenon. Representations are used to produce and mediate meanings between the members of a culture. In this mediation, language, signs, symbol systems, concrete pictures, and mental images are needed. During the interpretative process of visual culture, a spectator connects representations to the pictures typical of the culture and to the pictures she or he has seen earlier, and to his or her mental images and views. (See Hall 1997, Mäkiranta 2010.)

Culture involves all products of human activities, such as works of art, also including ways of producing and interpreting these representations. Culture thus refers to a process where people are constructing and shaping material and spiritual meanings. Different verbal and nonverbal languages help us to share meanings and understand messages embedded in representations. Visual representations can be analyzed from mimetic, intentional, or constructivist perspectives. The idea of shared meanings is connected to constructionism which views production and interpretation as dependent on language and culture so that the maker, the spectator, and the researcher of the image are all situated. (See Hall 1997, Mäkiranta 2010.) Visual studies using multicultural identity as the framework are rooted in social-constructivist theories of education, being interested in how identities and reality are built through images. Analyzing artworks and other visual products opens up for a student the views and values of their own and other cultures.

Embedded in visual studies based on multicultural identity is the view of art as an open concept including changing views of art's purposes and tasks in society (see Weitz 1968 in Danto 1986). In picture analysis, this means leaning on contextual and pragmatist art theories (e.g. Shusterman 1992). Although postmodernity should not be seen as synonymous to multiculturalism, many art theories connected to it are relevant in building up a theoretical basis for visual studies emphasizing identity construction. According to postmodern theories of culture, art does not provide a single window to reality but it opens doors to various truths. Art is seen as a representation of a world which can be received in several ways based on the viewer's background and lifeworld. Art mediates personal and social meanings, building bridges between the cultures of the maker and the respondent. According to the postmodern view, contemporary art also blurs boundaries between "high" and "low" art so that different products of visual culture are seen as equal. Similarly, separation between different art forms disappears. (See Efland et al. 1996.)

### Multiliteracy and visual culture

I have developed a model aiming at visual multiliteracy which is based on broad definitions of cultural identity and visual culture. Many scholars use the concept of visual culture to refer to the images of contemporary global media instead of so called traditional art. In my approach, the concept includes popular and fine art images of the past and the present. The contexts of making and interpreting visual culture are made for everyday use both in professional art and in visual products, also including the pictures students make at school and in their free time. In addition to the field of traditional art forms (paintings, sculptures etc.), visual multiliteracy deals with other visual products such as illustrations, tables, posters, propaganda, advertisements, tv-programs, movies, comics, cartoons, computer images, objects, and buildings (see Freedman 2003). My definition of visual multiliteracy is related to the concept of material culture arguing for a wide range of artifacts. In the study of material culture, everyday commonplace objects, forms, and expression are explored. The concept of material culture nicely fits in with the framework of the multicultural flower because people approach everyday images and objects from the perspective of their personal or cultural significance. (See Bolin and Blandy 2003.)

In the postmodern debate, the concept of "reading" keeps repeating. In the semioticians' terms, reading means interpretation, decoding, and deciphering verbal and visual messages as texts. As a difference to earlier models of picture-analysis, the emphasis in interpretation is on "reader" instead of "writer". (MacDonald 2006) The method was transferred from literature to the visual arts, and it has been popular among art educators ever since the 70's. (See Räsänen 2008b.) Closely related to reading is the concept of



literacy. Some scholars consider the concept problematic, because it refers to the semiotic reading of signs and symbols. This is seen as an attempt to force images into a structuralist analysis of literary texts, which tends to lead to narrow visual meanings. However, semiotics is not only about literary criticism, but it also seeks to define systems of communication other than verbal language. This is important in order to understand the multimodal nature of learning. The difference between, for instance, traditional aestheticians and semioticians is that the latter do not separate expressive and communicative acts but see them as cultural practices. Poststructuralist semiotics admits no closure in meaning making. (Addison 2006; see also Smith-Shank 2004.)

A range of literacies is at work in the current discourse on education. This involves encouraging diversity, which is consistent with the postmodern notion of grand and little narratives. The idea of several literacies is seen to promote a wider understanding of cultures. Visual literacy is a concept that grew out of the didacticism of the Fifties Basic Design in Britain and North America. Critical studies of visual culture which integrates multiculturalism and visual literacy could be organized under cultural literacy. From the cultural perspective, the work of art becomes a work of culture only when it has been reflected and shared. (MacDonald 2006) My definition of multiliteracy is based on the recognition that visual culture consists of little narratives represented by the microcultures as described in the flower of multicultural identity. Crucial in my approach is that the stories embedded in artworks and other artifacts are analyzed through and represented in visual and verbal dialogues. This makes visual multiliteracy a part of cultural conversation.

My view on visual multiliteracy is also connected with the discussion of different languages. The concept of multiliteracy has been used to refer to multilingual people or to multiple versions of the English language. More recently, the concept has been separated from its cognitive and linguistic context, and it is understood as a social practice. According to social semiotics, literacy is not located solely in the head or in texts but in contexts. In a post-structural sense, the concept refers to multiple readings generated from multiple positions from which one views, reads, or hears. It also refers to the range of modalities that all cultural sites include. According to Duncum, there are no exclusively visual sites. He sees multimodality as central in multiliteracy, which to him means that all, especially contemporary visuals, appeal to multiple perceptual systems. Because of the “multisemiotic nature” of contemporary sites, the definition of multiliteracy that he employs requires interaction between several sign systems. Responding to messages including codes from different “languages” does not mean reading them separately but taking them as a whole, all at once. This is a challenge of multimodality for education. (Duncum 2004)

Contemporary art offers excellent tools to study the culture where we and our students live. Many artworks, like almost all objects of present visual culture, are multimodal, also being rhizomatic in the sense that they relate to other visual and verbal texts. Relationships between “high” and “low” are of special interest in the intertextual study of visual culture. (See Duncum 2006.) However, the focus of my interpretative model aiming at visual multiliteracy is on the role of visuals in identity construction, taking place through contextualization of images. My approach promotes constructive dialogue between different cultural and social groups through making and interpreting art. Reading images happens through studying the maker’s and the responder’s multicultural identities. Its main goal is to study how students’ micro cultures and ways of life affect and change the macro culture. This goal is based on the view that arts are about cultural production: they contribute to the making and remaking of culture.

In visual multiliteracy, products of material culture are studied employing methodologies of several disciplines. In addition to methods of traditional art disciplines like art history and aesthetics, approaches from cultural studies are applied (e.g. Buckingham & Safton-Green 1994). A visual product under study is approached from several perspectives, and different models of picture analysis are used. Meaning giving is based on visual production so that verbal and visual investigation are intertwined. In the process of interpretation, the wider anthropological concept of culture is united with the aesthetic definition. (See Dissanayake 1988, Duncum 2001.) Similarly to the artist, students can be considered visual ethnographers in their art making and interpretation. Ethnographic methods combined with the study of visual culture

can help us connect artistic practice with cultural knowledge and narratives. (See Desai 2002.) In visual culture studies, the objects of interpretation may be chosen among those which are important to representatives of a certain culture. The exploration of images may broaden into a more extensive ethnographic study where visual methods are used. In the research context, multiliteracy includes skills in analyzing both verbal and visual data collected, thus connecting art to other forms of knowledge.

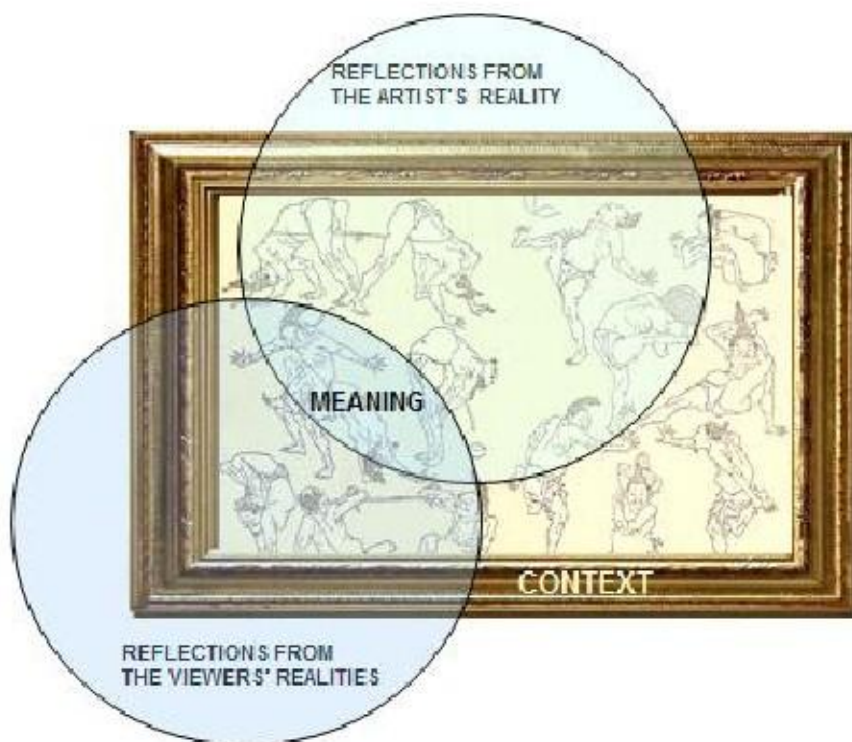
### Art understanding as a means of constructing multicultural selves

The basis of my work on visual literacy is to be found in my dissertation study (Räsänen 1997) where I developed and experimented on an experiential-constructivist model for art understanding. In the case study which was part of my thesis, 16-year-old high school students interpreted a single work of art in a course of 38 hours, connecting it with other artworks and visual material through writing, discussion, and art-making. According to the model of experiential art understanding, art experience comes into being when the cultural identities of the maker and the receiver meet as the work of art is explored. Artwork is seen as a bridge between the cultures of the artist and the viewer. The bridge is built through the contextualization of the image, the maker, and the respondent. The process of interpretation is loosely based on the four fields included in discipline-based art education (aesthetics, criticism, art history, studio), however applying postmodern methods within them and using art making as the main tool of analysis. (Räsänen 1997, 1999, 2003)

My model of art understanding has its roots in David Kolb's theory of experiential learning (1984), and it has three overlapping phases, each of them emphasizing art-making. The interpretative process starts from a sensuous response to the key-work and it is based on the viewers' personal experiences. At the level of contextualization, the biography and culture of the maker are studied. The process culminates in production as the students make their own appropriations based on the artwork explored. They are asking how the work is connected to their own lives. The meanings of the image are searched from various sources. During the process of interpretation, models of picture analysis based on the perspectives of image, maker, receiver, and context are integrated. The main goal of the study is to understand how the multicultural self of the artist affects the image, and how the personal and social identities of the viewers affect the way they respond to the image. Students are asking Why do I respond to this work of art in this way? Answers to this question are found in their prior knowledge and experiences, mood, context of viewing, and from various aspects of their cultural identities. Through sharing and art-making, students build a bridge between their lifeworlds and artworlds so that the understanding of art is united with self-construction. The students' life values and views of art are emphasized so that the interpretation and judgment are intertwined with self-understanding.

Figure 2. The meeting of realities in the process of meaning-making





Using the model of experiential art understanding, a multimodal course based on Internet dialogue between two or more teacher training universities was developed in 2006. The focus of the interpretation in class is in multicultural aspects of visual culture. (Räsänen 2008a) The process is organized around the three “realities” affecting meaning-making (see Figure 2), and it consists of nine key questions. They are: 1) What is my immediate experience – can I associate the artwork to my life? 2) What kind of knowledge about the artwork do I get through the different senses? 3) What do the details in the artwork tell about the cultures of the artist and myself as a viewer? 4) What does reading the artwork through verbal and visual texts tell about the meanings embedded in the image and its response? 5) What new understanding does the artist’s biography add to the artwork and to my own life? 6) How do the artist’s and my cultural identities affect the image and its response? 7) How does meeting the original in the museum contribute to my meaning-making? 8) Is this a good work of art – why? 9) What does the image mean to me – how can I connect it to my life through visual production?

The core of my approach in analyzing artworks and other products of visual culture is in production. Considering studio work as central in art educational practices is not very novel, but serious studies of art as a form of thinking are still not common (e.g. Walker 2001, Hetland et al. 2007). Different studio practices are also used under the rubric of visual culture. Students are often asked to analyze popular culture using conventional art forms like painting. Occasionally, studies of visual culture also employ contemporary media. This, however, may easily turn into parody if students are not given proper instruction. In these approaches, making is seen to provide an insider’s perspective on artist’s work. Students may also study an artist working on popular culture and then apply the observed creative process in their own work. If students are not researching issues the way the artists do they are only mimicking the technique. A false form of student-centrism is to ask the students to include a favorite item of popular culture in their work. Similarly, encouraging them to tell personal stories between people and artifacts emphasizes subjectivity over cultural meanings. Applying intertextual methods using the World Wide



Web may promote positive student-centrism but there is a risk that the Internet is used in a superficial way. (See Duncum 2006.)

The pedagogies described above are close to the forms of appropriation I have identified in the process of experiential art interpretation (Räsänen 1997). They are emphasized particularly at the end of the analysis. The main idea of visual multiliteracy is to connect the image with the student's lifeworld through productive activities, and to compare the cultures of the maker and the responder. In my web-based course of art understanding, multiliteracy is connected to cultural identity, and it is approached from two perspectives. Social identity is studied using art history and the iconological method. The artwork is linked to cultural studies through intertextuality. Personal identity is central when making appropriations based on the whole process of meaning-making (see Picture 1). In the same way as in the approaches typical of visual culture studies, layered over each interpretative phase students are asking questions drawn from aesthetics, semiotics, cultural theory etc. As part of the process of contextualization, students are working as ethnographers by interviewing artists or undertaking opinion surveys.

Picture 1. In this appropriation of Eero Järnefelt's painting *Casque. The wage slaves (Burn-beating)*, 1893. (Finnish National Gallery), the student explored children's roles in history and today. She felt that through her consumption she was responsible for child labour. The student made the girl in the original painting in the background ask *Can you meet my eyes?*



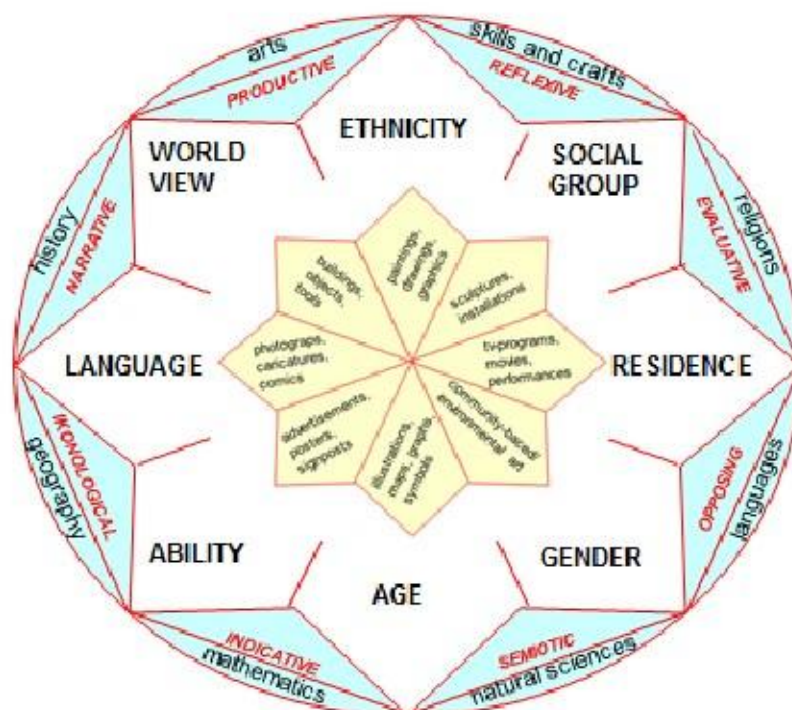
### Multiliteracy and integration

In my current research project, I explore how class teacher students' conceptions of multiculturalism and visual literacy, and the role of art in their professional identity are developed during their five study years. In the project, art is considered to contribute to school's main task which I consider cultural education. Different models of visual reading are related to approaches of multicultural education. As most of them aim either at adaptation, communion, or equality, the goal of visual multiliteracy as part of multicultural art education is change. (See Räsänen 2008a, Efland et al. 1996.) Multiliteracy involves an ability to perceive, interpret, understand, and appreciate visual messages of other cultural groups, and skills to

produce visual messages based on one's own cultural identity. In addition to communication and interaction, visual multiliteracy promotes personal, professional, and social development.

The main concepts of the research are multiliteracy and multidisciplinary. In my study, future class teachers ask following questions: How are different cultural groups and fields of cultural identity represented in visual culture? How is multiculturalism referred to in the curricula of different school subjects? What kinds of images can be used in teaching them? Students are encouraged to plan teaching units where images are used as sources for learning in all school subjects. In their planning, students use the five main principles of visual multiliteracy in studying material culture. They are: 1) Multiliteracy is rooted in contextualization, which involves the study of maker's and responder's multicultural identities. 2) The process of study is based on art disciplines emphasizing cultural studies. 3) During the interpretation, different approaches of picture analysis are used. 4) Art-making has a central role in the interpretative process. 5) Visual symbolization is related to other forms of conceptualization used in school subjects.

Figure 3. Multiliteracy through integration



In the research project, students are asked to approach different aspects of cultural identity through images (see Figure 3). Fields of visual culture are studied in the contexts of different school subjects using diverse ways of reading (e.g. Werner 2002). The goal of the project is integration on two levels. The students link together content areas of the art curriculum and connect them with cross-curricular themes so that interdisciplinary learning is promoted (see Table 1). The starting point of integration is in the issues mediated by works of art and other products of material culture.

Data analysis of the first phase of the study consisting of unit plans made by first year students (N=70) has given useful information for further developing my approach. The results show that my first intervention, one hour lecture on visual multiliteracy; only helped students to use the basic level of the model, i.e. classification of themes and images based on the dimensions of cultural identity. Guided by the

assignment form, students were supposed to apply all aspects of the model but most of them still used ethnicity, geography, and world view as their main categories rejecting age, gender, ability, and social class. Dimensions of the multicultural flower were understood as characterizations of different groups, not as attributes of individuals referring to human diversity. Only in four plans two of the dimensions were overlapping.

Table 1. A somewhat edited example of those few unit plans where all dimensions of the visual multiliteracy model were included

<b>THEMATIC UNIT OF WAR AIMING AT MULTILITERACY OF VISUAL CULTURE</b>				
<b>CULTURAL IDENTITY</b>	<b>ISSUE / CONTENT / QUESTIONS</b>	<b>ARTWORKS / OTHER IMAGES AND OBJECTS</b>	<b>VISUAL READING-MODEL</b>	<b>INTEGRATION / DISCIPLINE</b>
1. AGE	How do people of different age experience the war?	Wartime documentary photos of children and old people	Narrative, reflective	Psychology, social studies, history
2. GENDER	What are gender roles during the war?	Posters asking the women to join the army; women working in the home front	Narrative, reflective, productive	Art, psychology, social studies, history
3. ABILITY	What kinds of abilities does war technology promote?	Antique pottery describing the Olympics; weapon and army vehicles	Iconological, indicative, semiotic, productive	Art, crafts, physical education, history, mathematics
4. SOCIAL GROUP	Do rich and poor people's experiences of the war differ?	Paintings about civil suffering during the war	Narrative, reflective	Art, psychology, social studies, history
5. LANGUAGE	What kind of visual language does war create?	Symbol, signposts, flags	Iconological, indicative, semiotic, productive	Art, mother language, music, history
6. RESIDENCE	How does war affect domestic and national areas?	Documents of ruined homes; maps of national borders; buildings	Narrative, reflective	Geography, history
7. ETHNICITY	How are different groups treated during the war?	Posters made by the Nazis; press photos of the Iraqi war	Narrative, reflective, opposing, productive	Art, religion, history, social studies
8. WORLD VIEW	How are religions and ideologies used in the war?	Religious images; propaganda posters	Narrative, reflective, evaluative, productive	Art, religion, history, social studies

Very few students could broaden their concept of multiculturalism and include new factors of it in their plans. In addition to the narrow view of cultural identity, students' ability to use different products of visual culture was limited mostly on documentary photographs and paintings. Their skills in applying methods of visual interpretation, especially the way to use productive reading through art making, was very modest. Students' understanding of interdisciplinary investigation was also superficial. The results are not a surprise to me, and connected to the survey I have made of the beginning students' overall conceptions of multiculturalism and of their school-time memories of multicultural art education, the research shows what a challenge multicultural, integrative visual culture education for class teachers is. I hope my follow-up study with its yearly interventions will contribute new practices in this complex and demanding field.

#### Art educators as cultural workers

What does visual multiliteracy which is based on interdisciplinarity and multiculturalism mean to the practices of art education? My suggestion is that the role of the cultural worker should be added to the multiple roles of an art teacher as educator, artist, and researcher. (Räsänen 2005, 2008b) To me the

overall task of a multirole art teacher is to develop multicultural understanding through literacy of visual culture. The professional identity of an art educator thus changes from a teacher of skills to that of a cultural worker capable of participating in interdisciplinary cooperation. In this work, the flower of cultural identity is useful. The flower opens up a dialogue between the renaissance ideal of a holistic human being and the idea of postmodern identity. I see wholeness as a constant construction of multicultural identity. To me the piece missing from the puzzle based on the renaissance uomo universale illustrated by Leonardo (see Picture 2) does not represent something that is lacking but something that is in construction. The appropriation also poses the question of relationship between art and science already discussed in da Vinci's time.

The role of art in a holistic educational system is based on the special nature of knowing what it represents. According to current cognitive theories, learning happens through all sensory fields and includes various ways of knowing. All knowing involves processes of selection, evaluation, analysis, and synthesis. These characteristics of ordering and making sense are typical of both art and science. In the same way as sensations and experiences are ordered through the perceptual systems and the mind, material is organized into a system of visual signs in artworks. This kind of knowledge is embodied in all products of visual culture. In addition to the sensory information that images convey, they are also representations of subjective human experience. Knowledge acquired through reflection about what it is to be a certain person in a certain culture encompasses psychological, existential, and spiritual domains of knowledge. (Danvers 2006)

Cognitive theorists advocate a view of learning where different conceptions of knowledge are seen as complementary. They see that every school subject is based on expert knowledge of the discipline it represents. There are properties common to art and other subjects, but art also makes a unique contribution to cognition as a whole. (Efland 2002, Eisner 2002) Thinking and communicating are based on multiple intelligences (Gardner 1983). They are domain specific and bound to particular forms of expression. Verbal, numerical, and visual or other artistic ways of thinking are equal but separate ways of knowing. Transferring thought from one form to another always means distortion. (Arnheim 1969, Goodman 1976) For example, the visual cannot be reduced to the verbal, and visual language can be seen as a relatively autonomous semiotic mode. (See Duncum 2004.)

Like in other school subjects, conceptualization and theorizing are learnt in art. Art deals with theoretical issues by generalizing through specific cases, and by connecting an individual to culture. Works of art can be understood as artists' theories about reality. Art products consist of culturally based symbols that represent artistic conceptualization. As conceptual thinking in general is considered to take place through abstract symbols, such as numbers and letters, images are constructed using visual symbols like colors. Art offers a unique language equal to other symbolic forms. It is nonlinear, nonverbal, and metaphoric. What makes artistic conceptualization so special is that in art abstract thinking is not separated from action.

Image 2. The logo of the Department of Anatomy and Cell Biology at the University of Oulu designed by Juha Tuhkanen.





For a holistic school culture and world view, symbol systems embedded in different disciplines should be considered as equal. Students should learn to study, conceptualize, and express their cultures through the forms of symbolization included in each school subject. The idea that all ways of knowing are unique also means that integration should be based on independent school subjects. Interdisciplinary thus does not mean messy theme days but requires cooperation between experts who acknowledge each other's specialization. The challenge of art educators and researchers is also to introduce ways of knowing based on artistic conceptualization and action to other school subjects. Artistry as a broad concept deals with students' need to learn in a way in which senses, emotions, concepts, and actions are intertwined. Every school subject should involve head, body, and heart.

School is part of culture and its subjects represent different fields of culture. The main task of education is to give students tools to understand and construct their own lives and themselves as representatives of different cultures. The source of learning should thus be in the students' lifeworlds and cultural phenomena embedded in them. A broad definition of culture does not separate arts from other forms of meaning making and communication. Art is a form of knowing where knowledge is bound to its cultural context. The core of the kind of multiliteracy that I am advocating is to study images as cultural signs posting something about ways of life. Among other languages, learning to read the visual language of cultural products is fundamental to each student. Visual multiliteracy as part of cultural literacy means breaking up hierarchies between science, art, and different cultural practices. Art offers the school a cultural chiasm, a place where different disciplines are crossing. Art helps to recognize and bring into discussion different personal and cultural issues. Culture goes through all aspects of art and makes art educators cultural workers.

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## Museum-based literacies and learning for 21<sup>st</sup> century skills

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### Abstract

The skills required for students to communicate and act effectively in societies worldwide are constantly evolving. No longer is a restricted view of literacy as reading and writing skills acceptable in an increasingly multimodal and digitally-mediated world (Fleming 2005). Museums are not or shouldn't be left untouched by this evolving reality. The aim of this paper is to report on preliminary findings from a doctoral qualitative research investigating the nature of museum-based literacies and their implementation in museum educational programmes for pupils aged 9-12 years old in Cyprus. This research includes examining the potential of multiliteracies theory and pedagogy has to facilitate learning at the museum for 21<sup>st</sup> century needs.

After presenting a theoretical framework that combines the pedagogy of multiliteracies (New London Group 1996, Cope & Kalantzis 2000) with relevant notions such as multimodality, interdisciplinarity, intertextuality and socio-constructivist learning, the research design is described and discussed within this framework. The methodology and research questions that drive this research are made explicit while also a learning model developed for the purposes of the research, the "Museum-based Multiliteracies-Conscious Approach" (MMCA), is briefly explained.

It is considered that addressing the knowledge, skills and attitudes for museum-based multiliteracies will have significant implications for education in museums, and particularly for museum/school relationships, as it recognizes the particular demands of developing learning experiences in the museum setting that enable cultural participation (Mathewson-Mitchell 2007). The complexity involved in modes, literacies, sign systems and the unique museum environment make this a challenging task.

### Keywords

Museum education, pedagogy of multiliteracies, multimodality, museum-based pedagogy, design

### Introduction

The value of museums begins and ends with the relationship with our visitors. It's a contract that is renewed each and every time they engage with us, and if we don't live up to it, we will be usurped (Falk 2010:4). Our times are characterized by diversity and changes in all forms of experience; economical, sociocultural, personal, technological, environmental, educational. The impact of these constant changes have—or should- resulted to a shift in the way we view our selves and the world and also the demands for the literate person of the 21<sup>st</sup> century (Fleming 2005). Not left untouched by this world in transition, museums as places that nurture learning face dramatic shifts in the populations that they serve and the roles which they should practice.

Whereas museum education was once defined in terms of the linear transmission model which pursued neutral, information-based knowledge (Hooper-Greenhill xi), today it is thought of as an "activity that involves a constant negotiation between the stories given by museums and those brought by visitors" (Roberts 1997:14). This reconsideration of museum learning and the relationship between the visitors and the objects becomes more complicated when adding the question of the impact of emerging technology on the museum's interpretation of objects to visitors (Schwartz 2008). It has been claimed that the growing

use of new media in museums and of museums into new media such as CD-ROMs, videodiscs, the Web has, by spreading digital representations, challenged the primacy of the object (Schwartz 2008:29). If the 'old museology defined the museum as an educational space, the "new" museology shows that it is also a complexly rhetorical one' (Schwartz 2008:29; Daniell 1999).

To address these issues, the pedagogy of multiliteracies (New London Group 1996, Cope & Kalantzis 2000) offers an interesting proposal to what constitutes literacy in a constantly changing, socially and culturally diverse, globalized and technological world (Anstey & Bull 2006:19). Before entering into a description of the actual research project, I elaborate on the concept of literacy and outline my theoretical background – the multiliteracies framework – illustrating how this relates to the concepts of multimodality, interdisciplinarity and intertextuality. The final section reports on the methodology for investigating two Museums and one Public Art Gallery in Cyprus, during the years 2011-13, while also identifying a model for museum-based multiliteracies theory and practice.

### Defining literacy

'What counts as literacy changes depending on the historical time, the place, the purpose and the people' (Auerbach, Treffly-Goatley & Mckinney 1997:6; Street 1984). No single definition of literacy exists; it is a term overused, so contested, and little understood yet is seen as one of the major goals of education in the 21st century. In discussing literacy it can be claimed that it is economically focused; at the same time it is affected by the ideological and political contexts in which literacy policies are formed (Liddicoat 2007:12). Therefore while the general idea is that literacy is 'the ability to make and share meaning by constructing and interpreting texts' (Winch, Ross-Johnston, Holliday, Ljungdahl and March, 2006, p. xxxii) it remains vogue: what exactly is literacy, what counts as 'texts', what are the skills needed for literacy acquisition and development?

In this discourse of what constitutes literacy, Street (1984:15) distinguishes between an autonomous skills-based model of literacy and an ideological practices-oriented model of literacy. An autonomous skill-based approach defines literacy 'regardless of the contexts in which it occurs; it is mainly interested in literacy practice as print based and considers it related to intellectual abilities' (Liddicoat 2007:12). In this autonomous model the emphasis is on literacy as the ability of encoding and decoding print text (Hall 1980) or the traditional ability to read and write for Morrison, Bachman, & McDonald Connor (2005), 'the basics' or what is referred to is as 'functional literacy' (Grey 1956:19). Thus literacy is restricted to the set of skills supposed to be acquired/ possessed for work, education, social interaction and negotiation of everyday life (Street 1984); a set of skills measurable which can guarantee success through accepting dominant ideologies and be productive –working as a human capital (Liddicoat 2007).

However the nature of literacy practice and needs is changing; this is thought as a consequence of New Times<sup>27</sup> (Hall 1989). Literacy is seen now as the ability to function in an increasingly complex environment (Kuhlthau 1990:14). Therefore literacy is no longer considered as a singularity, a unitary set of skills but rather thought of as a plurality, sharing the idea of various and diverse 'literacies' (Liddicoat 2007:13). Literacy is conceived of as 'the ability to use language and images in rich and varied forms to read, write, listen, speak, view, represent, and think critically about ideas' (Ontario Ministry of Education (2004:5) or what Luke and Freebody (2000:9) describe as the flexible and sustainable mastery of a repertoire of practices with the texts of traditional and new communication technologies via spoken, print, and multimedia.

### The Pedagogy of Multiliteracies Framework

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<sup>27</sup>An era of internalization characterised by the breaking down of borders between local and global contexts resulting from rapid change in communicative practices (Gee 2000; Luke and Elkins 1998).

Multiliteracies (New London Group 1996) as a concept emerged following the New Literacy Studies, often referred to as NLS (Barton, Hamilton, & Ivanic, 2000; Gee, 1996; Lankshear and Knobel, 2003; Street, 1995) which falls within the ideological practices-oriented approach of literacy (Street 1984: 4, 15), by considering the varying cultural issues and diverse social situations surrounding every literacy experience (Goodman, 1996; Spiro, Bruce, & Brewer, 1980). This notion of literacy recognises literacy as a social practice (Gee 1996: 22, Street, 1995), a set of socially and culturally constituted practices enacted across and within social and institutional spaces that evolves dynamically (Giampapa 2010: 4; Potvin 2009). The scholars-members of The New London Group (NLG) (1996: 64), who employed the term multiliteracies, acknowledge the social view of literacy by emphasizing on the rapid change of new communications media and the proximity of cultural and linguistic diversity (due to migration, multiculturalism and global economic integration), which provide impetus for a pedagogy of multiliteracies (NLG 1996, Cope & Kalantzis 2000). Cope and Kalantzis (2000:239) stress that there is nothing radically new in a multiliteracies pedagogy; prevailing pedagogy has simply been repackaged in order to expand the scope for literacy by viewing many types of expression and communication as literacies, whether formal or informal; spoken, gestured, written or graphic; official or unofficial (Ryan and Anstey 2003). Within the spectrum of education and learning in general, this broadening can redefine the intentions and practices of teachers to include considerations of the students' real world experiences, who they really are and what kind of literacies they practice. Encompassing students' strengths and interests in popular culture and media literacies could be the way to social inclusion, while develop more traditional forms of literacy (Rowse, Kosnik, & Beck, 2008:112).

Anstey (2002:24) defines a multiliterate person as flexible, strategic and able to understand and use literacy and literate practices with a range of texts and technologies, written, spoken or multimodal texts (Kress & van Leeuwen 1996); in socially responsible ways; in a socially, culturally, and linguistically diverse world in order to fully participate in life as an active and informed citizen, a goal that presupposes critical literacy. An individual who is multiliterate should be able to critically analyze texts and contexts, recognize the dominant literacy forms and take informed action (Anstey & Bull 2006: 24). In the multiliteracies framework, learning is considered a process of meaning making, during which learners continually reshape themselves. Meaning making and any other semiotic activity are treated as 'a matter of Design' (NLG 1996:73).

Drawing on the concept of design, multiliteracies theory offers a reconceptualisation of what constitutes literacy education in the light of the increasing multimodality of texts. In discussing design, we can speak of it as either the way in which a text has been designed, or to the process involved in designing (Cloonan 2007:19). Multiliteracies theory offers the notion of design to describe the codes and conventions of meaning-making modes and posits that these six identified modes of meaning show regularities or grammars (NLG 1996:74). Multiliteracies theory presents:

"... any semiotic activity, including using language to produce or consume texts, as a matter of Design involving three elements: Available Designs, Designing, and The Redesigned. Together these three elements emphasise the fact that meaning-making is an active and dynamic process, and not something governed by static rules" (NLG, 2000:20).

In a multiliteracies-influenced literacy program, students draw on available designs; existing design elements that can be linguistic, visual, audio, gestural, spatial or multimodal designs (NLG 1996:73-74; 2000). Students can draw from existing designs to make meaning for their own purposes; in this way they become "active designers" (NLG 1996: 64) with the help of experienced others (educators) during overt instruction, which actually constructs the scaffolding of their learning (Cope and Kalantzis 2000). The redesigned or transformed notions of meaning produced can then be used by others as available designs to draw upon (NLG, 1996, 2000).

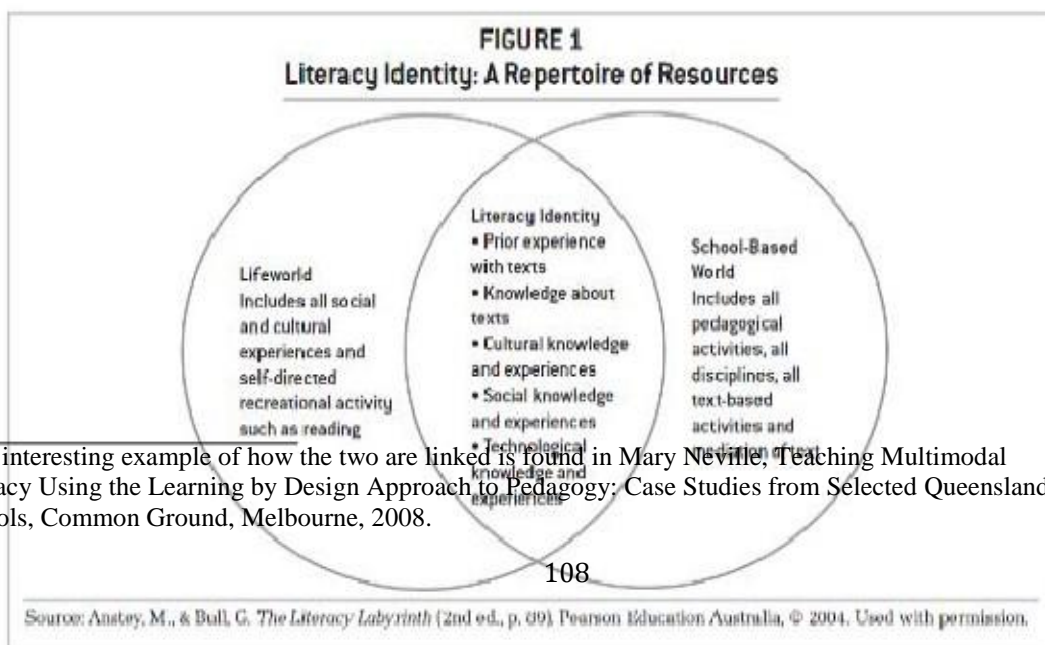
Cope and Kalantzis (2000:65) suggest an examination of five 'dimensions of meaning' (representational, social, organisational, contextual, and ideological) across five modes of meaning (linguistic, visual, gestural, spatial and audio) to support teachers in their endeavours to describe the interplay and integration



of modes of meaning. In relation to the previous, two important ideas are brought in a multiliteracies pedagogy: Learning by Design and Multimodality<sup>28</sup> (Kalantzis and Cope 2005, 2006). Learning by Design is building into curriculum the idea that not every learner will bring the same Lifeworld experiences and interests to learning (Kalantzis and Cope 2012), as well as acknowledging that every learner is not on the same page at the same time (Kalantzis and Cope 2005). They identify these different domains or identities collectively as Discourse Worlds, and suggest that students draw on two in particular to make meaning, their Lifeworld and their School-Based World (Barton, Hamilton, and Ivanic 2000; Anstey and Bull 2006:34, 2004). We represent this concept visually in Figure 1, which indicates that these worlds overlap and inform one another. Part of readers' Lifeworlds and School-based Worlds is their knowledge and experience as readers.

The idea of Multimodality discusses learners' movement between written, oral, visual, audio, tactile, gestural and spatial modes, which are combined during communication in order to produce meaning (Kress & van Leeuwen 1996). The aim of literacy teaching with respect to multimodality lies in the acquisition of abilities and skills necessary to produce various text forms linked with information and multimedia technologies (Baldry 2000:21), which usually combine different semiotic media for meaning making. The "multiliterate" subject possesses a range of literacies (e.g. visual literacy, techno-literacy etc.), reads multimodal texts in an integrated fashion (paying attention to the relationship between the different semiotic modes being deployed) and produces multimodal texts managing various resources (Kress 1995).

Figure 1. Discourse worlds in a reader's identity (Anstey and Bull 2006:34)



Multimodality cannot be of use to education unless combined with the concept and practices of interdisciplinarity (Katsarou 2009:57). Apart from focusing to the process of design of various texts, multiliteracies point to the investigation of the various written and spoken discourses featured in the texts. For students to comprehend of the various discourses, requires familiarizing with disciplinary discourse, practices and concepts. They can then employ the acquired discipline knowledge in interdisciplinary projects aiming at meaning making (Albright et al. 2007: 101-102, 97). It should be noted thus, that the idea is not to undermine the importance of students' discipline based studies, but rather to connect the dots between the specialization in one discipline and common work across disciplines (Katsarou 2009:57). Therefore in multiliteracies it is pivotal to have a variety of disciplinary approaches in meaning making.

Another main element of the pedagogy of multiliteracies, is intertextuality. This refers to the complex ways in which meanings are derived through relationships to other texts, text types (discourse or genres), narratives and other modes of meaning (such as visual design) (Katsarou 2009). Any given text carries a certain historical aspect in that it draws upon an intertextual chain and in the way it transforms this chain (NLG 1996). The intertextuality of a text 'mediates the relationship between the text's social context and its language' (Fairclough 2000: 173). Therefore, the intertextual analysis of a text illustrates the linguistic choices (or the choices of other modes) in the text. Nowadays with the prevailing of new technologies in communication the concept of intertextually has changed radically. Terms like electronic textuality and the hypertext have changed the elements of intertextuality and have had a considerable impact on how we define and teach literacy practices (Katsarou 2009).

The theory of multiliteracies has its foundations in the socio-cultural approach to literacy which is naturally complemented by a social-constructivist perspective of learning (Rogoff 1990, Vygotsky 1986). In such an approach, learning is seen as both rigorous and evolving, a complex process which is not decontextualised and happens in socio-cultural and historical contexts (Wertsch 1991). It is based on the interaction between the experienced and the less experienced members of society (Vygotsky 1978: 90), pointing to pedagogies that are underpinned by scaffolding (Wood, Bruner & Ross 1976, Bruner 1983) which is discussed earlier in this section with regards to design.

Multiliteracies focus on the multiplicity of technologies, cultures, experiences, ways of making meaning and ways of thinking that are available to the learner across contexts. The ultimate goal of literacy pedagogy should be to enable the reader to use any or all of the resources available to transform the meaning of text so as to be meaningful to them and apply it to different contexts. Lave (1996:161) refers to this as 'changing participation in changing practices'. In other words, we must teach students to recruit previous and current experiences as an integral part of learning to make meaning (Cope and Kalantzis, 2000).

#### Learning, multiliteracies and the museum

If museums accept their educational role 'they must also accept their social responsibility to work towards supporting a participatory democratic society' (Hein 2005: 50). The practice of education in museums has a long history (Hein, 1998; Hooper-Greenhill, 1994; Roberts 1997:7). No matter what theory they employ, scholars and practitioners depend on their epistemological position, their background and training and

their beliefs about knowledge. Hein (1998) argues that to determine how learning is viewed and what epistemological path is followed it is important to identify whether knowledge was acquired independently of the learner or constructed in the mind by the learner. Although it is difficult to classify theories into distinct groups, I identify five categories of museum-related learning theories—behavioural(Hein, 1998; Zervos,2003), cognitive(Piaget, 1952, 1963;Bruner 1986;Gardner 1999), social(Hooper-Greenhill 2000;Rogoff 1999; Wenger 1998),constructivist(Fosnot 2005; Hein 1991,1999; Paris 1997a) and sociocultural (Ellenbogen, 2003a, 2003b; Leinhardt, Crowley & Knutson, 2002; Falk and Dierking 2000; Schauble, Leinhardt, & Martin, 1997). The two theories of learning that have had (and are having) the most impact on museum learning research, are constructivism and sociocultural theory. These two are evident in what the theory of multiliteracies suggests, and despite the acknowledgement of the multiple and interacting language and modes of communication found in the museum (Mathewson-Mitchell 2007:3), there is a lack of empirical museum research that examines the potentials of multiliteracies pedagogy to facilitate learning at the museum space. The research work presented in this paper seeks to bridge the gap with special interest on the practical aspects of developing a curriculum of multiliteracies where students engage in transformed practice through multimodal design within a museum educational programme.

#### Research Plan, Methods, and Techniques

Following extensive literature reviews, we have identified these key objectives for our research: firstly, to understand the nature of ‘museum-based literacies’ for Key stage 2 pupils visiting Public Museums and Galleries in Cyprus. Secondly, it seeks to determine what kind of instructional development/design<sup>29</sup> related to literacies would be appropriate to implement in the museum in a way that would empower museum visiting as a meaningful cultural practice.

#### Context

Due to the particular political situation in the island<sup>30</sup>, museums in Cyprus as institutions are diachronically considered as ‘safekeepers’ of the nation, their role is to cherish heritage and tradition of Greek Cypriots (Makriyianni 2007). Despite the importance attributed to the museums and despite the large number of cultural sites found in the island, Cyprus does not have a tradition in museum research (Stylianou-Lambert, 2007). Nevertheless museum educational programmes for primary aged pupils are running in Public Museums for over 15 years (MOEC 2012). These programmes are designed by the Ministry Administrators and Museum Advisors appointed by the Ministry of Education and Culture in Cyprus (MOEC, 2011). Educational programmes implemented in the Public Museums are based on the idea is that these experiences and interaction with the artefacts in a museum could create positive attitudes towards the environment and the cultural heritage of Cyprus (MOEC 2011a). These programs are designed and organised ‘based on the objectives of curriculum, the needs and the interests of children, the restrictions and the possibilities of space and time’ (MOEC 2011b). Implementation of these programmes

<sup>29</sup> A term researchers have used to describe a process that involves the design and evaluation of instructional resources or educational packs (Kimpston & Rogers 1986: 259; Richey, Klein & Nelson 2004; Richey & Klein 2007; Heinich, Molenda, Russel & Smaldino 2002).

<sup>30</sup> A coup organised by the dictatorial government of Greece against the government of Cyprus led to a Turkish military intervention in 1974, which divided Cyprus into two parts separated by a demilitarized zone called “the Green Line,” and guarded by UN peacekeepers until today; however, after an easing of travel restrictions by the Turkish-Cypriot authorities in April 2003, there has been unprecedented mobility between the two communities (Philippou 2007).

lay 'in the experiential learning and the interdisciplinary approach which is achieved through the observation, the exploration, the discovery, and the theatrical game' (MOEC 2011b).

Programmes are implemented by nine schoolteachers appointed by MOEC who will usually hold relevant qualifications or experience. The relationship between policy making, planning and implementation of museum educational programmes in Cyprus suggests a strong connection exists between the broader area of Education and Museum Education in Cyprus. Following the new millennium the need to readdress education theory and practice in Cyprus has resulted in an educational reform that is taking place from 2011 onwards. As part of this process of transformation, "new" concepts have been introduced in the theory of Cypriot education such as critical literacy and multiliteracies (Hatzisavvides 2011). Nevertheless in this process of educational reform, museum education is left untouched. We suggest that the potentials of engagement in and through critical literacy and multiliteracies in a museum context are exceptional and therefore should be considered in any attempt to bridge 21st century needs and learning practices.

### Overall project structure

After reviewing literature related to qualitative research methodologies, it became clear that the case study is the appropriate methodology for investigating and presenting research on the development and implementation of collaborative museum-school programs (Berry, 1998; King, 1998; Yaffe & Shuler, 1992). Purposive sampling, which is taking a nonrandom sample to locate a highly specific population, was used in the selection of the initial case because it is suitable for the research criteria and renders a large amount of information (Hays, 2004; Neuman, 2006). For the purposes of this study, "school" refers to public primary schools. The participants are volunteers from Limassol town and district, and represent a broad socioeconomic cross-section of the community. The project involves investigation in two stages where findings from stage one would inform the next stage to be undertaken over a two-year period, concentrating on the experiences young children aged 8 to 11 years have as part of their educational visits to local museums.

### Stage One

The first stage of the research was structured to examine four components of learning: the individual (the young child), the setting (museum environment); the curriculum (the programme's creator intentions); and the instructor (the museum and its program). According to Kelly's doctoral research on museums and learning, museum learning experiences are enhanced through giving attention to the learner's needs and the multiple roles they play in a visit; the social context of the visit; the objects and tools the museum provides; and the interpretive approaches employed within a 6P model of museum learning—person, purpose, process, people, place and product (Kelly 2007:139-158).

As of November, 2011 all the studies data collection protocols have been developed and data collection took place. Due to the primarily qualitative nature of this study, the methodology employed for this research made use of multiple methods including interactive and humanistic approaches. Methods of data collection for stage one included questionnaires and semi-structured interviews with museum educators and schoolteachers, direct observations and collection of physical artefact such as photographs and paintings of the children participating in educational programmes at the Archaeological Museum and the Public Art Gallery in Limassol, Cyprus. Document analysis was also employed to provide additional substantiated evidence. Group interviews with the pupil participants were designed and developed specifically for the purposes of identifying young children's perspectives of museum exhibits and environments, including their past experiences, personal values concerning museum experience, and past visiting habits while also gaining insights to their perspectives during a single visit to one of the museum sites selected for the purposes of the study. Three protocol tools were developed for each phase based on the theory and practice of multiliteracies: prior to the visit children following an audiovisual comic strip

were asked to fill in “Diary notes”, a short diary of their daily activities in and out of school. This intended to gather factual information on the children as well as explored their level of engagement with multiliteracies. During the actual visit to the museum, four pupils were asked to record of their immediate experiences for each activity in the form of a “Knowledge journey” worksheet which is a common activity in a Pedagogy of Multiliteracies. Learners keep a record of their learning journey. The important starting point is what they already know, asking students to use prior knowledge and connect this with new knowledge. This activity was pursued as to eliminate time gap between the visit and the interview that would take place later. Following the visit to the museum, a focus group interview took place in each of the schools, where “A day at the museum” tool was developed. This aimed to probe children’s recollections of their recent museum experience through an audiovisual story completion.

Stage One was carried out in a total of four classes (grade four and fifth of the Cypriot Public school) in three different schools, one in a village in Limassol district, one in the suburbs of Limassol town and one from the city centre comprising a total of 43 children (24 males, 19 females). The children in this study lived in close proximity to the two museum sites examined in this study, the Archaeological Museum and the Public Art Gallery. Hence, the vast majority of the children’s past museum experience were developed from visits to these settings.

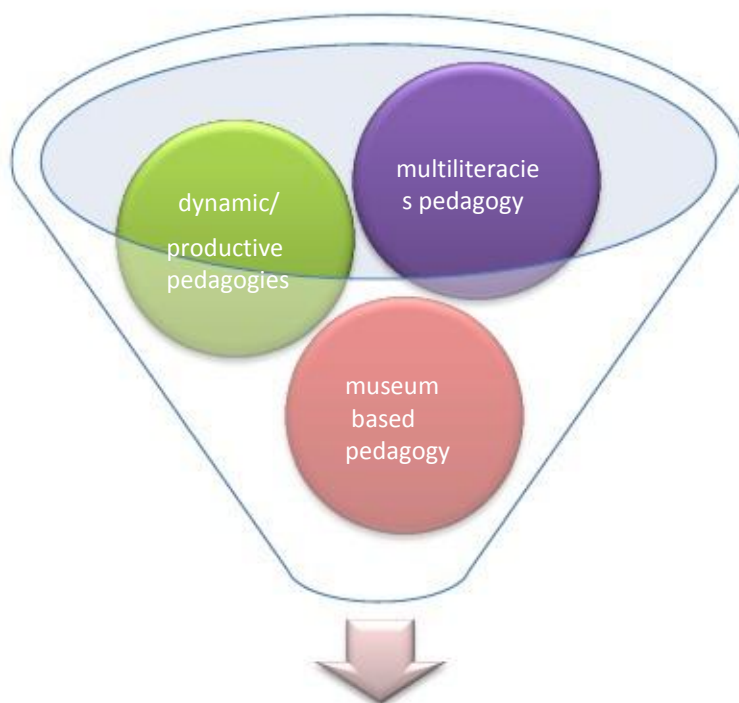
#### Stage Two

An intervention (new program design) will be developed and piloted in late 2012 and early months of 2013 in a museum in Limassol town. The intervention planned will make use of the findings from stage one of the research as well as the development of a model called the Museum Multiliteracies Conscious Approach (MMCA). Figure 2 created by the researcher, demonstrates the pedagogies interacting in the model.

This model can be used as a basis for an investigation of teaching and learning which re-envisioning what constitutes literacy in textual and pedagogical approaches, capitalising on the opportunities for complex literacy practices afforded by the museum environment. The model proposes a Museum-based pedagogy as opposed to traditional museum education in alliance with Schwartz's (2008) perception of museum literacy. He highlights that museum-based pedagogy differs in that its main goal is ‘the teaching of verbal, visual, technological, social, and critical literacies; not museum literacy, which is the ability to access the museum's cultural and intellectual resources’ (Stapp 1984; Schwartz 2008:29). Museum-based pedagogy is concerned with developing a competence at analyzing the museum's means of persuasion, the ways in which the museum makes arguments through and about the objects that it displays. Through provoking questions on the choices of organisation, exhibition of the objects, Museum based pedagogy ‘actively engages’ students to think beyond the museum's contents to its immediate and broader contexts. This contributes to acknowledging ‘the importance of social and material factors in determining students' empowerment and success’ (Schwartz 2008:29).

Figure 2: The MMCA model (Savva 2012)





#### Museum Multiliteracies-Conscious Approach(MMCA)

We suggest that the goals and ideas of museum based pedagogy would be better served by the theory and practice of multiliteracies pedagogy. Therefore we are drawing from key theorists and theories including the New London Group (1996), particularly Cope and Kalantzis' (2000b), Kress' (2000a; 2000b) theories of semiosis, multimodality, design and cultural transformation, and Gee's (1992; 1999; 2003) theories of discourses and power relations.

The MMCA model is aligned with socio-cultural literacy research tradition, following Vygotsky (1962; 1978), Heath (1983), and Street (1984; 1995; 1999). constructivist (Bruner, 1993; Jonassen, Peck & Wilson, 1999; Papert, 1993; Von Glasersfeld, 1987, 1995a, 1995b) learning principles through different modes of knowledge representation and interactive, digital media for collaborative knowledge construction, based on students' experiences and interests. As such it builds on the idea that 'people construct new knowledge with particular effectiveness when they are engaged in constructing products that are personally meaningful' (Resnick, 1997, p. 23-24). Bearing this in mind we bring to this discussion the concept of dynamic/productive pedagogies. Anstey and Bull (2006:59-61) in their book *Teaching and learning Multiliteracies* attribute great importance to 'certain areas of pedagogy needed to achieve improved outcomes for student' (Anstey and Bull 2006:60). Drawing on the work of Land (2001), Lingard, Hayes & Mills (2003), Lingard, Hayes, Mills and Christie (2003) they introduce 'Productive Pedagogies' to a Multiliteracies Pedagogy and discuss their interrelationship. Four Productive Pedagogies are outlined: intellectual quality, connectedness, supportive classroom environment, and recognition of difference. Within these 20 more specific items for attention are drawn. 'The importance of latter enquiry is that it acknowledges a multiliterate person's ability for higher order thinking, using deep understanding in new ways' (Anstey and Bull 2006:60). Anstey and Bull (2006) sustain that the combination of Luke's and Freebody's (1999) Four Resource Model for literacy which outlines the reader practices as code breaker, meaning maker, text user, and text analyst (Anstey, 2002b) (Figure 3), together with attention to

Productive Pedagogies could ensure a balance between lower order and higher order thinking skills addressed; enabling for a dynamic pedagogy<sup>31</sup>(Anstey and Bull 2006).

Figure 3: The Four Resource Model (Luke and Freebody 1999)



What could be of interest in the MMCA model is exploring the application of a Post-Structuralist viewpoint, evident in the introduction of notions of textuality and intertextuality, as a means of empowering museum visitors (McCarthy, 1990; Roberts, 1997; Silverman, 1995). Within this frame of thought museums through their materiality can be seen as ‘texts’ and the visitors as ‘readers’ in a process of interpretation that facilitates movement from passive consumers to active producers of individual meaning (Mathewson-Mitchell 2007). Such notions inform consideration of the literacy nature and requirements of museums as sites for learning at the 21st century. Examples of ways to increase students response to innovation could include metcognitively-rich activities that engage them in (a) “knowledge building” rather than merely “knowledge telling” (Bereiter & Scardamalia, 1989, 1993), and (b) systematic inquiry with an emphasis on theory building and disconfirmation (e.g., Karmiloff-Smith & Inhelder, 1974) rather than simply “following procedures for how to find some result” (e.g., NRC, 2005).

#### Implementation of the MMCA model

The teacher of the school in which the project will be implemented will be informed beforehand of the theoretical framework of the intervention. It is pursued that a prior and post visit interview with the schoolteacher will facilitate understanding of the children’s background knowledge and interests which is an important prerequisite of the MMCA model. Following this idea the subject of the visit will be chosen by the teachers and the researcher together. The interview after the visit will aid in evaluation of the possible learning outcomes of the intervention. As the school teacher will not have an active role during the intervention at the museum, it isn’t considered appropriate to be trained in the theory and practice of

<sup>31</sup>A dynamic multiliteracies pedagogy is concerned with decision making about learning based on the relationships between the learning outcomes, what teachers know about their students’ identities and what teachers know about effective teaching and learning pedagogy (Anstey and Bull 2006).



the learning approach implemented. A decision was made to carry out the intervention myself, assuming the role of the museum educator.

### Assessment

Essentially I will assess the intervention based on qualitative criteria, which, in my opinion, come from the pedagogy of multiliteracies. These criteria will be shaped not only by the theory of multiliteracies but also by the intervention itself, as it developed in the museum. At the same time, the criteria will shape the intervention, as I discuss them with the teacher in our meeting.

I will seek to evaluate:

- To which extent did the project meet its goals, which embody the principles of the pedagogy of multiliteracies?
- To which extent did the developed processes (teaching and learning) produced outcomes relevant to the terms of the MMCA model?
- Which factors helped and which hindered the development of the intervention in the museum?

My research approach in stage two is qualitative (Creswell 1998, Denzin & Lincoln 1994), since a single “case” is studied; a unique and complex case, which I endeavour to study in depth. The study is field focused and is based on qualitative data collected from: a) my research notes and recordings, taken during the prior to the intervention interview with the teacher, and immediately after the intervention b) my observations from the implementation of the project in the intervention and notes taken following the intervention c) interviews with participant students, d) the final product produced by students and teachers when the intervention is completed. The data are elaborated in order to answer the above research questions, making a point of taking into account the participants’ perspectives and their meanings.

### Conclusions

The development of a ‘new museology’ (Mayrand 1985: 201) has focused on the potential of museums as a positive social force. Golding (2009:3-5) argues the museums should act as frontiers, places where learning and identity are produced and developed for all, a position Philips reinforces by pointing to the possibility of museums building new ‘bridges’ are raised between non-dominant communities and their own histories (Golding 2009). This in relation to the significant literacy requirements of museums suggests that increasing focus on the explicit teaching of museum-based literacies, may affect the realization of museum visiting opportunities and the development of cultural competence in the museum setting (Mathewson-Mitchell 2007). Multiliteracies pedagogy then, as this paper contends, could offer a way for museums to address the needs of their changing audience and reach to their full potentials as learning institutions of the 21st century.

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## Mobilizing our cultural identities through art: communicating at the crossroads

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### Abstract

In this paper an arts education professor describes his interactive workshop designed for 2012 InSEA Cyprus participants representing various cultures, ethnicities, religions, and race to examine and reflect on their own cultural identity and mobility. Using images to provoke conversation about the use of language; drawing, poetry, and movement to recall individual cultural orientations; and collaboration in creating cross cultural narrative highlight the progression of activities within the workshop. George Ella Lyon's poem *Where I am* from inspired this workshop focused on interplay between communication, cultural identities, mobility, and art. The author shares the context for such a hands-on workshop including insight from the keynote speaker Rita Irwin. He concludes with insight from the workshop and an appeal for more such interactive sessions at InSEA congresses.

### Key Words

Identity, collaboration, sensitivity, imagination, interdisciplinary

### Overview

A 21<sup>st</sup> century world consists of many intersections of diverse culture and communities. It is a time with quick access to a myriad of images and visual culture that reflect our collage of cultural identities. As art educators we are compelled to ask ourselves: what is our unique role in preparing students with the literacy, sensitivity, and imagination to engage as world citizens? There are no easy answers to this, yet at gatherings such as InSEA 2012 European Congress in Cyprus we had the opportunity to learn from each other. We became students, shared our experiences, opened ourselves up to new artistic and curricula possibilities, and above all communicated with empathy, sincerity, and joy.

This paper describes my workshop, mobilizing our cultural identities through art: communicating at the crossroads as a humble attempt to contribute to both cross cultural sensitivity and meaningful exchange of practice. I wanted the workshop to validate our gifts as art educators from throughout the world and to collaborate as artists to reflect on two key themes from the congress: Arts and cultural identities and Learning in and through the arts in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

Rita Irwin, in her keynote address provoked us with the question what does art education practice set in motion do? She conveyed the image of a 'walking pedagogy' and the need to create environments that embrace experimentation and a strong sense of becoming (2012). I felt an affirmation for the risks we take as teachers, the vulnerability of opening ourselves up while creating a space for students to use their imaginations, develop voice, exchange ideas meaningfully, and create community. Indeed, it is challenging to craft an educational practice that is fluid and trusts the 'in-between illumination,' as Irwin suggests. As we crossed roads with our many cultures in Cyprus we also crossed pedagogies to achieve the common mission of empowering our students in and through the arts.

Dewey (1934), Greene (2005), and Taylor (2011) among many inspire us to bring transformation into the classroom where students and teachers create knowledge together. Flexibility, interdisciplinary thinking, imagination, and reflection support the building of new realities while enhancing one's identity within a





larger context (Pink, 2006; Robinson, 2006). When students work collectively on an artistic problem they enhance their skills to listen, empathize, run with new ideas, try new approaches and media, and reflect in the context of others. Hiltunen (2008) contends that as educators we need to create spaces where students learn from each other's different perspectives. For Shin and Willis (2010), it is the collective exchange of stories and cultural norms through art that leads to understanding. Surely, the dispositions we nurture and reveal in the process of creating art become as much of who we are as the art work itself. This is true for us as it is for our students. Few of us could disagree that today's students must be taught the necessary skills to function in an increasingly complex, conceptual, and globalized society and economy. Amidst the many encounters with art and aesthetics students need to acquire the 'habits of mind' that will enable them to communicate effectively, collaborate with people different from themselves, exercise initiative, and bridge identities from one culture to another. Perhaps, similar to how we value the creative process to understand our evolving identities as artists we need to have faith in the process of creating identity amidst today's crossroads of culture.

### Description of Workshop

Like many of you, I learn best when my hands, body, and mind are in motion and in a safe space to explore ideas. I value collaborative projects because I am taken out of familiar routines and paradigms and nudge myself to the ideas and wisdom of others. These explorations and new insights created with colleagues (and students) expand my individual portfolio of what is possible in creating art, creating curriculum, as well as creating cultural identity. I value experiencing that which I ask of my students, whether angst, confusion, wonder, connections, and discovery.

In my interactive workshop I requested InSEA participants to reflect on their cultural identities. My goal was for all of us to engage in a sequence of activities where we would examine our individual assumptions and habits when communicating and then collaborate on a project focused on culture. We began with the "reading" of images and briefly analyzing the words we use to describe what we see and feel. The following are among the range of images I showed: superman, polaroid camera, chalkboard, Japanese fashion, Greek family dining, polaroid camera and artists Faith Ringgold, Antony Gormley, Georgia O'Keeffe, Diego Rivera, Romare Beardon, Andy Warhol, and Bashir Mirza. In a cross cultural world it is imperative we break down the misunderstandings of language and recognize that certain words (such as perspective, gesture, composition, and intent) have different connotations. This is true for when describing art and visual culture as well as giving instructions and critique in an art lesson. With better cultural understanding of concepts we are able to perceive images with new lenses and respect.

This quick warm up led to a reflection on our individual cultural origins and identities. Moving around the room with various gestures and energies I asked participants to freeze periodically and recall childhood sensations such as smells, tastes, textures, sounds, and sights. These sensations were shared in pairs while walking in the space we created by moving chairs to one side. Inspired by George Ella Lyon's poem *Where I am from* (2004) I then asked participants to compose a quick sketch from one of their childhood memories and compose a short poem full of images, metaphors, and descriptions. My assumption was that learning about other stories enriches our own. We described people, breakfasts, gardens, encounters, furniture, language, religious rituals, snowstorms, markets, family gatherings, sports, cornfields, sand, noise, silence, and so much more.

After individually sharing these memories I shifted the focus to community. Consistent with the InSEA Cyprus objectives to demonstrate awareness of multicultural identity in an ever-changing world participants used the intersection of images, words, and movement to collaboratively and artistically respond to the question: *How might art education create environments that help cultural identities cross roads and live together?* In small groups InSEA participants changed the focus from *I am from* to *We are from*. Participants now were assigned to learn the stories of others and create a collective collage of cross cultural identities illuminating their different traditions, narratives, and visual cultures. Each group found



a way to honor common and uncommon experiences through both the communicating to each other and the cooperative process of discerning how to artistically represent their relatively small crossroads of culture.

### Discoveries

I applaud the willingness of the 20 brave participants in this workshop to embrace Irwin's (2012) image of experimentation and a strong sense of becoming! They modeled the spirit of engagement; they brought their curiosity, enthusiasm, creativity, and compassion to experience a hands-on workshop with some InSEA members who they did not know and in a context that may demand a different mental and physical energy than other inspiring sessions. In our too brief reflection participants commented on how this activity would be an excellent early lesson to establish a learning community built on care and openness. They valued the examination of assumptions of words used to express ideas and communicate about art. It was noted that words and images may be very different for cultures in communicating similar sensations, emotions, and events. They also discussed the need to think carefully about progression of risks from one activity to another and variances in the will to share personal stories. We recognized that inherently there are different comfort levels of openness per individual as well as per culture. In addition, we wondered about the role of technology in shaping cultural identity and the reverse, the role of cultural identity in shaping technology. In lieu of this conversation we agreed on the importance of perception and aesthetics being an indispensable part of art education.

I was most affirmed by their admiration for the community we formed in a relatively short time. They opened themselves up to each other and appreciated the stories behind each of the cultural identities. One of my initial goals was to have the final **We are from** pieces be represented in different art forms. Most were presented in the form of reader's theater and movement. Regrettably, there was little time to create a visual collage of cultural identities, though we talked about ways this might manifest from mural to comics to sculptural installation to digital imagery. There was no follow up workshop; nonetheless, I am convinced that this community formed and creative risks would take the artistic and cultural exploration to the next level whether it be interdisciplinary learning, community arts-based projects, and/or cross cultural curriculum. Overall, I am pleased with how the cross pollinating of creativity and narrative in this workshop sparked an energetic dialogue on our practice as art educators in a culturally mobile world.

### Conclusion

It was apparent to us that identities in a cross cultural world are constantly changing. As art educators we must invite our students to witness new narratives through their imagination, sensitivity, and common experimentation. Human interaction has to offset the sole impressions devised from screens. Often, curriculum begins with 'self' and then moves to community and the world. Images, poems, and movement provided a viable way to extend the language and conceptual knowledge necessary to empower all of us who are affected by cultural mobility. Hopefully, by creating a space for the exchange of cultural literacies and instructing through multiple artistic modalities this workshop contributed to the timely and meaningful examination of how globalization, mobility, and communication technologies influence and shift perspective on our daily practice. Art education is at a crossroads in providing voice for our students. We can't only rely on the enticement of a particular medium or the joy of making art; we need to construct environments that embrace ambiguity and change, balance structure and freedom for playful exploration, and encourage reflection on the way we communicate as well as construct and interpret images. InSEA members need to continue to be the catalysts to set in 'motion' a new paradigm of relating to each other and inquiring and communicating in and through the arts.

I close by complimenting InSEA to include workshops in addition to paper readings and panel discussions. Ironically, we speak about our best practices more often than we engage actively in the in-



between creative spaces collectively as a source for our pedagogy and artistic genes. We need inspiration from multiple modalities! The opportunity to collectively be creative, vulnerable, curious, explorative, and reflective gives a uniquely human touch to our too infrequent times together.

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## Body Image, Identity and Art Education

Wong Shuk-Fan

### Abstract

This paper explores how young peoples' personal and gender identities are shaped by mass media, in particular, through the production of body images. The study focuses upon the relationship between body images and eating disorders among young people (aged 11-17) in the United Kingdom (UK) and Hong Kong (HK). It employs the semiotic theory from the work of Saussure and Barthes to examine the symbolic representation of body identities. The work of Foucault will also be engaged to discuss the relationship between power and representation of gender identities. A survey was conducted and its results were used to illustrate the correlation between a desired body image and eating disorders by comparing the behaviours among secondary students in HK and the UK. The paper also highlights the significance of visual literacy in art education, which helps students critically evaluate the body images produced by the media.

### Key words

Body Image, Identity, Mass Media, Art Education

### Introduction

The impact of western cultural ideal of thinness has been proposed to cause dissatisfaction with body shape and weight concerns among young people not only in western countries, but also many Asian countries (Choi 2002; Kok & Tian, 1994; Markus & Kitayama, 1991). However, comparative case studies among secondary students in HK and the UK are limited. This study, therefore, explores the influence of ideal body images constructed by the mass media and illustrates the correlation between desired body images and eating disorders by using the results of a survey conducted among youths in HK and the UK. The analysis aims to systematically review the attitudes to food, eating and body image among contemporary young people with different cultural and ethnical background, by using standardized measurement instruments in both places.

First, this paper presents a brief discussion of Saussure and Barthes's ideas of semiotic theory. The purpose is to provide the theoretical framework for analysing how an ideal body is constructed through mass media. Besides, the work of Foucault will be employed to explore the power relationship between gender identities and body images representations. It aims to investigate how contemporary body images are being signified and represented through mass media, which provide specific visualizations of gender identities and ideal body images; how this might affect young people's perception of personal and gender identities; and how young people perceive the ideal body images constructed by mass media. Finally, this paper highlights the significance of visual literacy in art education so that art educators can help students develop a more critical attitude towards body image and personal identity.

### Literature Review

#### Meanings and Representations

All images, which we received from mass media, encode meanings and representations according to our social and culture values. Semiotic analysis can help us understand how the photographs of contemporary body images presented in the mass media provide specific visualizations of gender identities and ideal body images. The idea of semiotics is associated with Ferdinand de Saussure (1996) who believed that language is made up of signs (sign: Lat. signum, a mark, a token) that communicate meanings and could potentially be studied in the same way as linguistic signs. He suggests that our perception and understanding of reality is constructed by words and other signs which we use in a social context. He argues that each sign has two parts: the signifier which is “the vehicle which expresses the sign” and the signified which is “the concept which the signifier calls forth when we perceive it” (Bignell 2002:11-12). Apart from languages, gestures, dress codes, traffic signs, magazines, newspapers, films and so on are all kinds of media that use visual signs.

Roland Barthes (1973) develops Saussure’s theory of semiotics in relation to myth or ideology, known as the second level of meaning. He describes myth as the “tri-dimensional pattern” which consists of the signifier, the signified and the sign. In that it is constructed from a semiological chain which existed before it, which is known as a second-order semiological system. Therefore, a sign in the first system becomes a mere signifier in the second. Barthes (1984:109) declares myth functions in society as a “system of communication” or a “message”. This allows one to perceive that a myth cannot possibly be an object, a concept, or an idea; it is a mode of signification, a form. Myth is not defined by the object of its message, but by the way in which it utters this message. Therefore, everything can be a myth. Barthes describes the “chain of associations” or signs that make up a picture's narrative. We can explain these two semiotic levels by considering a well known fair’s name such as Disneyland. On the first semiotic level, the letters (signifier) simply denote a name (signified). However, on the second semiotic level, the name Disneyland signifies a world of “magical kingdom”. It is a magic park with music and tales from cartoons and films. It is a place where children and parents could have fun together. Therefore, the name circulates within the wider textual semiotics (visual, sound and verbal) of the world’s fair.

### The Construction of Body Images

In general, a body is labelled in different ways by the body’s gender, identity and physical appearance according to our social values and cultural assumptions. According to Bem (1974), identities may be different from their assigned gender. This is not contingent upon biological sex, it refers to a person’s own feelings of being male, female, both or neither. However, in most cases, gender identity is related to biological sex. Being socially and culturally constructed, gender defines the roles and expectations of behaviour that society assigns to men and women as well as the social relationships. For example, the way we talk, the activities we join, the clothes we wear, etc. all denotes our gender identities and cultural background. West & Zimmerman (1987:125) suggest that “gender is an achieved status: that which is constructed by psychological, cultural, and social means.”

### Power and Bodily Practices

The relationship between gender identity, representation and bodily practices in western societies has been investigated by Foucauldian’s theory about body and power. It is believed that all the behaviour that anyone undertakes to make the body desirable is a kind of investment of power in one’s own body. Michel Foucault (1980:56) declares “mastery and awareness of one’s own body can be acquired only through the effect of an investment of power in the body: gymnastics, exercises, muscle-building, nudism, glorification of the body beautiful”. Thus, the time and money we spend in order to keep our body ‘in shape’ is recognised as a kind of investment in the body. As Weinke (1998) pointed out in the *Journal of Men’s Studies*, disordered eating can be developed as a response to internal conflict with one’s sexual identity or cultural identity. He insisted that to be a ‘man,’ one had to have a powerful presence in the world, a masculinity represented by muscles, conveying power and control.



As a result, when we try to understand why people always chase the desirable bodies (better selves), we will not be surprised why Chinese foot binding, western corsets and body piercing or scarification, etc. in the past have involved the use of tools to modify body shape and appearance. They are the same behaviours that people today take dieting pills, undertake excessive excise and undergo plastic surgery to attain the socially valued ‘perfect body’.

## The Representation of Contemporary Body Image

### Young people’s perception of the ideal body

Images of female models that appear on the teen girls’ magazine covers are as common as in those for adults. In Figure 1, the cover of *Cosmo Girl* Magazine, July 2005; and in Figure 2 the *Yes* magazine, July 2005, both images of the models are similar to the one appears on *Marie Claire* magazine cover. The images display the young, slim and sexy figures, which present that the contemporary ideal of feminine beauty in both places is the same. Although the teen magazines’ covers display some other contents such as ‘Horoscope’, ‘Friendship’ and ‘Love’, much of the text still focus on how to wear clothes and how to keep the body ‘in shape’ to make a woman feel fashionable, fit and attractive. The texts also suggest how other celebrities or models keep their bodies look young and pretty. Besides, the concept presented in the teen magazines seems to be very mature and sex orientated, which is not very different from the women’s magazines.

Figure 1. Cover image of *Cosmo Girl* Magazine (UK Copy) July 2005



Figure 2. Cover image of *Yes* magazine (HK Copy) July 2005



Take a look at *Teen People* & *Monday* (Figure 3 & 4), which are magazines for adolescents. In *Teen People*, the model’s image on the cover is handsome and muscular. However, the model’s image on *Monday* is different as he is not as muscular as the one on *Teen People*. It might reveal that muscular male body in HK is not as popular as in the UK among teenagers. However, by placing the images on the cover, it creates an illusion for young people that an attractive person should possess ideal bodies of these models which look tanned, lean, strong and healthy. With the increasing emphasis in the media of a lean and muscular male body as the ideal, it is not surprising that many boys and men are becoming frustrated with their own bodies and are willing to make an ‘investment’ by exercising or even taking pills to achieve a ‘desirable’ body (Pope et al 1997).

Figure 3. Cover image of *Teen People* magazine (UK Copy) February 2004

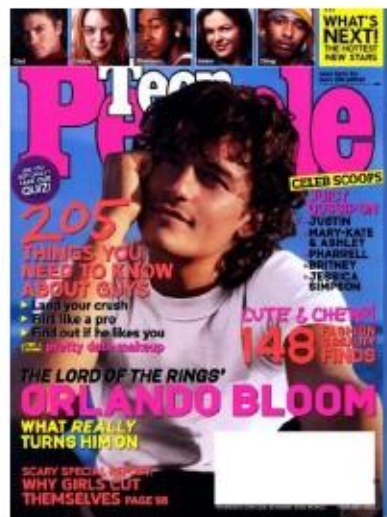


Figure 4. Cover image of *Monday* (HK Copy) August 2002



### Positive connotations of the perfect body

We all know that the representation signs of masculine or feminine identity found in magazines or advertisements are not accurate reflection of the lives and identities of real men or women. Advertisements always create positive connotations of how a perfect body should be represented, which is good looking, young, thin and healthy in physical appearance. The signs and codes in magazines actually construct the myth of positive meanings of masculinity and femininity which are established in our society (Bignell, 2002). Negative characters are always depicted as fat, short and ugly, so young people may get the wrong impression that a bad body is fat, slack and uncared for. It also represents a lazy and unmanageable 'self'. For example, in films, people who play negative roles are normally fat, ugly and short; while those who play positive roles are usually tall, smart and handsome. Take *Amelie*, a film directed by Jean-Pierre Jeunet in 2001 as an example; we will not be surprised that Mr Collignon, the shop keeper, is fat, short and ugly. He deserves to be tricked by Amelie because he is disgraceful and harsh to his worker. On the other hand, the actor playing Amelie's boyfriend, Hipolito, is well-built and handsome. Audrey Tautou, the actress playing Amelie, is beautiful, sweet and funny with a thin and attractive figure as well. Therefore, young people get a positive view of thin people but a negative view of fat people.

From the above discussion, it is noted that the media sets unrealistic standards for what body weight and appearance is considered 'normal' and puts much pressure on teenagers. These body ideals are reinforced every day in TV shows, movies, magazines, comics, video games, etc. What many adolescents do not realize is that most of the 'perfect bodies' they idealize are only an illusion produced by the mass media. Thus, adolescents might find themselves pursuing a body type that is impossible to obtain and hence develop an eating disorder, such as bulimia, or an image disorder, such as muscle dysmorphia (worrying about not being muscular enough) as well as depression and anxiety about their own bodies (Pope et al., 1997). Unless we develop an ability to see that the 'real' body cannot be the 'perfect' body, our desire for the ideal body will always conflict to our real self (Lacan 1977). Thus, as educators, we should facilitate and encourage our students to develop an acceptable, personal ideal image of their own.

A Comparative Study: Body image perceptions and eating attitudes among young people in HK and the UK

The over emphasis of the ideals of thinness through mass media have become a universal phenomenon in contemporary culture. Studies (Arenson 1984; Choi 2002; Kok & Tian, 1994) prove that such situation has been proposed to be causing mass dissatisfaction with body shape and weight among young people in both western and eastern societies. However, comparative studies between the UK and HK on this topic have not been fully investigated yet. Thus, a survey concerning the ideal body and eating behaviours, which was conducted in 2005 is analysed and discussed. The study focuses upon the relationship between body images and eating disorders among students (aged 11-17) in the UK and HK.

#### The aims of the survey are:

1. To explore how young people's personal and gender identities on body images are affected and constructed by the visual culture in specific forms of visualizations.
2. To examine obsessions with eating behaviour and body image among contemporary youths (aged group 11-17).
3. To compare the differences and similarities in young people's perception on body image and eating behaviour in the UK and HK.

#### Hypotheses

By referring to the theoretical discussions and research studies in the pervious chapters, I will expect that:

- (1) A significant relationship between body image and mass media's construction of ideal body images will be shown.
- (2) As children grow older, they will be more concerned about their body images and likely to initiate dieting behaviour.
- (3) Girls will score higher than boys on the statement relating to the upset feeling if the real self does not match the ideal self.
- (4) Girls will score higher than boys on statements relating to dieting, bulimic behaviours, oral control and attitudes to food, as girls are more likely to suffer from eating disorders and idealize the thin body image.
- (5) Girls will score higher than boys on the statement for a thinner body, while boys will score higher on the statement about carry out exerting exercise to burn off calories.
- (6) There will be ethnic differences in perceptions of ideal body images and eating behaviour because of cultural differences.
- (7) Students in HK will score higher score on statement relates the peers' view on body images because of the interdependence construal of Asian culture.

#### Methodology

Altogether, 240 secondary school students (aged 11-17) participated in the study (Table 1); among which 120 are Chinese students in HK and another 120 are British students in the UK. 240 of the questionnaires (Appendix I & II) were distributed and collected in both places. The questionnaires distributed in HK were written in Chinese and the models presented in the questionnaire are also Chinese. Although English is a compulsory subject for HK students, they speak Cantonese in daily life. Therefore, students can better comprehend the questions and be more familiar with Chinese models' images (Appendix II). The distribution of the number of students, their gender, race and ages are as follow:

Table 1

Age group	Chinese		British	
	HK Boys	HK Girls	UK Boys	UK Girls
11-13	20	20	20	20
13-15	20	20	20	20
15-17	20	20	20	20
No. of students	60	60	60	60

## Sample Descriptions and Measures:

### Perceptions of Body Image

Two sets of images were constructed for testing the perception of body images. The categories for female images are: fat/overweight; slim and flat; muscular and big; slim and voluptuous, while the male images are: fat/overweight; thin; muscular and big; mediate muscular. The body images of male and female western models are presented in Figure F1-F8. The participants have to answer a number of questions (Appendix I, Part One) to indicate their perception of the body images.

### Eating Behaviour

The Eating Behaviour part (Q1-Q12) of the questionnaire (Appendix I, Part Two) were derived from questions supplied in the Eating Attitudes Test (EAT) designed by Garner and Farfinkel (1979) for identifying those at risk of developing an eating disorder. The scale was originally used to examine eating disturbances among ballet students and college students. Leanne Roth (1996) conducted her research in her Sydney secondary co-educational school using the EAT and the Children's Depressions Scale (CDS), which indicates that the EAT is a good standardised measure with excellent consistency and validity coefficients.

In this survey, instead of testing 3 factors originally: Factor for Dieting, Factor for Oral control & bulimia and Factor for Food Preoccupation of eating behaviours, I only selected 12 of the EAT questions for testing the Factor for Dieting (Q1-Q6) and Factor for Oral control & bulimia (Q7-Q12). For assimilating the aims of the study, some questions are modified a bit and the response categories of "Always", "Often", "Sometimes", "Rarely" And "Never" are used.

## Results & discussion of results

### Part One: The perception of body images

#### 1. Re: Q1 to Q4

Table 2 and Table 3 below show the percentage of body perceptions of Real Self, Ideal Self, Ideal Male and Ideal Female among students in HK and the UK aged 11-17.

Table 2: boys' perception on ideal female in HK and UK

		HK Girls		UK Girls		HK Boys	UK Boys
		Real Self	Ideal Self	Real Self	Ideal Self	Ideal Female	Ideal Female
F1	Fat/Overweight	15%	0%	53%	8%	1.7%	5%
F2	Slim and Flat	30%	38.3%	27%	17%	25%	23%
F3	Muscular and Big	42%	11.6%	7%	22%	13.3%	3%
F4	Slim and voluptuous	11.7%	50%	28%	48%	58.3%	70%

Table 3: girls' perception on ideal male in HK and UK

		HK Boys		UK Boys		HK Girls	UK Girls
		Real Self	Ideal Self	Real Self	Ideal Self	Ideal Male	Ideal Male
F5	Fat/Overweight	18%	0%	15%	2%	1.7%	5%
F6	Thin	33.3%	10%	42%	38%	23.3%	25%
F7	Muscular and Big	5%	43.3%	5%	32%	23.3%	25%
F8	Mediate Muscular	36.6%	40%	36%	27%	46.7%	30%

When being asked to choose the ideal female figure among F1 to F4, over half of the students chose F4. 56.6% of students chose F4 (Slim and voluptuous) as the ideal female figure. For the ideal male figure, most students chose F7 (muscular and big) and F8 (mediate muscular). It proves that the ideal male and female figures among youths in HK and the UK correspond with the images constructed by the mass media. Therefore, the results confirm Hypothesis (1) that there will be a significant relationship between body image and mass media's construction of ideal body images.

It is interesting to note that over 64% ( $58.3\%/2 + 70\%/2$ ) of boys in the UK and HK voted F4 (Slim and voluptuous) as the ideal female figure, which is 15% higher than the girls who voted the same as ideal female figure. However, when comparing the ideal male figures F7 and F8, the difference is only 0.8%. While comparing with the UK girls, the gap between the ideal self 28% and the real self 48% is smaller. Table 3 shows the percentage in choosing F7 and F8 is very close among boys and girls in the UK, yet girls in HK, like F8 more than F7, indicating that girls like men to be muscular but not too big. This might link to the root of the Chinese culture that the ideal gentlemen (educated) is not too sporty or too muscular.

## 2. Re (Part One: Q3a-Q3d & Q4a-Q4d)

The Reason for choosing the ideal female figures, because: a) is feminine and beautiful; b) looks healthier; c) both; and d) other reasons: (please indicate).



Table 4 shows that over 50 % of boys think that the ideal slim and voluptuous female figure signifies feminine, beautiful and healthy.

The Reason for choosing the ideal male figures, because: a) is masculine and smart; b) looks healthier; c) both (a) and (b); d) other reason: (please indicate).

Table 4 indicates most of the girls believe that the ideal male body is represented as masculine, smart and healthy of men.

Table 4

	Ideal female figure (Q3) Boy's Ans. Only					Ideal female Reason (Q3) Boy's Ans. Only				
	F1	F2	F3	F4	NA	a	b	c	d	NA
UK	5%	23%	3%	70%	0%	53%	25%	38%	5%	2%
HK	1.7%	25%	13.3%	58.3%	3.3%	18.3%	21.7%	55%	5%	0%
	Ideal male figure (Q4) Girl's Ans. Only					Ideal male Reason (Q4) Girl's Ans. Only				
	F5	F6	F7	F8	NA	a	b	c	d	NA.
UK	5%	25%	25%	30%	12%	7%	28%	17%	20%	27%
HK	1.7%	23.3%	23.3%	46.7%	1.7%	21.7%	21.7%	36.7%	5%	1.7%

The results show that young people believe the ideal male and female bodies are linked to desirable gender characteristics. This corresponds to Benson's view, 'Bad' bodies become the external sign of people who do not count for much; fat and slackness mirror internal failure (Benson, 1999:141). In Table 2, only 8% of the UK girls chose F1 as their ideal figure; and in Table 3, only 2% of the UK boys chose F5. However, nobody in HK chose F1 and F5 as the ideal figure. This also implies that HK young people are more vulnerable when exposed to the mass media's ideas of the 'fat' failure culture, and perceives fat as extremely negative.

### 3. Re (Part One: Q5 & Q6)

Regarding the main source from which students get the idea of ideal body images, the four choices are: a) From TV and Film celebrities; b) From newspaper and magazines images; c) From peer's view and ideas; d) Other reason; (please indicate).

Table 5 shows the percentage of youths who chose the source of From TV and Film celebrities, and images From newspapers and magazines images. This once again confirms Hypothesis (1) that the media plays an important role on young people's perception of ideal of images.

Table 5

	HK students	UK Students	Upset with the non-matched

	Ideas From (Q5)			Ideas From (Q5)			ideal figure (Q6)			
	a	b	c	a	b	c	HK Boys	HK Girls	UK Boys	UK Girls
11-13	20	4	8	22	7	4	20%	10%	45%	40%
13-15	20	7	9	18	6	3	50%	55%	25%	40%
15-17	17	6	7	19	4	2	20%	70%	16%	45%
Total No.	57	17	24	59	17	9	18	27	22	25
Total%	47.5%	14.2%	20%	49.2%	14.2%	7.5%	30%	45%	36.6%	41.6%%

Table 5 shows that as students grow older, both girls in HK and the UK are more concerned with their body image. However, it is interesting that it is not the same for the boys. The results indicate that younger boys are more concerned with their body image. Thus, Hypothesis (2) is true for girls only, but not for the boys from this finding. The reason behind is unknown; more study may need to be explored. Please note that choice d) Other reasons has not showed in this table.

Besides, the results show that boys feel less upset with the fact that body image dose not match with the ideal self. Thus, the results confirm Hypothesis (3) that girls will score higher than boys in the statement (Q6) relating to the feeling of depression if the real self does not match the ideal self. In addition, 70% of HK girls (aged15-17) feel upset about the imperfect body. The findings also confirm Hypothesis (7) that students in HK will score higher on peer's view on ideal body image. These results support the view that people are more concerned with the relationship with the others because of the interdependent structure of Asian culture.

## Part two: Eating Behaviour

The results also show that girls score higher on eating disorder when compared with the boys (Appendix III, A & B), implying that girls are more likely to initiate dieting behaviour. This confirms the Hypothesis (4) & (5) that girls will score higher than boys on factors relating to dieting, bulimia and food control, as girls are more likely to suffer from eating disorders and idealize the thin body image. The results also find that students in the UK, especially girls, are more likely to initiate dieting behaviour than those in HK. Thus, it confirms Hypothesis (6) that there will be ethnic differences in the perceptions of ideal body images and eating behaviour because of cultural difference.

## Conclusion of the findings

The findings here are consistent with the literature that body image concerns, weight concerns and eating disorders are associated with the ideal body image constructed by mass media. In general, girls in both places are more concerned with their body images and eating behaviours when compared with the boys. However, dieting behaviour is more common among girls in the UK than in HK as shown in the findings. This may due to the fact that the cultural ideals of female thinness and physical attractiveness have long been valued and embedded in Western societies. Women or girls in Western culture have already been socialized to accept behaviours such as dieting, exercising and plastic surgery for making the body look good and attractive. However, I believe the popularity to practise dieting is rapidly increasing among HK girls, according to the much higher percentage of the girls who feel upset and depressed when their ideal



selves do not match their real selves. It will just take some more time for these feelings to be followed by actions.

In short, the emphasis on thinness in our culture not only oppresses those who are overweight, but also serves as a form of social and psychological control for everybody in the society. The image of ideal body that appears in the mass media has the power to damage an individual's health and destroy one's self-esteem. As Bill Ivey (2002:1) stresses, "If our children don't learn to shape images, images will shape them". I believe through 'visual literacy' education in art, it enables students to develop a critical understanding of how the body is represented in the media.

### Visual Literacy as a Study Tool for Today's Visual World

#### To encode and decode meanings in today's visual word

The term "Visual Literacy" was first defined by John Debes in 1968, which is a group of skills, which enable an individual to encode and decode visual images for the purpose of communicating with others. When young people are over exposed to visual images produced by the mass media, they may be incapable of comprehending or being misled by these dominant information sources, for example, the ideal body images constructed in our contemporary mass media culture. According to Don Langrehr (2003), "the language and images of advertising posed a complex, cognitive challenge, even to these students at advanced levels of education." Therefore, I argue that the weakness of individuals to distinguish particular images or ideas constructed by the mass media is due to poor judgments and critical thinking in the arts. We, as art educators, should assess the ability of students to accurately decode, evaluate and comprehend the implications embedded in visual images or visual languages, and to enable students to perceive the media messages with a clear, logical and critical mind.

#### Visual Literacy and Art Education

The importance of visual literacy has been apparent throughout history and across disciplines. It has emerged from a number of disciplines in arts including: Visual arts, Art History, Aesthetics, Cultural, Media, Semiotics and Communications studies, etc. For example, the reading of statistic diagrams, tables, charts and maps has been practically significant in our daily life. The understanding of images or pictures is a fundamental life enriching necessity; without the knowledge or ability to understand them is defined as 'illiteracy' in today's world, referring to Bamford (2003:2). Thus, it is necessary for everyone, especially young people, to learn how to comprehend the images presented in the media by accessing the knowledge of visual literacy. Referring to Bamford (2003:5), some points of the teaching implications of visual literacy include the need to:

1. Develop critical thinking skills in relation to visual images;
2. Integrate visual literacy across all curriculum areas;
3. Pose questions to students about images;
4. Encourage students to look at underlying assumptions that are embedded in the images surrounding young people;
5. Encourage students to critically investigate images and to analyse and evaluate the values inherently contained in images.

Bamford (2003:6) also emphasises that when we talk about images, we need to be aware of five areas as below:

Issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What issues are being shown in the images?</li> <li>• What might this image mean to someone who sees it?</li> <li>• What is the message of the image?</li> </ul>
Information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Where has the information come from?</li> <li>• What information has been included and what information has been left out?</li> <li>• What is the relationship between the image and any text?</li> </ul>
Who	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Who created the image</li> <li>• Who is the intended audience for the image?</li> </ul>
Persuasion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Why was a particular image chosen?</li> <li>• How has the message been affected by what has been left out or is not shown?</li> <li>• Why was the image arranged that way?</li> </ul>
Assumption	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What attitudes are assumed?</li> <li>• What experiences or points of view are assumed?</li> </ul>

What Bamford suggested above are not only useful when teaching students how to ‘read’ art works or images, but also provide ideas to students whenever they are creating their own or discussing other students’ art work.

## Conclusion

The perfect body of slimness for women; muscular for men becomes common desired body images for contemporary youths. However, such ideal images are actually created ‘products’ which are used as a tool for commercial purposes through the mass media. Perfect body, of course, is hard to attain. Matters are made worse for young people as they have been overexposed to these particular body images everyday in the contemporary universal culture. The survey conducted in HK and the UK shows that such over-fascination with a particular body shape can affect the development of personal identity, self-esteem and gender identities among young people. This will eventually lead to negative attitudes towards eating, obsession with weight and dieting, and a high risk of eating disorders as I have discussed in this dissertation.

However, it is unfair to totally blame the mass media for causing the problems. As educators, it is also our responsibility to guide our students to build up an appropriate attitude towards personal identity by developing a critical mind towards media images. Today, young people face the distortion of body images and eating disorder; tomorrow, they may face other problems such as obsessions with products or ideas created by the mass media. In exploring the value of visual literacy learning, students are encouraged to develop a critical thinking of how the body is represented, without being seduced by the constructed ideal images. What Bamford expresses so accurately, “visual literacy is not only what is seen with the eye, but also what is ‘seen’ with the mind (2003). As a result, through visual literacy education, students will be able to encode and decode the meaning of images, ideas, and then make accurate judgements about the value and the effects of media representations of the body.



Remarks: Although the survey had been conducted for a while, I hope the results would provide art educators a reference for further investigations of the related areas.

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#### List of Illustrations

- Figure 1 Cover image Cosmo Girl Magazine (UK Copy) July 2005
- Figure 2 Cover image of Yes magazine (Hong Kong Copy) July 2005
- Figure 3 Cover image of Teen People magazine (UK Copy) February 2004
- Figure 4 Cover image of Monday (Hong Kong Copy) August 2002

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## Using technology and art for bridging the gap between 'Us' and the 'Others'

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### Abstract

The paper refers to the contribution of art and technology, through film, technology and experiential workshops, for bridging the gap between "Us" and the "Others" in the case of young people (15-30 years old), members of the Greek Cypriot community. Specifically, the workshops begin by completing an online questionnaire with "bipolar" questions, in which respondents are asked to categorise a series of concepts such as 'cross', 'crescent', 'red', 'blue', 'economic migrants', 'illegal immigrants', 'Greek', 'Turkish', "Pope", etc in one of the following two categories: "Us" or "Others". Then the participants are divided into two groups, one watching an American film about World War II and the other watching a Japanese film describing the same war incident from the Japanese point of view. The two groups are then brought together in a fruitful and constructive confrontation to each other, which activates processes towards understanding the "Others" and accepting diversity. At this stage, the results of the "bipolar" questionnaire are publicised and the participants are given, for each one of the questions, additional information through experiential workshops, which tend to change the perceptions of the participants, as reflected in the results of the questionnaire, automatically extracted by the computer. Finally, participants are asked to answer an online questionnaire, which in fact summarises the results of the workshops and illustrates the views and believes that have been transformed through the arts and technology workshops.

### Key words

Seventh Art, Technology, Experiential Workshops, 'Surprise attack' Technique, Transformative Learning

### Introduction

This paper discusses the use of the 'seventh art' and technology in the framework of experiential workshops on issues of diversity, addressed to young people 15-30 years old in Nicosia, Cyprus.

First we analyze the theoretical background of the paper, with emphasis on experiential learning (as a form of alternative learning) and on transformative learning. The identity and the outline of the workshops are given to complete the picture, with details of the various parts, including the allocated time for each part. Alternative variations of some parts of the workshops are also given, where necessary. The methodology of the workshops is extensively explained, with emphasis on the "surprise attack" technique, on which the success and effectiveness of the workshops mainly depends. Finally, the conclusions derived from the implementation of the workshops are presented in detail.

### Literature Review

The experiential learning is an alternative form of learning, based on the assumption that personal experience is a very important element in the learning process. Greek tradition refers to this as a great truth. A number of examples are given by Natsoulis (1996), extracted from Aeschylus ("pathei mathos" = through experience learning is gained", Agamemnon, 178), from Euripidis ("gnosei sy paschon" = you

will learn through experience”, Iktides (Supplices), 580), from Hesiod (“pathon de te nipios egno” = “even a fool learns by experience”, Works and Days, 218) and so on. People’s wisdom also says that “to pathima ginetai mathima” = “suffering becomes a lesson” or “o pathos mathos” = “who suffers learns”. (Natsoulis, 1996). Although the wording could lead to a conclusion that “suffering” refers only to negative experiences, however, here it is understood in the broadest sense, which refers to everything someone experiences, regardless if it constitutes a negative or a positive experience. Therefore, every experience in our life, even accidental or unintentional (“random” and “unintentional” learning), is possible to activate the learning process. Also, looking at things from the perspective of the result, learning is practically achieved by action, the active (experiential) participation of the subject of learning (“learning by doing”).

Alan Rogers (2002) refers to a critical approach of the experience and active search for new material so that the experience will be assessed. The workshops using all these elements, are designed to bring participants face-to-face with “new material”, new information, which often comes in shocking contrast with pre-established perceptions, or “fresh”, not consolidated views that have been intentionally left to be formulated in the early stages of the experiential process. (Zenios, 2011). In general, the workshops have as theoretical background the work of some theorists and practitioners in the fields of learning and thinking, with emphasis on alternative forms of learning: Kolb (1984), Rogers (2002) and Jaques (2004) refer to critical thinking as a series of questions related to an experience that are generated in view of a new experience, leading to conclusions and formulation of general principles, supportive for the effective management of new experiences. De Bono (1967) introduces the theory of lateral thinking as the basis for creative learning (Lucas, 2007). Jaques (2004) refers to the theory of learning in groups while Dixon (2006), Varvel (2002) and Zenios (2008 and 2009) and Townsend (2003) refer to the icebreaking technique. Last but not least, Mezirow (2007) introduces the theory of transforming learning, which refers to the process according to which given reference frameworks are transformed to allow change through reflection and production of new beliefs and attitudes that will prove truer.

## Methodology

### Identity of the Workshops

The type of the workshops is experiential and they are addressed to around 30 youngsters 15-30 years old. The duration of the workshops is about 5 to 6 hours. There is a need for at least one computer for every four participants. The workshops are coordinated by one coordinator, assisted by two facilitators.

### Outline of the Workshops

The workshops include the following consequent parts: Completion of an online self-diagnostic test upon arrival, Projection of two films in two different rooms for two different groups, Group discussions and preparation of power point presentations on the films watched, Plenary session with group presentations followed by a group debate, Presentation of the results of the self-diagnostic test, Presentation of “new material” as food for thought, General discussion, Completion of an online evaluation questionnaire upon departure.

### Principles, Methods, Techniques and Tools used in the Workshops

The following principles, methods, techniques and tools are exploited: Use of the so called “Seventh Art” (cinema), extensive use of ICT (computers), use of an Icebreaking activity (Autograph), use of the Brainstorming technique, application of the “Surprise attack” technique (taking participants by surprise), use of Heuristic methods, application of the Principles of Transformative Learning, Working in Groups, Presentations, Plenary sessions, Discussions and Debates.

Special mention should be made about the “surprise attack” technique, used in these workshops, according to which the transformation of beliefs and attitudes is produced after the participants are taken by surprise, “attacked” by surprising new material and information. This element is used by Zenios (2011, 2012) in experiential workshops where well-designed activities which intentionally include concepts or questions with double or multiple meaning, reveal surprise as a strong factor for the activation of transformative learning.

### Online Individual Self-diagnostic Test

The self-diagnostic test includes 40 concepts (could be less or more, depending on time availability) which should be classified in one of the two following categories: "Us" and "Others". Deliberately, the test was designed with only the above two options. There is no third column for a “neutral” response or an “I do not know / I do not want to answer” option. Furthermore, there is no option for non-response, as all 40 points are compulsory. The participant is “forced” to take side. What really matters in this activity is not the exact statistical result but only the trend. This is the reason why no explanations are given, although concepts chosen are mostly (deliberately) ambiguous and ambivalent, with double or multiple meaning, depending on multiple points of view.

The 40 concepts are Cross, Crescent, Pope, Red, Blue, Greeks, Turks, Romans, Jews, Egyptians (Egyptiotes), Serbs, Bulgarians, Macedonians, Albanians, Black, Turkish speaking, Albanian speaking, Ellinorhythmoi (= of Greek rite), Janissaries, Turkish Cypriots, Economic Migrants, Illegal immigrants, Political Refugees, Constantinople, Istanbul, Athens, Ankara, Rome, Alexander the Great, Constantine the Great, Constantine Palaeologus, Armatoloi, Kleftes (= Thieves), Kolokotronis, Lord Byron, Kemal Attaturk, Markos Vamvakaris, Rauf Denktash, Virgin Mary and John Chrysostom.

Since the self-diagnostic test is completed online, this part of the workshop is organised in a computer lab, so that all participants have their own computer. Time allocated to this part is around 10 minutes.

Variations of this step: (a) Complete the online questionnaire before the beginning of the workshop after participants are provided with relevant user names and passwords and (b) give the questionnaires to be completed manually at the beginning of the workshop.

### Application of an icebreaking activity

Icebreaker is an activity which is implemented in vocational training programmes, where usually participants do not know each other, in order to help them overcome their initial embarrassment and become acquainted with each other and with the instructor and the learning environment. In this workshop the icebreaking activity used is a version of the so called “Autograph”. This is a specific icebreaker during which each participant holds a card with a number of statements and tries to find one participant for each statement who satisfies the content of the specific statement. The participant who satisfies a statement is kindly asked to sign next to it (autograph). Usually

the statements are related to the subject of the training course. In this case nine statements were used, related to the acceptance of diversity:

1. Speaks a language other than Greek, English or French
2. Studies in another country other than Cyprus and Greece
3. Lives permanently in a country other than Cyprus and Greece
4. At least one of the two parents comes from another country
5. The person himself / herself comes from another country





6. He / She has friendship with persons from another country
7. He / She has friendship with persons who are not Christian Orthodox
8. He / She has friendship with members of the Turkish Cypriot community
9. He / She has friendship with Maronites, Latins and Armenians (Cyprus religious groups)

For this activity time allocation needed is about 10 minutes.

### Film Workshop

Participants are divided into two groups, each one watching a different film in a separate projection room. The two movies, both directed and co-produced by Clint Eastwood are “Flags of Our Fathers” and “Letters from Iwo Jima”. The subject of these two films is the battle between the Americans and the Japanese over Iwo Jima, a Japanese island, during the World War II, seen from two different points of view, the American and the Japanese. The duration of the films is over 2 hours; therefore the time allocated for this part should be around 140 minutes.

### Group Discussions

Group discussions are conducted in two separate groups, having been formed during the previous step. Issues discussed in each group are different, but in both cases emphasis is put on the distinction between “Us” and the “Others”. Using brainstorming technique and aiming at preparing power point presentations, the two groups, named after the films watched (Group I: “Flags”, Group II: “Letters”) discuss the following issues:

#### Group I (“Flags”):

- Who are “Us” and who are the “Others” in the film watched?
- Discuss the concept of “hero” as it is presented in the film. Who is the real hero and who use him and why?
- What is the meaning and the importance of the flag in this movie?

#### Group II (“Letters”):

- Who are “Us” and who are the “Others” in the film watched?
- Discuss the concept of “honour” as it is presented in the film. Who is the real man of honour and which action, being considered as dishonour, is prevented or punished through decapitation?
- What is the role of the letters in this movie?

The various views are recorded through the computer and displayed simultaneously on the screen to be seen and agreed by all group members. The result of this procedure is the preparation of the presentation of each group, which will be presented in plenary session in the next step.

Time allocation for this activity is approximately 40 minutes.

### Group Presentations and Debate

Plenary session follows after group work is completed, to present the results of the group discussions. Participants bring with them their experiences and impressions from watching the movies. The two groups



have a fruitful and creative confrontation, through which impressions created during watching of the specific films are changed.

Time allocation to this stage is approximately 40 minutes.

### Presentation of the results of the self-diagnostic test

At this stage the participants are informed of the results of the online self-diagnostic test, which was completed individually by each participant at the beginning of the workshops. This is important to be done before or along with the next step, which is the presentation of new material. The results are automatically extracted through the computer and they are presented in numbers and in bar charts.

### The “Surprise Attack” Technique and Presentation of “new material” as food for thought

Either after or along with the presentation of the results of self-diagnostic test comes the “Surprise Attack” technique, used to facilitate the questioning of one’s own knowledge, beliefs and activate change procedure towards achieving transformation of learning.

Last two parts together need an allocation of at least 40 minutes.

### General discussion

This is the overall final discussion in plenary, during which transformation of views and beliefs of the group members on the issues related to diversity is consolidated and a new attitude calling for openness before new stimuli received from the environment is formed. Time allocation for this part is about 30 minutes.

### Completion of an online evaluation questionnaire upon departure

This is the last stage of the workshop, in fact having to do with the evaluation of the outcomes of the workshop. The questionnaire consists of a number of simple statements like “We should critically approach information”, “We should be open to the others”, “Respecting our own identity is a prerequisite to learn how to respect the identity of others”, “Mass media often act as media for mass influence”, “We should critically approach new information”, “We gain valuable experience when we are open to the views of others”, “We should accept something as a fact only when it is based on evidence”, “The ultimate expression of love is to sacrifice myself for others”.

Participants should state to what degree they agree with each statement (Strongly agree, agree, disagree or strongly disagree). This final stage is allocated around 20 minutes.

### Results and Discussion

After watching the films and after the two groups came in confrontation to each other, the participants started realising that there was a strong prejudice for the “Other” without knowing the “Other”. It was noticed that the majority of those in “Flags” group considered the Americans as “Us” and the Japanese as “Others”, while the opposite happened with those in the “Letters” group. The participants examined in a critical way whether hero is the one projected and promoted through the media or the one who sacrifices himself. In the same way, they critically discussed whether the real honoured soldier is the one fighting to the end or the one who kills himself to avoid surrender. They realised that “Us” and the “Others” usually co-exist in the same side, even in the same person.



In the self-diagnostic test, concepts like “Greeks”, “Cross” and “Blue” were classified by the vast majority as “Us”, while concepts like “Turks”, “Crescent”, “Red” and “Pope” were classified by the vast majority as “Others”.

Concepts with 100% classification as “Us” were two among 40: “Virgin Mary” and St John Chrysostom.

Concepts like “Economic migrants” were classified as “Others” by a narrow majority.

Shocking was the fact that the concept “Janissary” was classified by 50% as “Us” and by the other 50% as “Others”, revealing the tragic history of Greek and other Christian children kidnapped by the Ottomans and converted into Muslims.

Remarkable was the fact that someone had classified all concepts under “Us”, stating that there are no “Others” before God!

Upon receiving new material related to the self-diagnostic test, participants realised also that reality is not always as perceived by us and that reality has usually two or more interpretations.

Examples:

- “Greek” (classified by the vast majority as “Us”) in old Western European Dictionaries means heretic, schismatic, impostor, humbug, while “Hellen” (= Greek) until the 18<sup>th</sup> century meant the pagan.
- The Cross (classified by the vast majority as “Us”) in Jewish world was the symbol of disgraceful death.
- The Crescent (classified by the vast majority as “Others”) was an ancient symbol in Eastern Mediterranean and Middle East and passed through Byzantium to Christian world until today.
- Red colour (classified by the vast majority as “Others”, as related to Turkish flag) was the colour of the civil flag in Roman Empire (Byzantium) and is the symbol of the blood of the Christian Martyrs.

## Outcomes and Conclusions

Vast majority of the participants approved the evaluation statements, proving that the workshop lead to change of attitudes, views and beliefs. The response of the participants in the "new material" is positive, although there is an initial resistance to change. The art and technology were successfully used towards bridging the gap between “Us” and the “Others”.

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## **PART 3**

### **Arts and Society**





## Reflecting on artists in residence

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### Abstract

This paper has been based in the research I conducted for my dissertation in the MA Museums and Galleries in Education, at the Institute of Education, during the course 2009-10. In this paper I will look at the Artists in Residence programme, developed at The Whitechapel Gallery, to explore what distinguishes working with artists in residence, in long term educational programmes. By discussing to what extent the artists shaped Artists in Residence, I will examine where the differences and similarities between working with an artist and working with a gallery educator dwell, (in terms of the learning, strengths, problems and even the structure that upholds this educational initiative). I will also address the conflicts arising from the different ways artists are understood by the diverse agents involved in the programme (the gallery, teachers and the artists themselves). And I will identify “meaningful misunderstandings”, occurring partly as a result of failing to work with clearly defined notions such as “education”, “critical” or “risk taking”. I would like to clarify that, as I only had the opportunity to research this programme while doing the one month work placement at the gallery, there might be some discrepancies between my understanding of the programme and its history and development. Actually, the year I conducted my research was an especially tricky one. I would also like to highlight that the gallery is currently working to address some of the issues I will describe through the course of this paper.

### Key words

Gallery education, artist residencies

### Introducing the programme

Artists in Residence (which started in 2002 as Creative Connections), implements an approach to work at The Whitechapel Gallery that was introduced in the 1970s, when Nicholas Serota designated Martin Rewcastle as the first Education Community officer. Rewcastle initiated the placement of artists in local schools. The programme is very complete, as it makes possible an outside the classroom learning experience that comprises not just working with artists but also visiting The Whitechapel Gallery, artist's studios and other venues, as well as doing an exhibition at the gallery and doing evaluation/research about the pedagogical practice being developed. The programme prioritises the more disadvantaged as the first ones to work with.

The aims of the programme are multiple: a) to stimulate fresh approaches to teaching, learning and engaging with contemporary art in schools, b) to increase secondary school students' understanding and enjoyment of modern and contemporary art, developing creative skills and encouraging critical engagement, c) to offer young people the opportunity to work alongside professional artists, d) to foster creative collaboration between artists and teachers, giving teachers the opportunity to extend their engagement with modern and contemporary art, e) to support the professional development of both teachers and artists with a focus on developing expertise in the critical and contextual study aspects of art, and f) to extend the breadth of the Art and Design Curriculum to include art in the public realm and participatory arts practice, while developing skills in new media alongside more traditional art forms (Whitechapel Gallery, 2010)

## To what extent do artists shape the programme

On the reports about *Artists in Residence* since 2005 it is emphasised that the programme teaches students to have fun, and to be surprised and inspired by the contemporary art. The programme introduces them to experimental and exploratory ways of making while developing their intellectual and critical skills. Concretely, in relation to contemporary art, it is stated that the programme alters student's feelings, perceptions and attitudes towards contemporary art by introducing them to the way it functions. The artists' participation is presented as remarkable because of the resources they create, their preparation and the relationship they establish with the students. At the same time, problems such as conceptual leaps, the artist's practice not being understood by teachers and students, and communication difficulties between artists and teachers are pointed at.

All in all, I would say that there is nothing distinctive here in working with an artist. I work in Es Baluard Museum of Modern and Contemporary Art (Palma de Mallorca, Spain) and have been doing residencies in schools as a gallery educator, when we have developed long term educational projects. In all the evaluations of these programmes we have undertaken, the aspects mentioned above have appeared. What is indeed distinctive of working with artists, and mentioned in the *Artists in Residence's* reports is, firstly, that this programme affects how students manage and orientate their lives professionally and, secondly, that it gives students the opportunity to work alongside professional artists. Both statements refer to the idea of "professionalism", a goal that other long term educational programmes, as for example the ones we develop at Es Baluard Museum of Modern and Contemporary Art, do not pursue.

Regarding to how *Artists in Residence* has been structured, the studio visit and the commission for the gallery exhibition are the distinctive characteristics of the programme, resulting from working with artists. In the interview I made to Annabel Johnson (Schools Officer) and Selina Levinson (Schools Programme Curator), both responsible for the *Artists in Residence* programme, they talked about the gallery commission and the studio visit as a way to introduce the students into the art world, making them aware of how it works (consequently having a de-mystification effect):

I think the studio visit and the commissioned aspect are a strong part of the programme, which is about engaging with artists practice. The artists we work with are often emerging artists, or at some point of their career... It's about engaging students in their thought processes. (A. Johnson, personal communication, June 7, 2010).

For the students, the good side of the commission is that it motivates them to do a good job:

Students also appreciated the fact that their ideas were contributing to Lisa's own work and the Whitechapel's new exhibitions. (The Whitechapel Gallery, 2010, p. 8).

I didn't like art before...trips like this inspire you. The idea of getting my work hung in a gallery pushes me to practice my skills. (Student Comment from Focus Group, Rokeby School). (Johnson, 2006, p. 21).

However, in *Inspiring Learning in Galleries: London Custer Research Report* (2006), it can be observed that, sometimes, when student's work is shown into a gallery context, they can feel that their voices are not taken enough into account. The reason why this happened is that when an exhibition has to be done, issues of quality (understood in terms of aesthetic value and presentation) as well as time pressure emerge. The gallery commission is definitely a very valuable way of introducing the students into the art world. However, it does not always work, as problems arise related to the pedagogical character of the students/teacher-artist-gallery relationship, the student's ownership of the work and their control about the learning process. Here, then, it can already be observed that artists and pedagogy are not always necessarily a perfect match.

### Artists through the eyes of the different agents implicated on the project

In the interview I made to Annabel and Selina, they described the artist as the “driver” of the project, someone that goes to the school to collaborate with the teachers in order to inject new ways of working. The importance of their ability to relate to people was emphasized:

Within the education department we tend to work with artists whose work is within the participatory practice, socially engaged... Just because the work they are doing is tied up with working with people. (A. Johnson, personal communication, June 7, 2010).

Working with the wrong artist could be detrimental, that’s why it is important for us to find the right that have got really interesting new types of practice but, usually as Annabel says, they are participatory because they need to be able to work with people. There would be no point for us putting an artist in a school who has a really interesting practice but has no skills at all... and could actually work the other way. (S. Levinson, personal communication, June 7, 2010).

The positive aspects of working with artists have also been signalled by several teachers participating in *Artists in Residence* (whose voices have been collected through all the different reports written about this programme):

I have been inspired to vary my teaching style and include more critical thinking discussions in other classes. I am developing more projects including trips with follow up workshops. (Teacher). (The Whitechapel Gallery, 2008, p. 21-22).

(...) described how the project rejuvenated her teaching methods to include more risk taking and discourse within the class. (Head of Art, Tower Hamlets). (The Whitechapel Gallery, 2009, p. 12).

Therefore, it is described an ideal scenario where artists eager to work with the education community are able to develop innovative and experimental practices in the classroom. A connection between relational/participatory/collaborative art practices and critical pedagogies is also made by the gallery, which is not strange if we take into consideration the commonalities among these theoretical positions. However, despite of the clear proximity between relational/participatory/collaborative art practices and critical pedagogies, reality is far more complex. There are multiple ways of understanding the role that artists should play in educational projects and, in this particular programme –*Artists in Residence*–, I had the opportunity to observe certain incompatibilities between the gallery and the teacher’s views on the one hand and the way artists understood themselves on the other hand.

### But we are not educators...

The artists I interviewed define their practices as the gallery does, in a participatory and relational way, emphasizing their role as connectors and engines of social interaction. In their interviews, all artists strongly highlighted that they do not consider themselves educators. They feel this identity has been forcefully allocated on them by the gallery and the teachers.

I don’t see myself as an educator and I don’t see myself changing in any way if I am working in the context of... in this sort of context. So, for me, it doesn’t change much if there is an education department from the gallery that asks me to do a project, I think that doesn’t necessarily mean that I am now an educator because I am working with an education department. I still think that I am an artist that simply entered the gallery from a different door. (...). I still see myself as an artist and I still want to produce my work. (Mary, personal communication, June 16, 2010).

I would have never said I was an educator. I would say that I am... in terms of my role in kind of working in an educational environment, like in secondary school, it's more for me about getting access to a group of people that I would not normally get access to, developing something with them that kind of... You know, in an ideal situation it's a two way thing. (...). Education is essentially having access to new things and different ways of looking at stuff. (Joan, personal communication, June 16, 2010).

The artists interviewed emphasized that in their participation in the project they expected to fulfil their own interests as artists and claimed their "right" to do so, understanding that education would then be an outcome of the experience for both parts, the students and also the artists themselves. Helen (another of the artists participating in the programme who I interviewed) specially put a lot of emphasis in the fact that the gain of these experiences should be the reflection they allow for, that the programme should be a space not to learn something already established but to question it. This relates to the view of Jantjes on the art's function in society:

Art is the part that takes the broadest and most critical view of culture as a whole, rather than a specialised and narrow one. (Jantjes, 2001, p. 21).

A major concern in all the artists interviewed was the very structure of the programme.

That kind of thing I was saying about sociable exchange of knowledge was not allowed to happen very much because I was... I had to deliver particular workshops in particular ways and yes, I am working within the structure of the secondary school and that's not the secondary school's fault, that's just the way the educational system works in states schools in Britain. (Joan, personal communication, June 16, 2010).

All artists coincided that the structure of the programme made it difficult for them to work as artists and that, instead, they were being forced to act as "teachers" by the working circumstances they had<sup>2</sup>. Lack of time to work with the kids, the duration of the project being not enough, having to meet teachers' criteria to evaluate what was being done, and having no power to choose the students and teachers they wanted to work with, made it difficult to establish relationships that allowed for an experience that enriched all people involved in the project. Helen defended that for the project to work, its total reconceptualisation would be necessary. Understanding it not as an education programme anymore, but as a school programme would not constrict it to the institutional structure and the curriculum, and could allow for critique and risk taking, and account for the school as a social, political, and historical space. Here it can be observed that what teachers consider to be "critical thinking" and "new approaches to the pedagogical methods used in their practices" is, for the artists I interviewed, just a watered down version of what they expected the project to be and allow for.

The artists' discourse is surrounded by a romantic vision (Meecham, 2005) in which the artist is seen as an outsider to a regulated system, not able to adapt to it or work within its constraints. A dichotomy is presented between developing critical artistic practices on the one hand, and the school and gallery's demands for "education" on the other hand (education here being understood only as the opposite to what the artist aims to do, a kind of "free-of-constraints thinking"). At any point is the possibility of understanding education inside the school's structure from another less constricted model considered. This polarization of possibilities is worrying as it does not give any chance to teachers for agency to move outside the deficit model in which they have been allocated, and in which they have allocated themselves (in this it seems that teachers need someone from outside the classroom to really innovate in their pedagogical practices). At this point, it is worthy to signal another way of understanding the role of artists in educational projects.

### Pringle's conceptualization of the artist as educator

Pringle's thesis *The artist as educator: an examination of the relationship between artistic practice and pedagogy between contemporary gallery education* (2008), is a study around the benefits of using artists in gallery education that focuses particularly in artist-educators working at Tate Modern. The author refers to the Art Making Model, elaborated by Rebecca Binch and Lucy Pedlar in 2005, to explain how their practice as artists informed their pedagogical practices. Apart from the critiques this model has received<sup>3</sup>, it is interesting as it presents different phases of the artistic process that can be extrapolated to pedagogical practices informed by a co-constructivist model and that seek to forge the student's autonomy and critical thinking through dialogue. In the Art Making Model, it is sustained that the creative process is constituted by several phases: interest/curiosity; looking; re-present stage; reflection; transformation.

Contrarily to the artists interviewed, Pringle is looking at how the particularities of the artists' ways of working can inform pedagogies inside institutional frames. Furthermore, from her point of view, the idea of the artist as a mere mediator or facilitator that is permanently opening up a dialogue oversimplifies what happens in the pedagogical experience; the fact that artists-educators do adopt more of a teacher position, strategically, at some point of the pedagogical experience, should not be demonized:

I consider inappropriate to underestimate the active and direct involvement of the artist as teacher in the pedagogic process. I recognize the desire to move beyond the transmission model and the teacher as a "teller, organizer, judge" (Watkins, 2005), but equally, positioning the educator wholly as facilitator risks simplifying the multi-layered interchange between themselves, artworks and learners. In some aspects I wish to reclaim a space for teaching (...) in the gallery. (...). Rather than denying the "teaching" that takes place, it is constructive to examine what part all forms of engagement, including instruction, play in the overall process of meaning making. (Pringle, 2008, p. 170).

Pringle's understanding of the artist as an educator breaks the clear polarisation between education and artistic practice, allowing for the creation of a common ground, from where teachers and artists can work together (collaboratively more than from opposite sites). Furthermore, Pringle's conceptualisation of the artist-educator brings me back to the question of "what is distinctive of working with artists in long term educational programmes; what is the difference between working with educators or working with artists?". Whereas if I compare myself as a gallery educator to the artists that I interviewed the difference appears clearly in the goals of the whole project –my purpose is to educate while theirs is to build up interesting art practices–, in Pringle's frame the goals are the same, and the differences more difficult to elucidate. I will defend that most of the procedures mentioned by her in the Meaning Making Model are not restrictive to the artist's work; problem posing, experimentation, risk taking, and so on are also present in my pedagogical experiences as a gallery educator. At the end of the day, the difference between working with artists or gallery educators could be what I have already pointed at in the first part of this paper; a matter of professionalism.

Moreover, it is necessary to take into account that the difference between a gallery educator and an artist working in educational projects also depends on what we understand by gallery education. As Carmen Möersch (2003) poses, in Germany –and also in Spain– gallery education has traditionally been made not by artists, but by art historians, in their role of experts. As soon as other people come into gallery education, their position in the gallery structure can be rethought and become more flexible. Boundaries appear blurry and hybrid figures, able to reside in distinct spheres, emerge. In regards to this, it is interesting to point at the paper by Katie Orr (2010) about her work at Gassworks, where she positions herself as wanting to improve as a gallery educator, while presenting herself as an artist to the children; a strategy to diffuse both institutional authority and her own expertise, which would allow for a more dialogical experience (Pringle, 2008, p. 191).



## Reflecting on the arisen questions

The gains of working with artists in educational projects cannot be stated in a deterministic or conclusive way. The argument to be constructed will depend, firstly, on what the goals of the educational project in which the artists work are: maybe it is to integrate art in the whole school curriculum, or to turn students into “young artists”, or to extend the school pedagogical practices, or to offer an alternative space to experiment, etc. Secondly, it will also be subjected to what the role of the artists working in the programme is: sometimes they are required in a practical skills based sense, others as role models of “being an artist”, or as cultural producers whose practice can inform different interesting pedagogies inside the demarcated classroom space, or as complete outsiders that can promote something absolutely different. In the same way, the differences between the role of artists and gallery educators in educational programmes will vary depending on the initiative, and will be related not only to the way in which artists are understood but also to the way in which gallery educators are. In the concrete case of the **Artists in Residence** programme, it has several really good points to take into account, such as: it prioritising the disadvantaged young people as the ones the gallery wants to work with, offering an outside the classroom experience and the projects being embedded in the specificity of the school context. Furthermore, the programme promotes fresh approaches to teaching, learning and engaging with contemporary art in schools. In respect to the students, they have the opportunity to meet and work with contemporary art practitioners, fostering their understanding of the art field and, maybe, even finding interesting career paths. They are introduced to working in exploratory ways of making and developing their intellectual and critical skills.

However, as it always happens, this outstanding programme has also weak points that need to be worked out. First of all, it seems that in **Artists in Residence** difficulties emerge from managing notions such as “education”, “critical”, “risk taking” or “introducing new practices in the classroom”. The agents involved in this educational initiative have different understandings of them, which cause consequent incompatibilities in their expectations about the goals of the programme and their own roles on it. Maybe it would be enough trying to manage these notions in a less loose way, being more concrete about what we mean by them.

Moreover, a common understanding of the “terms of the contract” has to be reached. In order to meet everybody’s expectations, the programme’s structure and artist’s agency to make decisions regarding groups, directions of the project, timetable, duration of the programme etc., should be defined more clearly from the beginning. It is also important that the gallery makes explicit the terms in which it hires the artists as well as their position or role within the whole institution, either as “educators”, or “artists” with the same status as the artists in the galleries.

In order to sort out the two points just presented above, it is crucial to polish the communication channels between the gallery, artists and schools. Whereas it is true that the gallery, through CPD sessions, forums, the introductory training day, and the time given for teachers and artists to jointly prepare and evaluate the programme, tries very hard to achieve this, it doesn’t seem to be enough. Maybe a way to foster more understanding and communication among all parts involved would be to increase the gallery’s presence in the whole process and try to be more specific at the early stages of the project, getting all agents involved in it to discuss what they expect to get, and what their ideas about all the tricky notions referred to above are. Something the gallery should especially take care of is the artist-teacher relationship; a closer understanding and collaboration should be fostered.

Through the course of this paper important incompatibilities have emerged regarding how the gallery and the artists understand and build up expectations around **Artists in Residence**. Even the goals of the programme and the function of the artists on it are differently conceptualised by both parts. The artists’ criticisms to the project cast doubt as to it being transformative or not and, if so, as to the extent to which it has been so and as to what should be understood by transformative. As I have already mentioned, for the gallery the programme provides a meaningful experience to the school because it offers new approaches to teaching and learning, giving teachers and students the opportunity to extend their practices, and working

with professional artists, among other aspects. For the artists, this scope is limited as it is constricted by the school's culture and rules, which determine what can and cannot be done. Artists think that education should not be the goal of the project and that this can only be fully meaningful, for the school and for themselves, if it offers something else: an experience outside the limits of the pedagogical, where what matters is having people working in a shared project that is site specific. From their point of view, it is the outcome of that unusual experience what would be "educational" or "transformative" for the ones participating in the programme.

For future projects, there are only two possible paths to follow by the gallery in order to achieve an experience that can meet everybody's interests: a) changing the programme's structure; b) hiring another kind of artist. In respect to changing the programme's structure, if the gallery wanted to accomplish the artist's will to turn *Artists in Residence* into something much more flexible and fluid, it would find countless difficulties and barriers. We should bear in mind how difficult it is doing this in a school context. We should take into account that too often the lack of innovation in teacher's practices is due not just to what the art curriculum "dictates", but also to profound incompatibilities between collaborative art-pedagogical practices and the school culture. Actually, trying something so different to the school way of functioning would possibly affect the number of institutions eager to participate in *Artists in Residence* and, consequently, this would also pose difficulties in terms of funding (which is particularly delicate in the current political climate and the cuts that culture is facing).

Referring to the second option, it is important to emphasise that artists working in this course programme have really good points to its favour, such as the quality of their art practices and the link between their interests as cultural workers and the character of the commission, which is to build up a site-specific project with the local people. In fact, most of the projects have had very interesting results and the relationships that have been built up with the school have also enriched all parts involved. However, besides all these good outcomes, the artists' disconformities about the programme which have been explored through the course of this paper suggest that the experience could be even more satisfactory if the artists that are hired for the programme were positioned in a slightly different track, mainly in what refers to their relation to education. If the gallery wants the artists to promote an educational experience inside the school structure, finding a middle ground between the artists' work and the current school educational practices, what may be needed instead of artists working in school contexts who do not consider themselves educators might be artist-educators, as defined by Pringle (2008).

Unfortunately, the problem is not merely to define what artists are more suitable to work in this programme, but also how to detect those ones for which the gallery is looking. Selecting the right artists is not just a matter of the quality of their art practices or even their experience in working with people or in educational contexts; the gallery and the artists should also share the same "language" and pursue the same goals. Because this is a very slippery and tricky territory, with plenty of nuances, it is very difficult to decide in an interview whether the artists that the gallery is considering are suitable or not for the programme. How to select the right artists for educational programmes such as *Artists in Residence* is something that should be researched.

### End notes

<sup>1</sup> All artists' names have been changed in order to preserve their anonymity.

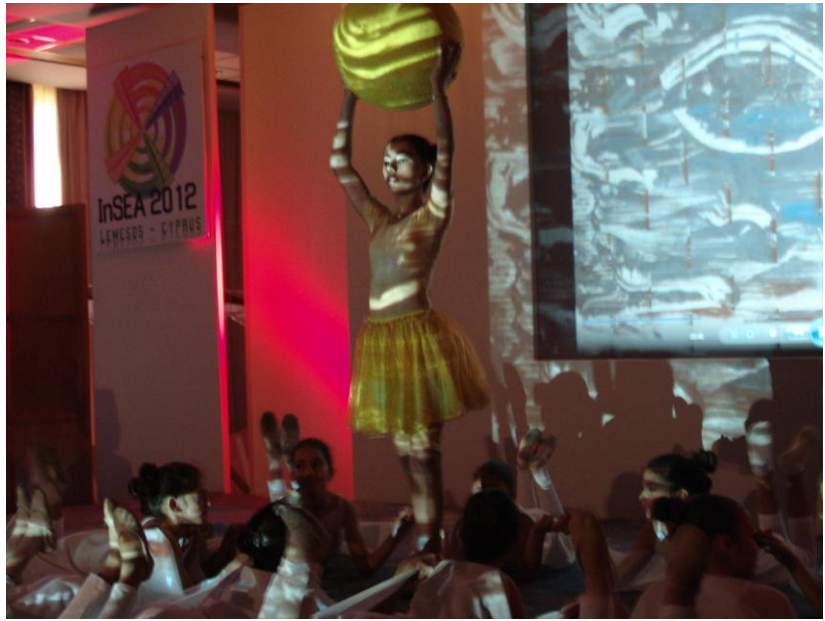
<sup>1</sup> It is fair to indicate that this is not the intention of the gallery. When Annabel visits possible schools to work with, she always emphasizes to the teachers that artists do not like to be seen as teachers and that they have their own agendas that should be able to meet in the project.

<sup>1</sup> Pringle (2008) states that this model constructs artists as individual-independent, context-free, representing the art making process as something separated from social, political or educational concerns.



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## Art Education and Social Communication- revision of pedagogies

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### Abstract

This article deals with the use of technologies in art education. It develops from the perspective of practices and theories consolidated in the history of art education in Brazil, in the 80s and 90s, when there was an articulation with the field of Educommunication, in the School of Communications and Arts of the University of São Paulo (ECA/USP) and the Nucleus of Communication and Education NCE/ECA/USP. The need to bring the theme for discussion emerges from the reading (summary, goals and methodologies) of 159 monographs in the period of 2011-2012, in the specialization course, EAD, Medias in Education, from NCE/ECA/USP, still taking place, geared towards public school teachers of the state of São Paulo. This universe reveals a hiatus between the beginning of the new century and the present time, which reveals immobility, absence of a historical and theoretical reference and mainly a technicist view of communication technologies. To this end, part of the history of art education is reviewed, the very part that develops together with educommunication, and vice versa. The theoretical framework crosses over from the literature of the history of art education to media education and social communication theories, confirming the importance of an interdisciplinary work in education and also the cultural complexity and dynamism present in schools. It states the importance of distance training courses to educate researchers, with artistic and aesthetic knowledge and experience in the field of educommunication. The unique aspects of this research expand to cultural, local-global issues, in which medias also support and reinforce globalized policies and cultures.

### Keywords:

History of art education, educommunication, social communication, medias in education.

### Introduction

In Brazil, and especially at ECA/USP, as from the 80s and 90s, art education structures itself as one of the social and cultural dynamics that generate new visualities, interdisciplinary aesthetic experiences and the understanding of the arts in the Brazilian society and for the intellectual and political education of the citizen. This is the period in which the visual culture is established in the broader scope of art education, Latin American studies of popular mass culture and education through communication- called educommunication since 1996, an interdisciplinary field of the social communication sciences. All the academic production from Ana Mae Barbosa (2010) confirms this history, as well as that produced by NCE/ECA/USP, <http://www.usp.br/nce/onucleo>, coordinated by Ismar de Oliveira Soares (1999), and the author of the present article (2008).

To a great extent, in this period, because the graduate course is developed together with the departments of Arts and Social Communications at ECA/USP, research and promotion of art education, as well as meetings and projects to form educators in large scale took place together with the department of social communication, from the new area of educommunication. Among them Ana Mae Barbosa, José Manuel Moran (2000) and Maria Felisminda de Rezende Fusari (1992) (School of Education at USP) stand out. Later on, with the setting up of NCE/ECA/USP by Ismar de Oliveira Soares and others, experiences with art education and educommunication gained more space in the department of Social Communications. Cinema, TV, radio, printed media and publicity are also studied in direct relation with art education, promoting the production of master and doctorate dissertations with the interdisciplinary production of



Ana Mae Barbosa (see too Ar'Te: Costa (1984); Lanier (1984); Fabris& Costa (1983)).

Ten years into the new century, the art educator of the public schools of the State of São Paulo shows immobility when using medias, or when they do use them, they have a technicist tendency, without any reference to the history of art education and social communication studies. They forget experiences that were carried out and announced in previous years, which is a contradictory situation for a virtual society, with a fast flow of information and easy access to it. In this scenario, the memory of art education and educommunication is in jeopardy, especially the education mediated by technologies. According to Huyssen (2000), we need productive remembering rather than productive forgetting.

Decelerating instead of accelerating, this is the proposal of the article when it resumes the historical phase of articulation of the two areas, to suggest a pedagogical proposal with communication technologies, in which art education and educommunication are fundamental and interdisciplinary theoretical parameters. According to Santaella (2003), cultural transformations and first mediations do not stem from the medias, but from the signs, messages, sensitivities, thoughts, and socio-cultural environments and communication processes that occurred, circulated and were promoted with them. Based on the ideas of Kaplun (1999), the study of medias in education includes the communication process, and it is this very aspect that turns into a pedagogical element of art education and Contemporary Educational Communication.

To collaborate with educators who are in the classroom, before the cultural wealth and difficulties of a public school, it is believed that the teacher in any discipline needs to have an anthropologic attitude before his student and the reality. He needs to know how the student and the community consume and produce culture, what their objects of choice are and what they do with them; what the communicative, socializing, artistic and aesthetic possibilities that express this consumption are, in order to have a dialog with other aesthetic and communication frameworks and, later on, regard this lesson as a social intervention, which may bring about different attitudes and consumption, articulated with a mundialized and technological society.

On the other hand, it is interesting to stand out what Azevedo (2009) claimed. According to him, the contemporary art education is a specific way of working with education in any discipline. The use of medias in education in general, inevitably raises questions regarding reading, interpreting and producing images and sounds, audiovisual, animations, etc.. Today, building knowledge, discussing, reflecting, selecting information, analyzing and producing new information cross over technologies, the local-global society and the pedagogical and technological pedagogy. Understanding language and its codes, messages, products and contexts are elements that promote expression, imagination, dialog and socialization. They make up a work of art education and educommunication simultaneously. The interdisciplinary aspect of the two areas stands out.

Creating a lesson plan is the result of imagining, ordering the number of possibilities, researching and choosing. Choices are made by the educator, who notices and observes his students, tries things out, searches for solutions to problems and defines the best class method to promote interaction, dialog and reasoning in students.

Although the universe of this article is limited to the academic productions from ECA/USP, it is understood that from this context contemporary and pertinent issues in all cultural contexts come up, for example, how to develop the media-driven and informational competence in a mundialized society.

Besides, it is believed that in more than 20 years, the Brazilian public policy of teaching and culture, the academic events and research and practices did not develop at the same rate as the social and cultural phenomena caused by the mundialization of the culture and the fragmentation of the popular mass culture, both supported by new medias. The habits, behaviors, values and tastes are modeled and remodeled in this flow of communication and cultures, and emerge differently in the school routine. The communicative and creative restlessness of the young people is confronted with the uncertainties of the school community.



## Starting Point

The article stems from reading abstracts, goals and methodologies of 32 monographs developed in the specialization course *Medias in Education, EAD*, in 2011, designed for public school teachers, at NC /EC /USP; Ministry of Education and Culture (MEC) and the Federal University of Pernambuco (UFPE). Out of the 32 monographs, none was about art education. Up to mid 2012, 127 monographs were produced, and only 2 of them were on art education, one on photography and the other one on video.

It is important to point out that the course presents a line of research called *Art and Medias in Education*, whose goal is to “gather studies that think of arts (fine arts, video, audio, etc.) in media-type/educational processes”. According to the text, “the proposals may reflect upon theoretical approaches or interventions and artistic/media-type practices in educational contexts”. (<http://blog.midiaseducacao.com>)

However, as a whole, medias in education have been used by educators in the areas of history, teaching children, special education, pedagogic coordination, Portuguese, geography, mathematics/information technology when producing screenplays, animation, audiovisual, readings and images with photography, painting, collage, mobiles...whose bibliographical references do not present specific literature in art education.

It's interesting to compare this data with research carried out at the end of the 90s, in the field of communication and education by the NCE team, supervised by Ismar de Oliveira Soares. After extensive investigation on the practices of educators and communicators from Latin America and the Iberian Peninsula, an interface between education and communication is revealed, which was called *educommunication*. In this study, the presence of doing, knowing, thinking and reading the artistic product of the visual culture is revealed, as well as an understanding of its ample symbolic context in the different cultural and social groups. However, in the universe of 178 specialists who were interviewed, 4% “dedicate to activities geared towards the area of cultural communication with emphasis on the use of several artistic languages”. (Soares, 1999, 60).

Although the specific literature on art education (mainly that produced by Ana Mae Barbosa, since 1980) refers to the ample and complex field of mass-made popular visual culture, in the relation with different traditional art spaces, there is a theoretical and practical separation, effective of cultures, in the school reality.

On the other hand, the art education of the 80s and 90s made use of theories of communication that strengthen the concept of a quotidian production in view of the mass-production popular products of culture. At the beginning, the dialogic pedagogy of Paulo Freire (1992) stands out, and there is also Canclini (1984), who values all the stages of communication that the artistic product passes, including consumption. The critical theory, the cultural market, the cultural dependence, the cultural, reception and mediation studies are present both in art education and in *educommunication*.

When communication technologies reach almost all public schools in São Paulo, and their students and teachers also become producers, editors and consumers of virtual image content, in an intense context of cultural market and cultural exchanges, interdisciplinary art education and *educommunication* become inevitable. The local-global subjects are inserted, and only exist as such, in the virtual field as a network, because of the exchanges of meanings, expression, creation, interpretation and communication.

## Approximations of Art Education and Social Communications at ECA/USP

In the books *Image in Art Teaching*, from BARBOSA (1991) and in the text *From origins and reconfigurations*, by Rita Bredariolli (2010), it becomes clear that the Art Week at the University of São Paulo in 1980, promoted by Ana Mae Barbosa and others, and the 14<sup>th</sup> Winter festival of Campos de Jordão in São Paulo in 1983 were turning points to establish a new way of teaching and understanding art in all its cultural, social and supporting dimensions, including the different medias. In these two events,



technologies were used as a means of expressing, registering/documenting didactic material, aesthetic experimenting, subverting the standard language, and the critical reading of TV, cinema and printed media content.

During this period Ana Mae Barbosa (Art department), José Manuel Moran Costas (Social Communications– Education for Communication) and Maria Felisminda de Rezende e Fusari (School of Education /FEUSP) stand out.

It is important to notice that these and other events carried out by ECA/USP take place in an international contemporary state context, which proceeds this period. For example, Ana Mae Barbosa describes, in the newspaper Ar`TE, n. 1, 1982, that in the INSEA Congress 1981, in Rotterdam, Holland, there was a considerable number of theses that defended the relationship between Art and Communication, the latter understood as “basis communication, with the collective practice of emancipation groups” (p.5). In the same article, Ana Mae says that in the UCBC Congress (Brazilian Christian Union of Social Communication), site [www.ucbc.org.br](http://www.ucbc.org.br), about Communication, Youth and Participation there were several discussion tables about art teaching, especially cinema. (p. 3)

Since the 60s and 70s, important national and Latin American experiences on critical reading of the communication means have been recorded, mainly on TV, cinema, cartoons and audiovisual production. There were exchange programs between organizations in Brazil, CIFEJ ( Centre International Du Film et La Jeunesse, UNESCO body with headquarters in Montreal; Lima/Peru, La Paz/Bolivia, Asuncion/Paraguay. OCIC-AL (Catholic Cinema Organization of Latin America); and the UCBC work (Brazilian Christian Union of Social Communication [www.ucbc.org.br](http://www.ucbc.org.br) ) also stand out. The CINEDUC ( [www.cineduc.org.br](http://www.cineduc.org.br)), until the present date intends to formulate, according to them “ theoretical points of view about image/education and about the child and means of communication”. By means of a study on audiovisual language, cinema, video and TV, the production of films, development of events, research and training courses for teachers, the CINEDUC aims at “promoting the reflection on audiovisual languages with children and youth audiences and educators, formal and informal, in order to contribute to transforming the educational process by means of the development of a critical understanding of the creative expression". It is important to stand out in this brief history that Ismar de Oliveira Soares is an active participant of UCBC, and that the author of this article has collaborated with his experiences in art education with technologies.

At ECA/USP, in the beginning of the 80s, the relationship between art and education for communication points to similar theoretical approaches. There was an implicit conception that the mass media and its products/ content had a power over the audience by means of the determination of a view of the world and an aesthetic taste, and the interests of the market. Therefore, pedagogical practices with a less passive attitude and more wary of the mass media were justified. In the art education practices, there was a subtle separation between popular mass culture, strongly geared towards the market and the consumption ideology, and, something similar to what Mattelart (1999,78) mentions about the critical theory of communication, the artistic activity that was conceived as a revolutionary concept.

Especially Ana Mae Barbosa, José Manuel Moran Costas, Fusari and Ismar de Oliveira do not embrace the dualism or the functional and technicist view of the relations among author, message, receptor and technology. In contrast, they suggest authors who reinforce the political fight for democracy through communications and art.

In the Brazilian political context, in the 80s and 90s, the same historical and structural moments are shared, such as, the graduate programs that facilitate the integration among courses; resistance and aversion to the harmful consequences of almost twenty years of military government ruled by censorship in education, the media, art and culture; participating in a period of review of practices and discussions that aimed at reconstructing democracy in the country via education, art, culture and communication.

As of the 80s, concepts that enable the investigation of new ways of teaching and learning art are established, as for example: 1. The dissolution of dichotomies and cultural apartheid, and the appearance

of a new concept of popular culture detached from the conservatory notion, of something contrary to progress, tradition, or the world conceptions of subaltern classes or the artistic products created by them; 2. The direct correspondence among popular culture, power and the effort of the State and its apparatus to define a national identity; 3. The importance of exploiting/assessing the process and final artistic product; the context in which the work/product is made, its means of promoting it and appropriations, understanding/quotidian uses; the analysis is broadened to several spaces in which art and the aesthetic experience are performed. New concepts of content and form are articulated; technique, technology with sensitivity, creativity and culture; a critical reading of contents with action pedagogy and speaking. Therefore, there was access and knowledge of codes from different languages; the making of art as a unique action that enables the development of the awareness of one's own existence and their importance in a world of diversity, market, money, life history, etc.

According to Martin-Barbero, 2004, a Colombian communication sociologist, in modern times, the oral expression of the popular– massive culture is transformed by the language of the mass communication means from radio, cinema and TV, establishing new ways of seeing, thinking and imagining. To this author, disconcerting hybrid identities and dislocations in the quotidian culture of most people are observed.

“(…) This is the scenario in which relations between culture and communication are established today : That of destructuring communities and fragmenting the experience, losing the autonomy of the cultural and the arbitrary mixture of traditions, the appearance of new cultures which challenge educational systems unable to deal with what mass mediums mean and are culturally, such as the cultural policies dedicated mainly to promoting continuance. (Barbero, 2004, 210)”

In the 80s, at ECA/USP, Nestor Garcia Canclini (1984) is one of the first Latin American authors to contribute to regarding art and culture in the scope of the cultural market, of distribution, access, production and consumption. It is important to point out the Latin American interpretation of the circulation of the artistic product in the capitalist context, in which Paulo Freire and Canclini are included. According to Matterlart (1999) the concept of communication by Paulo Freire is at the forefront of studies that exploit the horizontal communication strategies and popular organization, and aim at the social transformation and the discussion of a democratization policy for communication and its meanings.

In the same cultural and political context and with Paulo Freire's contribution, Ana Mae Barbosa structures an ample, transversal and democratic concept of art education, in which the modern world art and culture of a complex country are articulated.

In 1983, Ana Mae Barbosa creates the specialization course in art education at ECA/USP, enabling access of public school teachers to graduate courses and, consequently, because they were at ECA, they had the chance to take specific courses in social communications and media education. The department of Radio, Cinema and TV accepts research that articulate the two areas, mainly the group that researches education through communication, especially José Manuel Moran Costas and Ismar de Oliveira Soares. The concept of communication and the communicative relation are present in the history of art education with different learning and teaching methods and techniques, which occur between the art educator, audience/reader/student, artist, monitor, work, support, ateliers, language, museums, communication means, etc.

Both in art education and in education through communication, after the 80s, there was a technicist, moralist and ideological attitude in relation to the use of technologies. However, it was not predominant at ECA/USP. Cultural studies, social phenomenology and ethno methodology became stronger. (Matterlart, 1999)

There is a valorization of the quotidian dimension in research about medias-art and education, studies that are geared towards the aesthetic values and means of appropriating the popular-mass culture; the understanding of expression and art exposure of several groups as a way of legitimizing artistic production of popular-mass culture in the Brazilian society. An example is the cultural policy that Ana Mae Barbosa

developed at MAC/USP, when she was a director from 1987-1993. The museum becomes a political, public, social and cultural mediation space, enabling the artistic and aesthetic experimentation and exchange among different groups. According to Barbosa (2007), “a reflection about what is different and unique as opposed to what is homogeneous in the hegemonic power” is searched by means of the arts”. (2007,103)

Communication between different parts is the key element of these innovative cultural projects, and the theoretical consensus in the field of educommunication. When reflecting upon technological mediation in education, Ismar Soares, in 1999 states that studies in communication technologies, even in the US, go gradually from the understanding of the means of communication in themselves to an “interdisciplinary work that brings together the Arts and Communications in productive processes of knowledge in general, mobilizing students to the use of means of communication in learning activities. Therefore, the more restricted scope of “media education” has been transforming,...(....) into the greater scope of “Communication/Education”, and overlap, in this aspect, with what has been going on for at least two decades in Latin America.” ( p.32)

Studies about technology in education start in our country with critical readings on account of the Pedagogy of the Oppressed by Paulo Freire (1986) and the theory of cultural dependence, of the 60s, which strengthens the relationship between communication and popular organization. (Mattelart, 1999, 119) and (Ismar, 1999, 32). Later on, they go from the critical reading to understanding and practicing communication as a dialogic, alternative and not unidirectional process.

According to the new paradigms of communication, the technologies, those considered teaching tools or TICS, information and communication technologies are not at the core of cultural changes anymore. Santaella, 2003, understands that the language and different possibilities for thought constructions determine social and cultural changes.

When talking about multiculturalism, cultural policy, democratization of the collection and the architecture of museums buildings “of a museum with exposed entrails”, Ana Mae uses the ethno methodology and anthropology that observes the other, putting an end to the dualism between the actor and the system. She values the communicative practice and cultural studies. In her book, Topics and Utopias, 1998, she describes and reflects upon her practices.

“Another point discussed in professional meetings in museums is the idea that a modern or contemporary art museum cannot, in our days, live without anthropology, because it is not possible to understand the discussion about the nature of art by hiding behind hegemonic codes and trying to make any aesthetic manifestation illegitimate. Anthropology teaches us to see the other and, more precisely, the connection of anthropology and art teaches us to see the aesthetic universe of the other”. (1998, 99)

The stage that the communication studies reaches in Latin America is the Theory of Mediation, contribution of Manuel Martin Serrano, decades of 70 and 80, which gives a cognitive relation to this concept, different from that of Martin- Barbero (2004) that is social-spatial. To this author, both the medias and other instances in society such as family, church, school, etc have an intermediation role in the culture. According to Consani, 2008, the social/cultural mediator is an “operator of meanings” whose action defines, within a system, the cultural constancies (identified, roughly, as the informative value of the message) in order to make sure there’s unequivocal understanding and consequently, the possibility for anticipation and action”. (90) This author observes that in this definition there’s a subtle dislocation from the social sphere to the political intervention (note from the author).

Martin-Barbero is another author who collaborates with the new communication concept through the mediation bias, and not through technologies. (Consani, 2008)

In short, the democratic, political, humanistic view surpasses the technicist and moralistic view both in art education and in educommunication in the history of ECA/USP. From this perspective, the quotidian and the cultural mediation gain a strategic dimension to carry out research and work the aesthetic and communicative experience with technologies in education. The study of different forms of symbolic,





sensitive and aesthetic appropriation makes it possible to understand and work with the dynamics of a mundialized culture. Based on Dewey (1958), the work on art education enables continuity of the consummation of the instrumental aesthetic experience, already acquired in the quotidian.

According to Ortiz (2000), the society after the 80s is characterized by an increase in the deterritorialization of the culture in the world, or the deterritorialization of the cultural demarcations, the strengthening of the popular market culture and the medias, making this contemporary scenario and the social and political perceptions of the world stronger. In this sense, communication is understood as a symbolic exchange and space for building social and cultural bonds, and culture is seen in the dimension of the quotidian and in the relation among text/context/audience/reader. These are core concepts in art education and educommunication and they also have an essential role for the understanding of new global scenarios.

### Final consideration

This article begins with a surprise observed in the specialization course *Medias in Education*, at NCE/ECA/USP, geared towards educators in general from public schools. The art educator is in a position that may be similar to the one Santaella, 2003, classifies as the *skeptical* in relation to technologies in society and education, which is “let it be to see what happens”, added to a context with many uncertainties. Therefore, the first goal is to speak directly to these teachers, bring arguments that may help position themselves in the society and begin their projects with medias in a realistic, daring and imaginative way.

There are topical problems that stand out, one of which is related to knowledge of history, in all senses, of public policies of education and culture, the relation and commitment of the university with the education and continuous specialization of educators; the academic production of one of the most important institutions in Brazil, the ECA/USP; the development of specific literature in art education and education for communication; the history of students and of others; the history of art, the city and communication theories. According to Ana Mae Barbosa, 2012, the history is regenerative and potentiator.

“Aloisio Magalhães, a Brazilian culturalist designer that created the Ministry of Culture of Brazil used to use a metaphor to explain the importance of History, which is very accurate, but which he did not leave in writing; however, we, his disciples, heard constantly: “the more we pull the rubber of the sling further backwards, the more we will launch the rock forward.” Sometimes it’s necessary to use the sling (...) pulling the rubber backwards to its maximum in order to overcome reductions and mediocre situations, or the previous failure, and throw the rock”.

At ECA/USP, particularly in the field of art and education and education through communication, the 80s and 90s have motivated scholars from different countries, and produced massive events for updating educators. ECA opened itself to educators from the public schools and created an arts course, integrated with the courses of social communication and education. However, at the end of the 90s, there was isolation among the different groups, their productions and events. The challenge posed is studying the interfaces between teaching art and communication via technologies in the cultural complexity of the contemporary world.

The communicative and aesthetic experiences become definitely relevant. According to Dewey, the aesthetic experience is a stage of wholeness of the sensitive, creative and cognitive awareness, attained from unique experiences of the quotidian articulated with the artistic experience and that of the others.

The art educator and educator in general, who intend to use medias in education, need to understand their job as a work under construction, similar to the behavior of the artist. They do not work in conformity with the system, but through questioning, imagining, daring and experimenting. Accepting the challenge of searching for new ways of teaching and learning with art and the communication processes become

essential. It is possible to accept what Santaella, 2003, suggests to the contemporary man about the use of technologies,

“The hypothesis that has guided me is that, in times of changes, we’ve got to remain close to artists. For the simple reason that, paraphrasing Lacan, they know without knowing they know. Similar to this, there’s a dictum by Goethe that is worth mentioning: There’s an empiric sensitivity that identifies itself very closely with the object and therefore, is transformed into theory. It is, in fact kind of a non-verbal and poetic theory that the artists create in their sensitive approach to the enigmas of the real. Therefore, I am moved by the belief that, when entering the third evolutive cycle of the species (Donald’s argument, 1991), we have to pay attention to what the artists are doing. I have a feeling that they are creating a new image of the human being in the vortex of their current transformations. The artists are the ones that put us face to face with a new human approach of technologies” (Santaella, 2003, 31).

Planning a lesson is at the same time an aesthetic experience, and the search for the wholeness of the sensitivity, perception, together with meaning, imagination, communication with the other, the process of searching and choosing. The art and communication class needs aesthetic and artistic referentials, as well their comparison for future re-signifying. When analyzing the Spanish project Latifundi, from Joan Vallés, Eva Vendrell and Marian Vayreda, Ana Mae says,

“(…) The activities of the Latifundi project develop the perception to discover a surrounding reality, they develop imagination, through which it is discovered that in fact they don’t exist and develop creativity to re-signify, reorganize, recreate the reality perceived and imagined. Working with perception, the cultural mediators of Latifundi are not oculo-centrists, but they consider the idea that perception doesn’t take place just by means of looking, but through all the senses and the whole body. This Concept of perception, inherited from Merleau Ponty, rules the contemporary art in its relational adventure, embracing all aspects of life, the subject, circumstances, his contact with other human beings and history. The Latifundi project seems to have been born under the sign of historical re-signifying and the awareness that our subjectivity is historically built. Educating is also about historical placement. A study area that looks down on History is easily dominated and manipulated. All scientific discourse is supported by a previous thought regarding the discussed thing, said Diderot.”

The educator of the present time may regard his lesson as a process of mediation and cultural intervention, as well as a rich field for research. Therefore, he needs to avoid fragmentation of knowledge and have an interdisciplinary approach, where art education and educommunication are essential for the development of any subject matter.

The contemporary society is structured in the dynamics of a technological, symbolic and communication network, which interferes in the local-global politics and economics. The cultures are not direct reflex of economics anymore, but the dynamic result of transversalities in the communication processes. Researching and acting with and about contemporary cultures is a way of searching for equal and humanizing solutions before world diversities and unbalances, and discuss new paths for art education in a global and local context.

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## Drama and Adolescents in 21st century Cyprus: An outlook on social issues focused drama workshops and performances

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### Abstract

The paper examines four drama projects with adolescents and the deriving performances, taking place in Cyprus from 2007-2012. The framework under which these projects were organised varies. The first case concerns a summer school in the countryside, based on the experience of the group living together for ten days, the second is an urban out-of-school activity beginning from a drama workshop with Greek-Cypriot and Turkish-Cypriot adolescents and ending up to a performance addressing to adolescents and adults, the third concentrates on two secondary school drama clubs organised by the same teacher and finally the fourth one concerns a drama class in a non-privileged secondary school. Their concepts pay special attention to team and trust building and a variety of drama in education techniques are employed. The paper discusses this new trend in the island. All these attempts, located in the social and political context of contemporary Cyprus, are related to goals such as enhancing creativity, free expression and deliberation of talents but also development of new attitudes concerning peace, mutual understanding, empathy and creative use of differences, as well as self-esteem and self-awareness.

### Key words

Cyprus, drama, theatre, social awareness, adolescents

### Introduction: Beginning from a personal experience

There is a personal terminus a quo for this paper; my interest in the social potential of drama began through a discovery, as it is evident that what is conquered through experience is always stronger than what is simply been taught. This crucial point has been my experience with the Theatre Workshop and Camp, set up as a summer school, hosted in the highland village of Kaminaria in Lemesos district, in the republic of Cyprus. This annual project – being repeated for six consecutive summers from 2000 to 2005 – was organised by the drama therapist and musician Vangelis Michas and me, with the contribution of three other animators from Greece. It hosted totally twelve groups, of twenty teenagers at a time. The concept focused not only in drama and in the interaction in the workshops but also in co-existence and in sharing the responsibility for the smooth flow of the household during the ten days each project lasted (Constantinou, 2001).

I had already completed a Theatre Studies Degree and was interested in practising stage directing in 2000, however another potential of drama surprised me during these workshops; I came to realise the enormous strength of theatre not only as a joyful creative process but also as a precious tool in getting people together and in enhancing communication and social skills. It was obvious from the first year of the project how drama was assisting teenagers in multiple ways; in gaining social awareness as well as tolerance and in going one step further in terms of self-awareness, self-esteem and self-development. The evidence to their enthusiasm on the project was not only their blooming creativity but also the improvement in cooperation during the ten-day project as well as the eager of many of the participants to join the event the following year and, finally, the thankful and oven evaluation of the whole experience written by each participant on the last evening.

## Theatre and drama in education in Cyprus

Theatre performances by secondary school pupils have been presented in Cyprus since the late nineteenth century. In the Greek secondary schools of the island, ancient Greek drama has been a common source for plays. Later on, this production was enhanced by a school drama festival, starting in 1983 but being established in 1991, organised by THOC, the state Cyprus Theatre Organisation (“Theatro sta sxoleia”, n.d.). But drama in education as conceived in Europe and North America already since the second half of the twentieth century is a rather new concept in Cyprus. Even more recent and still limited is the application of drama as a tool for learning social and intercultural awareness. On the contrary, this dimension of drama is widely practised, especially in Europe and America, the relevant research being related not only with theatre and drama in education and drama as an educational tool but also with researches in the fields of social work, psychology and mental health.

Jennings (1986), Somers (1996), and Balfour & Somers (2006) have dealt with the subject among other academics and practitioners, and contemporary researchers all around the world offer new experiences. For instance, Tuisku (2010) studies the aspects of theatre supporting adolescents in personal growth; Gervais (2006) explores moral issues and ways of improvement of values awareness through process drama; Rousseau, Armand, Laurin-Lamothe, Gauthier, & Saboundjian (2012) deal with an intervention which integrates drama and language awareness, focusing on immigrant and refugee adolescents; Lenz, Homan and Dominguez (2010) try out some therapeutic social skills training interventions through art and drama and Hughes & Wilson (2004) examine the personal and social impacts on young people of devising and performing youth theatre productions.

In the Republic of Cyprus, political facts and corresponding changes contribute to the transformation of society during the last fifty years. Independence was gained in 1960; the state was in danger in 1974 after the invasion by Turkey which – among other dramatic consequences – separated completely the two principal ethnic communities of the island; during the last two decades there has been a large flow of immigrants and in 2004 Cyprus entered the EU. These crucial social and political changes altered of course educational perspectives. Influences mainly from Greece and the UK can be seen, transferred often by theatre practitioners educated abroad. The use of drama and theatre in education techniques is starting to be applied in activities and initiatives for training the educators organized by THOC, in formal education curriculum and in the programs and in projects of the Educational Psychology Service of the Ministry of Education and Culture. An important role also plays Theatre Antidote which is dedicated to youth theatre, performances and workshops. Finally, some educators studying drama in education in postgraduate level are giving the first approaches drama in education in Cyprus (see Polykarpou, 2002; Kafkaridou, 2003).

This is the context in which arises the trend that will be described below, fulfilling new social needs. This trend – of workshops and performances focused on social issues – is rather wide, as it is a new dimension not having yet been defined into specific orientations.

### Focus and methodology

Being a permanent resident of Cyprus since 2004, I have had the chance to observe the work of several people, from different backgrounds, who have given to their work in theatre in education social content and orientation. The four cases of projects that were selected for this paper have some common characteristics. These are: they are short term drama workshops; they conclude either in a devised performance, open to the public, or another type of short scale presentation; they were addressed to adolescents; they took place in Cyprus among 2007 and 2012 and their objectives were related to social issues i.e. tolerance, immigrants, coexistence of main ethnic groups on the island (Greek-Cypriots and Turkish-Cypriots), issues of puberty, such as not succeeding at school, family instability and facing the future in today’s most uncertain world.



They differ as far the framework in which these attempts and organised: there are secondary school drama clubs; urban out-of-school activities; a summer schools in rural area which include the experience of living together in a group for a number of days. In addition to that, they apply different methods of drama as a tool for social, cultural and self-awareness. I will examine two projects of informal education and two projects in the framework of formal education.

Coming from a different scientific background (Cypriot theatre history and study of performance) I adopted, for this paper, combined methods and tools of research. These include historical research but also observation, open interviews of project leaders, qualitative research and grounded theory principles. It is important to state that for the needs of this paper I focused on the feedback given from the organizers, since the research has been a report and analysis of already completed projects. As I am personally involved in similar projects and as it is a first description of the phenomenon, having still little evidences and fewer sources, no effort was made to avoid the personal point of view of the observer, so the subjectivity and sentimental effect of the cases under consideration is part of the presentation.

## The case studies

### I. The project “Crossroads”

Beginning from the summer of 2010, Natalia B. Kouhartsiouk, one of the participants in the Theatre Workshop and Camp” in Kaminaria mentioned before – I am proud to say my former student – returned to the village as a facilitator and brought the venue back to life. Along with Christos Charitou and their NGO Theatre Etc they created a youth camp called “Crossroads” addressing to teenagers from the two sides of divided Cyprus, both of Greek-Cypriot and Turkish-Cypriot origin. Natalia studied Classics and is interested in conflict resolution and Christos is a teacher and an amateur actor. Their common background is a master degree in Applied Drama from London School of Speech and Drama. In 2011 the NGO Culture in Action, which, as written in its website, aims also “to facilitate networking between several culture groups in a local and European level and to inform and explore issues of social exclusion” joined them (“About us”, n.d.). In the group also participates Oya Akin, a Turkish-Cypriot actress and teacher.

Their method of work is based on Theatre of Empowerment and on Process Drama. “Introducing our project to two communities with a long history of conflict, we trust drama as our vehicle through this journey”, stated in their first proposal in search of funding and next year, they noted that their work is “focused on a twofold agenda: enhancing communication and cross-cultural dialogue and using theatre as a tool for creative expression”. The workshops – including drama, music, dance, puppetry etc as well as discussions and nature exploration – end up in a devised performance which is a compilation of creative moments and daily projects developed during the ten-day workshops. The problem of the language was solved initially by using English as a common language. In the second year a more daring choice was made; good knowledge of English was not anymore a prerequisite for joining “Crossroads”. The camp was organised as bilingual and focused on physical theatre, art and handicrafts as well as the research for words that were common in the Greek-Cypriot and the Turkish-Cypriot dialects – which are practically the mother tongues of the participants. These words as well as some invented words formed the text of the performance which was the finale of the ten-day workshops. (N. B. Kouhartsiouk & Ch. Charitou, personal communication, June 9, 2012). In 2012 project, “Crossroads” broadened its horizons with the concept of multiculturalism, by hosting participants also coming from other ethnic origins, living in Cyprus.

### II. The project “Voicing and staging the experience”

The project “Voicing and staging the experience” was organized by Rooftop Theatre Group – founded by dramaturge Ellada Evangelou and cinema theorist Costas Constantinides – and Intercultural Center of Cyprus (ICC). Rooftop Theatre Group states as one of its artistic origins the methods of Augusto Boal;



one of the Rooftop projects – presented in “X-Dream Arts Festival”, in Nicosia in 2009 – was a direct application of Forum Theatre in the context of the Cypriot society and culture. Forum Theatre was also applied in 2011-2012, during a project in collaboration with the Association for the Prevention of Violence in the Family (E. Evangelou, personal communication, June 6, 2011).

A theatre workshop during a reunion of the participants in a bi-communal summer camps organized by the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) led to the idea that the experiences and life lessons about tolerance and understanding gained there should not be left to be an individual fading memory but ought to be spread around (Rooftop Theatre Group, 2008). This led to the project “Voicing and staging the experience” which started on 2007 and lasted fifteen months and included four stages: The first stage consisted of two-month long weekly theatre workshops with a bi-communal group of children and teenagers (eleven to seventeen years old) animated by Rooftop Theatre Group members. The theme was the exploration of the experience of co-existence through theatre games and improvisations which ended up in the writing of a text. The second phase was a two-month long collaborative process of writing and editing the performance text by the Rooftop Theatre Group. The final English text was translated into Greek and Turkish. What followed was the production of the play *Performing the experience* by young theatre professionals, both Greek and Turkish Cypriots. The performance was presented before young and adult audiences. Regular shows on theatre venues for adult audiences took place as well as time-and-place specific performances for young audiences. The performances were given in Greek or in English, by Greek-Cypriot young actors but both performance texts included phrases in all three languages. The Turkish-Cypriot actor, Oya Akin was filmed and was appearing in one of the videos which were part of the show. Costas Constantinides (2008) notes that “The audience experiences the final outcome of those workshops, which is [...] the result of a collective creative force that derives from the need to speak out a number of questions that arise from younger generation of Cypriots”.

Parallel to the production process, there was an information campaign towards media, educators and education officials on both sides, in order to spread the idea as widely as possible. The last part was the publication of the text in a trilingual edition (English, Greek and Turkish), including guidance to the educators who would try to work with the text, organizing workshops or in order to perform it, as a whole or partly. The book was given, as the performance program, to the audience. In the book, a text by academic Stephanos Stephanides (2008) focuses on identity, believing that youngsters are open to work with and that “theatre and performance gives us access to insights and skills needed to live in a multicultural society like Cyprus”. Ellada Evangelou (2008), director of the performance, uses Boal’s words, about the need for active spectators as a motto to the director’s note and refers to a theatre that “claims to have social consciousness” and even “strives for change” and for former spectators that are now active Spect-Actors, supporting the Group one way or another. She describes their method as follows: “The group gathers, an idea is given, energy and good will flow and theatre is born. Theatre in its most pure and unadulterated form [...] raw and honest”.

### III. The projects “Our own foreigners” and “I want to tell you. Yellow pages”

I will now focus on the work of a secondary school Teacher of Greek language, literature and history Nona Moleski who is also a theatre critic. Her work in public secondary education schools in Nicosia focuses in involving in the procedure of a school performance those pupils who would never participate in such an activity for various reasons. The teacher does not search for her amateur actors among the high achieving pupils, nor among those considered as talented but tries to involve practically everybody who would have the curiosity to join the venture and encourage those who would not normally have interest in an artistic activity.

Her first attempts were in the non-privileged Geri Gymnasium (ages twelve to fifteen) in Nicosia, where she staged a couple of performances. In 2009, in Palouriotissa Lyceum (ages fifteen to eighteen), starting

from a project for the module of Sociology, N. Moleski asked her pupils to take an interview from an immigrant and present his/her story as if it was their own. The concept was based on the acknowledgment of the fact that the Greek-Cypriot teenagers knew very little about the immigrants around them, so it would be hard to accept them. The narrations would be about their culture, their personal story that led them to Cyprus, the difficulties of their everyday life in the island. The stories, enriched with connecting texts that derived from improvisations, formed the performance script, along with a newspaper article and a short story by Cypriot novelist Antonis Georgiou. The performance *Oi dikoi mas xenoi*, meaning *Our own foreigners* was simple but touching and, of course, the impact was not only on the audience, mainly pupils and parents, but also on the twenty two participants that gained a totally different view of the person next-door or even on next-desk (Constantinou, 2009). According to N. Moleski, this project was about the discovery of the other. The next project turned out to be the discovery of the self (N. Moleski, personal communication, April 17, 2012).

The second project is an even more impressive story. In 2012 Nona Moleski happened to be a teacher in the 2nd Technical School of Nicosia (ages fifteen to eighteen), among non-privileged students, with issues related to infringement, delinquency, family problems, low performance at school etc. The school had in 2011-2012 156 pupils, half of whom were immigrants and many of whom did not speak adequate Greek.

In spite of the fact that her pupils had no experience and merely any interest in theatre at all, the teacher decided to try an experiment. She gave to every pupil a few yellow sheets she found at school. Passing from their classrooms, she asked them to name the issues that concerned them. A variety of topics emerged including love, solitude and friendship, loss, their relationship with family, the difficult way to adulthood. Interestingly enough a teenager suggested “Life is a party” as a topic as well. The next step was to write anything they wanted about their thoughts and their lives within these topics. Twenty seven of them responded to the challenge. Excerpts from all texts were used anonymously and thirteen of the pupils continued the venture on stage, exchanging texts so as nobody was exposed in public with his/her own text. The stage set was made of copies of their manuscripts on the same yellow paper. The text was compiled by the teacher but the performance script was composed by ideas of the participants including singing and dancing. The theatricality was absolutely minimal. The teacher and director of the performance understood on time that she could not ask much in terms of artistic achievements. She did not censor or try to do any artistic editing of the outcome but adopted the ideas emerging from the teenagers in order to encourage and give confidence.

#### IV. Workshop on Euripides’ Helen and a short film

The next school involved in this research, Agios Antonios Gymnasium (ages twelve to fifteen) in Lemesos, is also a non-privileged school. The problems faced concern violence, illiteracy, poverty and unemployment of parents and the high risk of abandonment of school.

Agios Antonios Gymnasium population for school year 2011-2012, included, according data given from the school (M. Pavlou, personal communication, June 22, 2012) a large percentage of immigrants (25%) and 4% of Turkish Cypriots pupils. It belongs in the Zone of Educational Priority (ZEP), set by the Ministry of Education and Culture, in order to reinforce the pupils of those schools against the possibility of delinquency and school abandonment. This allows the school to enjoy additional funding from EU and local funds. In and out-curriculum projects are offered to the pupils and sometimes the objective is mainly to keep the children in the safe environment of the school for as long as possible.

In the framework of ZEP performer Elena Agathokleous, co-founder of the Centre of Performing Arts Mitos in Lemesos, was invited to animate drama workshops with classes of the school. A group was formed that was willing to get the work further. The workshop started with improvisations on matters the pupils were concerned with and followed some discussion about the content and on the artistic outcome of their work. At a second stage the myth of Euripides’ *Helen* – but not the poetic text itself – was used as a story line to improvise, often with a sense of humor. It was decided that the exposure to any audience

would not be a good choice at the moment. So, in order to celebrate an outcome of the team's work, Elena Agathokleous hosted the team in her own theatre venue, which is Palio Xydadiko in Lemesos old city. During a single morning, the participants gave shape, with the animator's contribution, to their own dramatized narration of the myth, including their improvisations, staging ideas, singing and dancing (E. Agathokleous, personal communication, June 6, 2012). The outcome of this composition, a sort of performance with no spectators, was filmed.

### Goals, methods, problems and outcomes

All these attempts, located in the social and political context of contemporary Cyprus, are related to goals such as the development of new attitudes concerning peace, mutual understanding, realizing human right matters and how every individual is involved in these, empathy and creative use of differences, interference to society, as well as incorporation and also self-esteem and self-awareness.

The projects presented can be connected to internationally acclaimed theories, methods and techniques concerning Drama and Theatre in Education. More specifically they are related to Community Theatre, Augusto Boal's theories, Process Theatre, Theatre of Empowerment, devised theatre and creative writing. The process followed, either rather conventional or experimental, is based on acknowledged theories and practices according to the leaders' background and training. In some cases however original experimentation is released, according to the special competences, interests and needs of the team. The methods used pay in all cases special attention to team and trust building. Additionally, the use of art, photography, video, music, dance and corporal expression enriches the content and methodology of these workshops.

None of these ventures was easy to carry out. The values they are based on are not self-evident or accepted by the whole society and there are examples of resistance of the society stated below. However, I consider all four cases successful, regarding their specific goals, their contribution to the promotion of the application of drama for the purposes described above and for spreading humanistic ideas.

In case study I, organizing the project raised problems of political texture, such as on which side of the dividing line would the event be set. The trust was not self-evident and had to be gained so that the teenagers and their parents would feel safe enough to cross the border and be hosted for ten days in the opposite side and by the other community. The success is proved by the continuation of the project for three years up to now and its evolution every year. An example of the effectiveness of the team on crucial issues is the creative solution of the problem of the language described above.

In case study II, an important effect was not only the performances addressed to adolescents but also the discussions with the audience that followed these performances. The project revealed the insisting difficulties as far reconciliation is concerned. The efforts to present the show in Turkish-Cypriot Schools did not flourish. One must not fail to refer to a negative reaction that made evident the daring nature of the venture: a Greek-Cypriot teacher in Rizokarpaso Greek High School, in the occupied North, started a large scale campaign against the performance, considering it not supporting enough Greek-Cypriot community. This reaction involved the press and politicians with a nationalistic point of view. The belligerence against the project – often misrepresenting the text – is, I believe, a clear evidence of its radical character and the of fact that it posed questions – not giving answers however – about dominant ideas about “the other side” (see Rooftop Theatre Group, 2009; Drousiotis, 2009; “Barnava: exthriki I diefthinsi”, 2009).

In case III, this brand new experience for the adolescents was related to the relationship built with the teacher. Their participation in the project led to the improvement of the incorporation of them in the school community. Watching the video of the performance was a moving experience, especially when one was aware of the long way that had to be made in order to achieve this minimal outcome. The project and the show evoked to me the basic statement by Peter Brook “I can take any empty space and call it a bare stage. A man walks across this empty space whilst someone is watching him, and this is all that is needed



for an act of theatre to be engaged.” (Brook, 1968). The texts were in some cases very simple but honest, the pupils became actors, performing not actually themselves but their classmates. By the elementary action of walking on stage, theatre was rediscovered; it was a trip back to a rite with no artistic ambitions, like a rite of adultery, but also a rite to discovering and accepting the self and asking for acceptance and the feeling of belonging to a community. The performance of the pupils of a professional education high school surprised everybody and the event was presented by the press (see Demetriou, 2012) and by the television show *Proektaseis*, by Giannis Kareklas, on channel RIK 1 of the Cyprus Broadcasting Corporation on 12 April 2012.

In case IV, there are already some positive results, remarked by the teacher Maria Pavlou who is responsible for this project on behalf of the school. What is measurable is the reduction of the absences on the two days of the week the animator had her class. In addition to that, the pupils ask to have their teacher back for next year. A participant said to Maria Pavlou “I live for Monday and Wednesday we have the drama class”. (M. Pavlou, personal communication, June 22, 2012). I have watched that short video – the final product of the workshop – during the 3rd Small Festival of Ancient Drama organised by the Centre of Performing Arts Mitos, in spring 2012. My personal impression was that the adolescents looked totally devoted, happy with and proud of what they were doing.

Theatre in formal or informal education has only a history of mostly two decades in Cyprus – I consider that the guided staging of a play from Greek or international repertory for a school performance is a different aspect. Drama in combination with other arts are now used as means of creativity, free expression and deliberation of talents as well as a sharing process of what the individual can offer to the team and what he or she can gain out of this contribution. I believe that the tendency described by these cases is pointing to the fact that theatre is acknowledged by professionals and institutions not only as art education but also a means for all the humanistic goals mentioned above.

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## A visual culture education practice: parody and precariousness in de/constructions

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### Abstract

This paper presents a critical development of an artwork titled *De/constructions* by Felipe Sobreiro, which was developed at an undergraduate level at the University of Brasília's Fine Arts program, between 2002 and 2008. The paper shows its origins and evolution, and connections with Visual Culture and Education. In *De/constructions*, Sobreiro sets out to parody and question the way the rhetoric of official discourses and narratives combines with the apparatus of visibility to control and censor our everyday lives. The article associates Sobreiro's artwork with the objectives and pedagogies proposed by the North American group called VizCult in the consultative document suggested for the United States' National Art Education Association for the subjects of Art education and Visual Culture, in 2002.

### Key words

Artwork, Visual Culture Education, Art Education

### Foretaste

The intent of this paper is to critically recount the pedagogical development of an artwork called *De/constructions* by showing its backgrounds and evolution, and at the same time introduce this process as a Visual Culture Education practice. The series *De/constructions* was made by Felipe Sobreiro in an undergraduate program of Fine Arts at the University of Brasilia, Brazil, from 2002 to 2008. It is a series of signposts, a set of images that parody instructive, safety and regulatory signaling imposed by centers of power in public spaces. By subverting the traditional didactic, moralistic, educational content of sanctioned safety signs with his *De/constructions*, which are exposed as instructions for absurd situations and are disobedient to social norms, Felipe Sobreiro clearly aims to parody and question the way the rhetoric of official discourses controls and censors everyday people as a tool of daily visibility.

Initially, I present a brief opening about Sobreiro's academic and artistic background, then the description of his poetic vision in his own words, after which I discuss a number of artists who influenced his art making. Later, I associate some concepts of Visual Culture Education suggested by the VizCult group with aspects of *De/constructions*, in order to contextualize them theoretically, leaving open possibilities for new means of achieving critical and insightful ways of knowing through art making.

### Crossings

From 2002 to 2008, Sobreiro took a long route to cultivate his artistic and academic skills at the Fine Arts program at the University of Brasilia (UnB), Brazil. During these six years he was able to explore among a community of scholars various features of his own work that he hardly would have discovered if he were alone. His interests have always been focused on the aesthetics of pop culture and especially the comics — and by the way, he had been working professionally as a comic-strip artist and cartoonist. During this time, he was able to associate his educational formal training with his personal practice, but also discovered new expressive and artistic areas previously ignored, for example, engraving, digital art and photography.

The De/constructions depended largely on several courses and prior works developed during them, as well as his studio work. Initially, it was the courses of Fundamentals of Visual Language, and Electronic Art which put him in touch with theories and practices whose notions and complexity had been unknown to him. In 2003, in Drawing 2, he began exploring the possibility of drawing multiples by reproducing the same image in different ways, trying to go beyond his usual set of and exploring new means of graphic expression. At first he sought to continue with his typical drawing trace, working in small formats and scale and using ink as a medium, but rapidly began to expand its scope and methods, making works by passing to larger and looser visuals, exploring different possibilities of working with line, form and composition. At the end of the course he presented the series *Seven Shadows* (Figure 1), in which he made a portrait of his father in seven different types of roles, using several drawing media such as graphite, charcoal, chalk, pastels, India ink, among others. This repetition of images was a first experimental approach, a kind of visual cacophony that it would take until several semesters later to reach the De/constructions.



FIGURE 1 – “Sete Sombras” (Seven shadows), Drawing mixed methods– 2003. © Sobreiro's personal archive.

In the first semester of 2006 Sobreiro attended the Interdisciplinary Project course, in which he outlined a line of work that led to the realization of De/constructions. There, he developed a series of images that mingled religious elements of Baroque paintings with sacred elements of American "B" horror movie posters. The aim of this work was to generate parallels between the ways in which fear, violence and pain were explored by the rhetoric of both the Catholic Church and mainstream film studios, which both seek the most widespread and efficient ways to market their products to the public. By collecting and analyzing many images from these two sources, apparently disparate, Sobreiro was surprised by how the same rhetorical tools were employed to manipulate their audiences' reactions and sensations.

The images he made became the series entitled *Jesus! (CREDO!)* (See Figure 2.1, 2.2, 2.3 e 2.4) which attempted to reference the dual spiritual content which he was treating, as well as a popular Brazilian interjection of fear related to horror movie posters' characteristics of darkness and abjection.

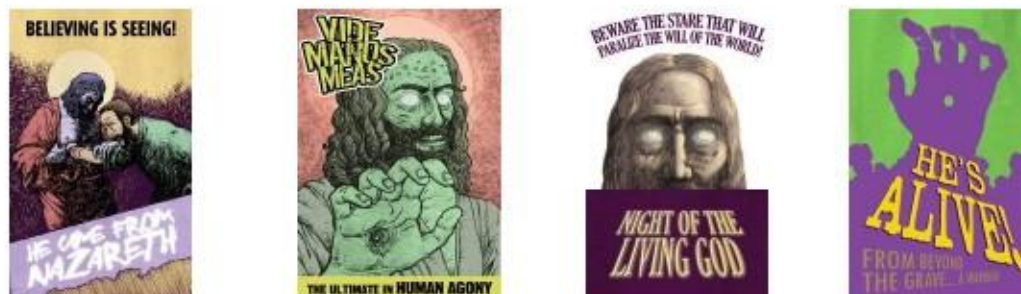


FIGURE 2.1) Vide Manus Meas,) 2.2) Sed Fidelis (after Caravaggio) 2.3) Beati Qui Non Viderunt 2.4) Noli Me Tangere, - Digital media. 29,7 x 21 cm each – 2006. © Sobreiro's personal archive.

## De/constructions as an artwork

Sobreiro in his own words describes the development of his artwork:

The nature and form of my final work, *De/constructions*, began to become clear during the course named *Studio 1*, during the 2<sup>nd</sup> semester of 2006. Departing from the series *Jesus!*, I left behind the ideological statements on the relationships between the rhetoric of discourses employed by the church through the baroque and the rhetoric of business employed by the film industry, and began to pay more attention to the flow of contemporary issues existing in everyday life. [...] By reviewing my work at that time, I found that, even if the posters realized the expected purpose of my work, the subject of religion was not essentially my main interest. Thus, keeping the idea of the series, I reconsidered the work, partly inspired by a scene from the movie *Fight Club* [See Figure 3], adapted from the book by Chuck Palahniuk (1997) and directed David Fincher; and I began to realize the beginnings of my “unsafety” sign, my sign posts, of my instructional cards. The scene in question depicts an act of terrorism in which the characters replace an airplane’s safety leaflet with modified versions, in which the figures represented do not look serene and calm, as in the original instructions, but instead look panic-stricken. In the context of the movie’s plot, this act was a remark on the artificial way a normalizing system provides safety for persons. Advancing from my previous work and taking into account the artistic implications that could unfold from it, I relied in part on the format suggested by the ambiguous instructions exhibited in the film, and carrying forward the concepts of the series *Jesus!* I moved from the hybrid posters to the signposts of arbitrary instructions, that later I would call *De/constructions*. (Sobreiro, 2008, p.23)



FIGURE 3 “Fight Club” Card instructions, 1999. Available at [http://www.foxmovies.com/fightclub/flightcard\\_big.jpg](http://www.foxmovies.com/fightclub/flightcard_big.jpg).

© Fox Films

One aspect of his production that he always tried to retain and attempted to rework into *De/constructions* was the language of comic books. The author never expected his audience to literally “read” the signposts in the usual sense of the word, where the viewer must “read” a logical sequence of introduction, development and conclusion. But instead, the signposts could be categorized as a variation of comics,



utilizing here McCloud's broad concept of comics, described as "pictorial images juxtaposed in a deliberate sequence" (2005, p. 9).

The format of these early signposts (Figure 4 and 5) proved to be inappropriate for the type of work/viewer experience he wanted initially to establish. By restricting the format to only 20 x 42 cm, the signposts, once exhibited, became completely lost in the vastness of the walls; thus the viewers had to approach considerably closer to the work to be able to appreciate it. The desired replication of the normative aspect of the signposts was not achieved and the images did not impose any form of discourse on viewers. The problem with the size of the work was solved later in 2007, during the *Studio 2* course, in which Sobreiro increased the scale to 100 X 150 cm. With the enlarged size, the signposts' visual effect noticeably improved, allowing them to dominate the wall and appear to viewers in a similar situation to that of official signpost information of which they were a parody.



FIGURE 4 and 5: De/contructions 01 and 02 . Poster , paper, 20 cm x 42 cm. 2006. © Sobreiro's personal archive.

Besides increasing the signposts' dimensions, also in 2007, he produced the signboard *Depression: A Practical Guide* (Figure 6), which replaced the horizontal format of three frames with a map with multiple frames. Therefore the viewers' reading order follows their own will and curiosity, in a playful game similar to board games and instructions on aircraft security cards, where readers are guided through various safety procedures. According to Sobreiro:



The visual aspect (style, color, trace) was kept comparable to the first images to continue the same work of investigating the language of signposts. Due to the wide variety of possible readings/viewings this image requires viewers to take a longer time compared with the previous signposts; and different narrative options arise and they can be interpreted in many ways. While the first works of De/constructions functioned more like a kind of conventional and synthetic narrative, the **Practical Guide** is an artwork that must be fostered by viewers' spectatorship at the time of observation. However, sometimes the excess of frames and options counteracts the effectiveness of the signpost itself. While the form is imposed on the viewer, the viewing process requires sophisticated features that make the artwork impact the time that has elapsed during its interpretation. (Sobreiro, 2008, p 26.)



FIGURE 6: Depression: A Practical Guide. Paper , poster, 100 cm x 150 cm. 2007. © Sobreiro's personal archive.

The last stage of this series was the board **untitled 1** (Figure 7) made in 2008 during the **Graduation** course. This signpost has many elements of the previous boards, but with some distinctions. First, the format is not more horizontal but vertical. The multitude of viewing options of the previous work has been replaced by a single reading/viewing sequence from top to bottom. The only instruction to “read” is the numbers indicating the sequence of steps. The absence of texts and titles, and the irregular shapes, make the piece much more ambiguous than the previous boards, and it provokes the question: is it a sequence of instructions, safety signs or a warning? The signpost is only fully comprehended within the context of the whole series.

Subsequently, keeping the same visual pattern of the signpost described above, he carried out **Untitled 2** (Figure 8), a diagram that also employs the vertical format and round frames. The action is more troubled and less clear than in previous pieces, and the total absence of text or even numbers makes the signpost's meaning uncertain.

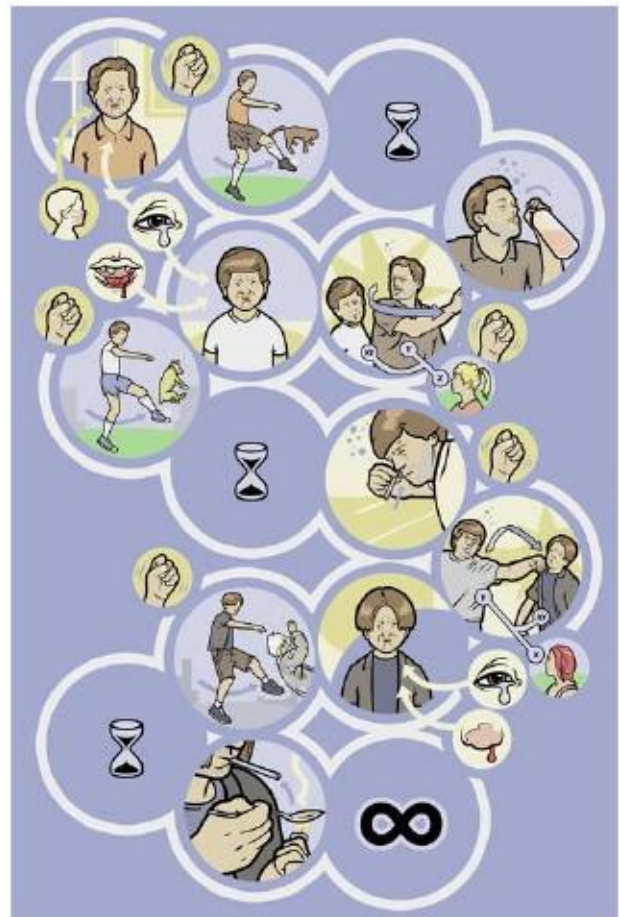


FIGURE 07 and 08: Untitled 1 and 2. Paper, posters, 150 cm x 100 cm each. 2008. © Sobreiro's personal archive.

## Influences

The ubiquitous pop art present in everyday life and the anonymous imagery that unnoticeably exist in the visuality of authoritative discourses both constitute part of the main sources of Sobreiro's artwork as well as being the targets of his criticism. Plates, diagrams, instructions, signs are the raw imagery from which springs his work, but a great number of visual artists also influenced the progress of his production. Among many, I would like to cite the American comic artist Chris Ware, the British street artist Banksy, the Brazilian artist Evandro Prado and the Argentine writer Julio Cortázar.

Chris Ware is one of the leading voices of contemporary American alternative comics (or underground comics). His semi-autobiographical graphic novel *Jimmy Corrigan - The Smartest Kid on Earth* (2000) (Figure 9) was one of the main inspirations for Sobreiro's work, specifically with regard to the style and language of the association of comics with official symbols and icons. Ware destroyed conventions of traditional reading and turned his narrative into a complex of non-linear diagrams that require of the reader an unusual degree of patience and dedication to follow the plot. Arrows, frames out of sequence and a highly cold technical design are some of the features which Ware imported from the detailed designs of instructional information to the pages of his work. His trace, though personal, does not seem to be made manually, but mechanically, and the distance this establishes between himself and the work is one of the most distinctive elements of his work.



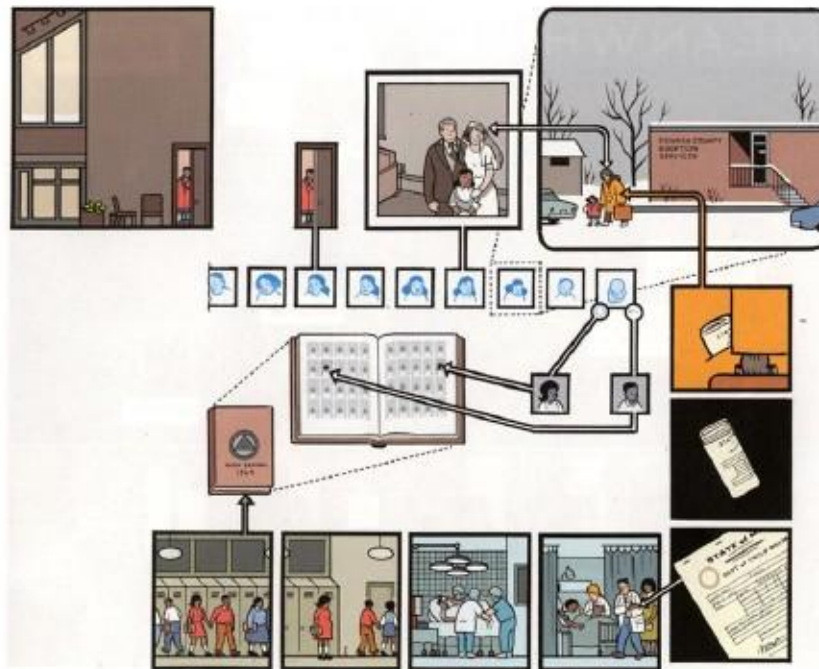


FIGURE 9. Spread from Jimmy Corrigan - © Chris Ware

For the purposes of Sobreiro's work, Cortázar's book *Historias de Cronopios y Famas* (1996) was one of the most significant, inspiring the development of *De/constructions*. In this book, composed of short stories, Cortázar devoted a section, *Instrucciones*, to short literary experiments in which are described step by step arbitrary, subjective and personal ways to perform natural and universal acts such as crying or climbing stairs. Sobreiro explains:

This book is probably the main influence on the satirical and pseudo-official content and format that I sought in developing my work. While playing with the union of personal opinion and the subjective will of the author, and the seemingly objective and superior quality of instructions that is incorporated into instructors' discourses, I could say that Cortázar's stories are somewhat a parody of imperceptible ways in which rhetoric spreads, depending on the format itself to convince the reader/viewer of the content that it professes. By assuming the role of the voice that instructs, the subject (in this case, the writer) is evidence of other unstable and arbitrary characters that hide behind the facade of infallibility of the authoritative official discourses, and call for a new attitude of criticism and reflection. You could say that, in part, what I tried to do through my visuality was to develop what Cortázar developed through literature in his *Instrucciones*. (Sobreiro, 2008, p 15.)

The satirical and critical content Sobreiro attempts to insert into his work had great influence from Banksy (Figure 10). His technique and intentions are often totally different from Sobreiro's since he uses stencils and urban interventions, and his art is almost entirely public, mostly inserted illegally in urban areas "during the night", or in other words, it enters the public arena using exceptional methods. In contesting the discourse and contrary to the order imposed by the art world system, the aspect of his work that impacted Sobreiro is the fact that it is entirely built of irony and parody. More than pointing out and blaming the injustices of the system, Banksy makes use of public space to ridicule the power of British and world institutions. This critic's role, which seeks to convince the viewer through the use of humor, is in part what Sobreiro adopted during the creation of his *De/constructions*. Another point that appears to have influenced Sobreiro's work is Banksy's strategy of concealing the discourse of his artwork with an official appearance, which instead is antagonistic to this view. On more than one occasion, Banksy broke

into museums and, unseen, inserted subversive art pieces in their collections, and some of these were only discovered much later in time.

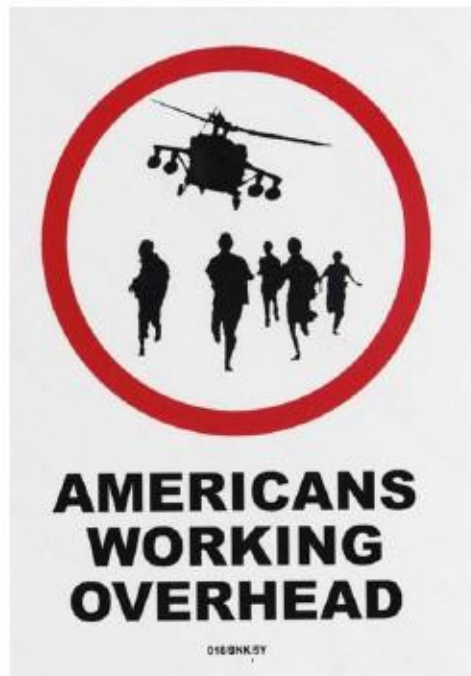


FIGURE 10. Banksy - 'Americans Working Overhead' -About 2004 Digital print sticker .© Victoria and Albert Museum



FIGURE 11. Evandro Prado - Habemus Cocam "Christ III" acrylic on canvas, 40 x 30 cm – 2008 © Maxwell Machado Collection.

Evandro Prado is a Brazilian contemporary artist, whose work is largely a reflection about religious systems, specifically Catholic Christianity, exploring its imagery and visual languages. In his multimedia series Habemus Cocam (Figure 11), for example, Prado expanded his theme and combined elements of the

Catholic Church's visuality with socialist and capitalist ideologies, creating hybrid installations, objects and images of figures and religious situations as Coca-Cola ads, mingling the sacred with pagan imagery. In a simultaneous treatment of several icons (Coca-Cola/Jesus/Che Guevara), the artist used the universe of the "traditional" fused with the "transitory," creating a third space in which he addressed issues belonging to both original sources.

### Communication and visuality

Sobreiro deals directly with issues of Visual Culture as a tool of ideology, as he inserts his visual production not primarily into the traditional space of the art gallery, but as part of the collective level of visuality, and at the same time, questions the nature of the authoritative instructions sanctioned by those in power. While preparing *De/constructions*, he sought a transit point between visual appearance and the message itself, making the viewer see through his work the arbitrariness that permeates the formal discourse of standardized safety signs displayed in public, which then become unnoticed as they are displayed. Taking advantage of the anti-hierarchical nature of Visual Culture, Sobreiro situates his production within an area of criticism and reflection, using the very flexible and moveable tendency of cultural studies to point to the static and rigid mechanisms of the official rhetoric that should be reconsidered and questioned.

Visual Culture is a recent field of studies, which involves the study of visuality, including the studies and practices that have traditionally been denominated as "Fine Arts" and "Visual Arts." Dias states that Visual Culture emphasizes:

[...] the daily experiences of the visual and move the attention given to the Fine Arts and Visual Arts, that is, a culture of elite to the visualization of everyday life. Moreover, denying boundaries between the elite and the popular art forms, Visual Culture uses as objects of interest the artifacts, institutions and technologies of visual representation. (Dias, 2007, p.7)

By dealing with all types of visual representations, considered or not as "art", Visual Culture as a field of study lends itself to analysis more related to the relationship between people and images than the images themselves. The focus of the artwork is no longer what happens within it, as it was in traditional fine arts until the mid-twentieth century; instead it privileges dialogues generated with viewers and encourages further analysis of these relationships. Martins adds that, besides the insertion of the focus in the space of everyday life, another basic element of these studies is that "Visual Culture addresses and discusses the image from another perspective, considering it not only in terms of its aesthetic value, but mainly trying to understand the social role of the image in life and culture." (Martins, 2008, p.30)

This situation of artistic interest in daily life and social space assists Sobreiro's ambiguous visual discourses. While fitting into viewers' everyday common space (rather than the highly exclusive space of artistic production until the mid-twentieth century), Sobreiro's signposts leave the traditional category of "art" and are seen to be simultaneous and parallel with signpost that are the target of his parody. Thus, Sobreiro partly promotes the questioning of his work, whose unreliable content is made clear to reveal his interest in dealing with absurd issues and troubling normalcy, but particularly the questioning of safety signposts that are obeyed unconsciously and uncritically on a daily basis. As David Darts asserts:

By calling attention to the social political, cultural and religious mechanisms and restrictions that inform our actions and temper our beliefs, artists are able to expose us to ourselves, to each other, and to the world we are attempting to cultivate together. This artistic troubling of our identities, our beliefs and our actions (and inactions) is often disorienting and often discomfiting. It frequently trembles the ideological ground on which we are accustomed to stand. (Darts, 2004, p.319)

This troubling of the viewer's experience makes the work itself and Sobreiro overcome the space of the artwork and question normative discourses. This act is doubly troublesome: in part because the work is hybrid and outside standards, and in part because of the morbid and critical content, which requires



viewers to sneak, to rely on the visual characteristics of the instructions they are used to consuming. Concerning this last statement, Duncum mentions that

Ideology works not because it calls particular attention to itself, but because it grounds itself in taken-for-granted, common-sense assumptions. Ideology works through ordinary cultural artifacts, and it can be hard to resist because it so often appears to belong to the realm of the natural. In this way ideology establishes the parameters for thinking and experiencing outside of which it is difficult to experience, let alone to act... While culture is always a site of struggle to define how life is to be lived and experienced, the struggle is often rendered invisible. (Duncum 2002, pp.5-6)

Moreover, Duncum asserts that ideology works through common cultural artifacts, and can be difficult to resist because it almost always seems to belong to the sphere of nature. The rhetorical tools with which power is perpetuated are somehow left invisible by their constant use, and as Darts cites, with the appearance of belonging to the space of what is natural, they never show up as being able to be troubled. The art, employed by forces of power, is kept in the foreground, obscuring the view of those who use it for ideological purposes. The relationship of art and power, as Darts stated, is not a new development occurring in the industrial and technological revolution, but an old alliance (2004, p. 313).

Through the assistance of visibility, the dissemination of ideologies occurs without ever calling attention to itself. As such, it operates camouflaged, and that is why the role of criticism, within the context of Sobreiro's artwork, is so significant. Whereas since immemorial time those in power prolong and extend the scope of their dominance over other individuals using art arbitrarily, it is also feasible that those who criticize this same power make use of art as a counter-discursive tool. Thus is unveiled the injustice, subjectivity and arbitrariness of visual normalcy, but also of the vehicle of this ideological dissemination: art itself. Besides the fact that the institutions of power silently disseminate its normative discourses, another point for criticism is that there is also a big difference between what is said by the systems and what systems actually do. Exposing this hypocrisy is one of the arts' tasks, as Darts suggested that "the visual arts have been used for decades to reveal tears in the social fabric, thereby exposing the caesuras between the fundamental social values (i.e., justice, democracy, freedom) and the dominant discourses and normative practices of the status quo." (2004, p. 318). The critique developed by the De/constructions reveals degrees of divergence among practices that we are silently induced to reproduce, and the sense of individual freedom that is promoted by state propaganda and publicity, and also by other controlling social forces, such as market advertising.

### Visual Culture Education and De/constructions

In November 2001, twelve North American art educators<sup>1</sup> met to discuss and share common concerns about the future of art education in the United States (US). This meeting was the beginning of a series of meetings that has been held over the years in the US and Canada by the original group of researchers and other aggregates, and is best known today as the VizCult group. Characterized as a group of experts in art education who demonstrated throughout their careers a great dedication to the field of art education, the VizCult is particularly interested in contemporary visual culture and its teaching.

A new paradigm of teaching art in the public schools was proposed by Freedman (2003) and other VizCult members (Boughton et al., 2002), and seeks to expand the curriculum of art education to include a careful and measured study of images and means of production in new media. In an attempt to clarify and develop understandings of the relationship between visual culture and education they summarized a study of visual culture in art education that values the students' interests and knowledge of the imagery they see on a daily basis, and understands and acknowledges their desire to participate in the production of this same visuality. The pedagogy they outlined is as follows: focus of curriculum content that is conceptually based, interdisciplinary, and socially relevant through creating and responding to images, artifacts and performances; encouragement of students to take responsibility for their learning under the guidance of a teacher who initiates experiences with a full range of visual culture; expansion of awareness and use of

newer visual media and alternative sites of teaching and learning; engaging the perspectives of artists who create a variety of forms of visual culture to broaden students' imaginations and inform critiques; encouraging learners to reflect on the relationship of visual culture to the construction of identity, the richness of global cultures, and the integrity of natural and human-made environments.

Another group, known as the Critical Visual Art Education Club (CVAE Club) <sup>2</sup>, based in Chicago, outlined, as well, aesthetic aspects of experience that are manifest in creating and responding to art in the context of students' everyday lives (Hausman et al., 2010). These and other assertions below are assembled from observations of their practices in art education, teaching and learning. The following are their main statements:

We are moving beyond previously defined disciplinary and theoretical boundaries toward broader, more culturally relevant discourses; Creating, perceiving, and responding to images in our lives should be given balanced attention with verbal and cognitive learning. Producing and responding to art extends the qualities of the immediate present to another level of awareness. By doing so, art processes can be thought of as a dialogue that brings into existence new understanding. Curriculum should be rooted in the life experiences of students, and explore how personal perspectives are intertwined with broader study. The distinctive forms of art education are its emphasis upon experiences of creative thought and visualization processes; and technique is instrumental to the expression and realization of an idea or feeling. Thinking like an artist invites insightful and multivalent ways of seeing. (Hausman et al., 2010)

By comparing Sobreiro's practice, as an artist/educator/researcher during the realization of *De/constructions*, to the goals and pedagogies suggested by the CVAE club and *VizCult* statements I consider that he was able to do as follows: to look to social issues and current events outside the fields of art to spark his interests, thus grounding his artistic investigations in ordinary life in order to respond to the needs of contemporary art making in a visualized society; to connect understandings, gained from art images and art viewing, to a more personal place of familiarity by deconstructing, discussing, and appropriating popular image forms from advertisements, comics and graphic novels to critique and make art to be placed in public spheres [or "in the public sphere," singular] as products and processes of mediation between people; to create art forms that deal with studies of individual artists as starting points for inquiries into the circumstances and interpretations of his personal artwork; to explore his life experiences, and explore how his personal perspectives are intertwined with broader studies that further aid to investigate understandings of diversity and complexity of all the visual arts as expressions of social and cultural issues, past and present; to experiment with different applications of techniques to create new forms and ideas from different perspectives as instrumental to the expression and realization of an idea or feeling; to explore real and imaginary themes and reflect upon works of art as starting points for personal expression, or construct other opportunities for rich visualization in order to inform the audience through reflective and responsible social interactions with the visual.

Further, Sobreiro's discourses confuse and provoke entrenched notions about art, representation, and common sense by continually changing concepts of certainty, morality, authority and appropriateness, thus encouraging pedagogies of confrontation as opposed to assimilation and uncritical reproduction. These discourses suggest how one might define and establish visual culture education practices, while encouraging interactions between viewer and objects of vision. A discussion of these discourses provides tools for visual culture educators to study cultural domination while empowering and enabling students to become critical producers of meanings and texts as they resist manipulation and domination.

I make the point that if visual culture education is to embrace all art forms of everyday life for inclusion in the curriculum, including comic signposts, it is essential that we learn more about specificities and implications of these fields for teaching and learning. In *De/constructions* a study of current relations between visibility and visual culture is restricted to a form of representation. This allows for a focus on particular kinds of representations in the construction of our everyday culture and popular memory, and the ideological and rhetorical work they do. Also it looks at the social issues presented and represented in signposts, as well as the oblique reflections they can give rise to, through their production, circulation and reception.



Then teaching and learning of visual culture, visual culture education, does not erase high art from the curriculum but rather approaches it from an inclusive perspective in which different forms of visual culture production can be understood through non-hierarchical categories. Visual culture education poses unasked questions, and visualizes possibilities for education in general that might never be in focus anywhere else. This occurs because it leads to critical consciousness that engages in social critique as its primary dialogue, which leads to understanding, and then action. The best word to describe this process is “agency,” a critical awareness that leads to informed action to resist processes of domination in our everyday lives. Visual culture education, open to new and diverse forms of knowledge and promoting understanding of hidden means of oppression, rejects the culture of positivism, accepts the idea that facts and values are indivisible, and above all that knowledge is socially constructed and intrinsically related to power. Accordingly, visual culture education encourages passive consumers to become active producers of culture, revealing, and resisting in the process, the homogenizing structures.

## Endnotes

<sup>1</sup> Dough Boughton, Kerry Freedman, Jerome Hausman, Laurie Hicks, Stanley Madeja, Suesi Metcalf, Martin Rayala, Deborah Smith-Shank, Mary Ann Stankiewicz, Patricia Stuhr, Kevin Tavin and Elizabeth Wallace.

<sup>2</sup>The Critical Visual Art Education Club (CVAE Club) members are Jerome Hausman, John Ploof, Jim Duignan, Nick Hostert, and Keith Brown.

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## The social discourse of childhood and the children's notions for the childhood's characteristics

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### Abstract

The aim of the research was the investigation of the position students take to the social discourses of childhood.

The theoretical context consisted of (a) the theory of Cultural Studies concerning to viewer's potential positions while decoding the meaning of cultural artifacts, (b) the considerations of Childhood Studies about the social discourses of childhood and their visual representations, (c) the Visual Culture Art Education Pedagogy's aim to develop students' critical literacy skills to deconstruct visual imagery's ideology and the need to investigate children's notions and positions concerning various discourses.

The sample was 112 students in Grade 6 of five primary urban schools. Data had been collected through anonymous questionnaires and paintings and processed by ATLAS ti program. The methodological tools were critical discourse analysis and semiotics of their verbal statements, their paintings, and their responses to visual representations of children.

We found that most students' notions refer to the characteristics like child's nature, the sentiments, The interpersonal relations, the type and place of children's action, which correspond to the dominant romantic discourse of childhood. Negotiated position to this discourse took few students, through their visual artwork mainly. Oppositional position took a minus number of students through their painting only, representing forms and actions that oppose the discourse of the "romantic child". We propose the development of students critical literacy skills in order to be able to improve their understanding of how they interact with visual culture and how visual culture influences their perceptions of various discourses including the discourses of childhood

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### Key words

Social discourses of childhood, primary students' notions of childhood, Visual Culture Art Education

### Introduction

The need for critical literacy in order to educate critical thinking citizens is widespread. Images and artworks are seen as sites of visual representation of ideals, beliefs, values, ideologies and dominant discourses about gender, race, power, class, age. The development of critical literacy skills to every discipline entails the ability to read and decode the meaning and intentions in every text and image, to reflect both on what is represented and unrepresented and think about multiple interpretations and alternative perspectives of representation (Misson & Morgan, 2006). In order to develop students' critical literacy skills in art education we need a curriculum based on Visual Culture Art Education (VCAE) that includes concepts like discourse, identity, visuality (Duncum, 2010).



Social discourses refer to systems of thoughts composed of ideas, attitudes, courses of action, beliefs and practices that systematically construct the subjects and the worlds of which they speak (Foucault, 1972). The visual representations of various discourses are part of students cultural knowledge and influence students interpretations in art making and viewing. Since cognitive science have demonstrated the importance of previous knowledge in the construction of knowledge, we need to know students preexistent ideas-notions in various issues and discourses in order to implement a VCAE curriculum.

There are many sociological researches about children's perceptions on media imagery or their appropriation of popular culture's artifacts but they do not concern the primary students' perspectives of the social discourses of childhood in the context of an art education curriculum.

The aim of our research was the investigation of the notions and the position that primary students take to the social discourses of childhood.

The research questions were:

- What are the children's notions of childhood characteristics?
- What position do the children occupy in relation to the social discourses of childhood?

The results could inform a VCAE curriculum development.

The theoretical context is consisted by concessions of Cultural Studies, Childhood Studies, Visual Culture Art Education.

## Theoretical context

### Cultural Studies

The meaning we give to the images, objects or to the culture in general, is determined by the participants of each society on a particular time. Seeing is a social construction (Bryson, 1988; Walker & Chaplin, 1997), a cultivated cultural practice (Jenks, 1996). We bring to the images social knowledge often unconsciously (Sturken & Cartwright, 2005). That's the reason we often think that some concepts are "common sense" (Hall, 1997) and we think that this is the only perspective to depict or understand the meaning of an image or of concepts like race, gender, age, class.

An image is encoded with meaning by his creator. It is decoded by the viewers according to their particular set of cultural assumptions, knowledge, interests, age, class, gender or the particular time and place involved (Sturken & Cartwright, 2005: 46).

The images present to viewers clues about the dominant meaning they want to communicate but the viewers choose the position they will take as decoders of cultural artifacts. They could choose (a) the dominant-hegemonic reading where they decode images in a relatively passive, unquestioning manner and they identify with the hegemonic meaning the images communicate, (b) the negotiated reading where they decode images in an active manner trying to interpret them in relation of their own memories and knowledge as well as the image itself but they still being aware of the dominant meanings that cling to it, (c) the oppositional reading where they decode images in a critical manner. They deconstruct the stereotypes, the ideology that is embedded in the image and they uncover the voices that are silenced. Oppositional reading also includes not looking at an image (Hall, 1997).





## Childhood Studies

The concept of childhood is considered a historic, social construction that is influenced by social cultural contexts, the economy and politics (James & James, 2008) and it is part of the social macrostructures (Qvortrup, 2005). There are contrasting concepts about childhood: the old view of the wilful, sinful child, whom the adults have to discipline was replaced from Rousseau's romantic idea for the naturally good child. There is also the model of childhood on the two dimensions of time: as an orbit towards the future where the child is validated as the society's investment for the future, the carrier of collective expectations (Hendrick, 2003) and as a world in the past that the adults lost and feel nostalgic for it (James & Prout 1990).

The romantic discourse of childhood ascribes to children's identity special characteristics like innocence, ignorance, happiness and the child's proximity to nature (Cannella & Kincheloe, 2002; James & Prout 1990; Jordanova, 1989). These convictions are embedded both to verbal and visual representations. Images of every kind show smiling children who play happily in countryside with toys -usually old technology- or with domesticated small animals in total harmony with nature, themselves and other children. They are depicted dressed up in old style attire or special costumes, like fairies, angels, cupids (Higonnet, 1998; Holland, 2004). These visual representations lead to conceptualizations of innocent, pure, immature, cute, little children. They focus on the child's naturalness, timelessness, and they visualize the romantic child of Jean-Jacques Rousseau (Higonnet, 1998; Holland, 2004; Sofaer Derevensky, 2000). The children's visual representations that dominate in the visual culture of every era, contribute to the discourses of childhood and operate as patterns of expectations which the members of a society, adults and children, accept and reuse (Benton, 1996; Cunningham, 1995; Higonnet, 1998; Holland, 2004).

Childhood's sociology rejects the classic view about children as passive recipients and acknowledges their active role as interpreters and negotiators of meanings in the social worlds they live. Thus it studies children's perceptions and asks for their point of view (Buchingham, 2000; Corsaro, 1997).

## Visual Culture Art Education

Nowadays with the plethora of images there is a need to develop a deeper understanding of the visual experiences in order to respond critically to the surface appearances. The VCAE's emphasis is on the various meanings people make of images, as they accept preferred meanings, resist or negotiate them (Duncum, 2002a, p. 15). A major role of art education should be to examine how the aesthetic features of visual imagery offer up ideology as natural and seductive and how they work to achieve assent, and shape the culture and individual identity (Duncum, 2008; Freedman, 2003). Art educators have to promote students' expanded self-awareness examining content that is taken for granted and to investigate ideas for themselves rather than being told what to produce (Gude, 2007). The emphasis in a VCAE curriculum could be the educative power of positions and opinions on various issues expressed by individuals and social groups through visual forms. Social discourses are reflected in student beliefs and art making and should be considered in curriculum planning (Freedman, 2003). We need to address how children are visually represented in contemporary society, but it would also be useful to investigate how children see themselves, how and in what extent they accept, negotiate or resist to the social discourses of childhood (Duncum, 2002b).

## Methodology

The sample was 112 students (56 girls and 56 boys) in Grade 6 of five urban primary schools. We investigate their notions through three types of data: their verbal statements, their painting and their responses to images. They filled in an anonymous questionnaire, they create one painting on paper

(21X15cm) with felt-tips, and they responded to two images (16X11 cm) printed in photographic paper that have visual representations of children (Figure 1, Figure 2).



Figure 1: First Image, Bonne Maman advertisement. (Child & New Parents, November 2010).



Figure 2: Second image, Nara, Y. (1995). Childhood [Online image]. Retrieved from:

[http://www.google.gr/imgres?q=Nara,+d50785871&num=10&hl=el&tbm=isch&tbnid=sTfljExH3ZjEzM:&imgrefurl=http://www.christies.com/LotFinder/lot\\_details.aspx%3FintObjectID%3D5078587&docid=DUVF7963t\\_Ug6M&imgurl=http://www.christies.com/lotfinderimages/d50785/d50785871.jpg&w=309&h=340&ei=lb4vUKvwCuaoyAHlhoGwBw&zoom=1&biw=1024&bih=685](http://www.google.gr/imgres?q=Nara,+d50785871&num=10&hl=el&tbm=isch&tbnid=sTfljExH3ZjEzM:&imgrefurl=http://www.christies.com/LotFinder/lot_details.aspx%3FintObjectID%3D5078587&docid=DUVF7963t_Ug6M&imgurl=http://www.christies.com/lotfinderimages/d50785/d50785871.jpg&w=309&h=340&ei=lb4vUKvwCuaoyAHlhoGwBw&zoom=1&biw=1024&bih=685)

The questionnaire's questions were:

- What do you think when you hear the word "childhood"?
- When do you think childhood ends?
- Paint a picture that depicts something characteristic of your own childhood.

After the creation of their painting the questions were:

- Why did you choose this picture to show your own childhood?
- How old are you in this picture?

Afterwards we gave them two images and we asked them to choose (the first/second/both/none of them) and justify their answer:

- Which one would you choose to decorate your bedroom or for your photo collection?
- Which one would you choose to identify yourself with?

We processed data by critical discourse analysis and semiotics using ATLAS ti program. We interrelated their verbal statements, their paintings and their responses to images to infer their position to social discourses of childhood.

## Results

### Verbal statements

The conceptual units that emerged from the verbal statements are about child's nature, children's actions, interpersonal relations and differences from adulthood (Figure 3).

The category "child's nature" includes students' statements of intrinsic characteristics like "innocence", "purity", "tenderness", "cute", abilities like "fantasy", "more appetite for everything", "much energy", sentiments like "joy", "happiness", "enthusiasm", "spontaneity".

Two statements referred indirectly to vulnerability ("protection", "parents' care"). None of the students referred to the stress and fears for example of the unknown or of the dark, the weakness to administrate negative feelings like anger etc. that children experience intensively.

The category with the most statements (44,15%) refers to children's actions and includes pastime, toys, sports, games, special places for children like open air or interior playgrounds. The characteristics about the cognitive field refer only to the systematic education (few references about school and reading) and none to the children's spontaneous bias to know the world.

We found minimum references to interpersonal relations: six references about family but seventeen about friends.

The fourth category corresponds to differences from adulthood. They refer mostly to thoughtlessness, freedom of actions, absent of problems and stress, potentiality to live for a long time ("the best period of our life", "it's the time when you can enjoy your life", "as a child you can do whatever you want, when you grow up you can do nothing", "when I was a little child I get through fantastically, but as I grow up life gets more difficult", "you don't have to worry for financial issues", "you have a long time ahead to live"). We found few references to the cognitive field ("children have not acquire yet the behavior and the way of thinking as the adults"), one to the females biological maturity and one to the childhood's psychological dimension for adults ("what I think for the word childhood is: grown up men discuss about their childhood").

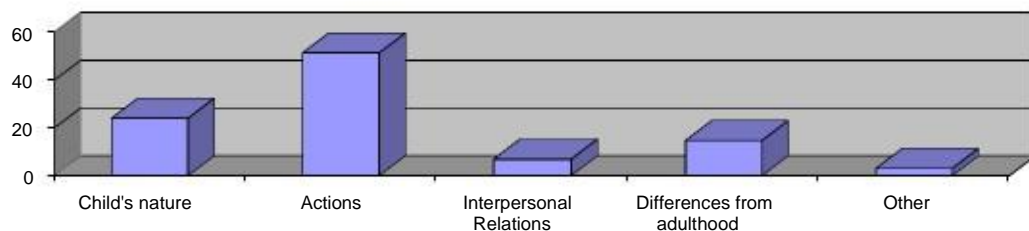


Figure 3: Verbal statements about childhood's characteristics.

Their verbal statements about childhood's limits constituent four categories: during adolescence (between 13-18 years old), before or at the 12th year, absence of limit (Figure 4). Most students believe that childhood ends somewhere during the adolescence, either to the beginning or to the end

of the studies between the two stages of secondary education (gymnasium and lyceum). Many students believe that childhood never ends and some of them justify their answer in the base of stereotypical phrases ("you always have a child within you"). A very small number believes that it ends with the studies of primary education and few students stated different numbers between the 19th and 42nd year. Some girls said that childhood ends before the 12th year.

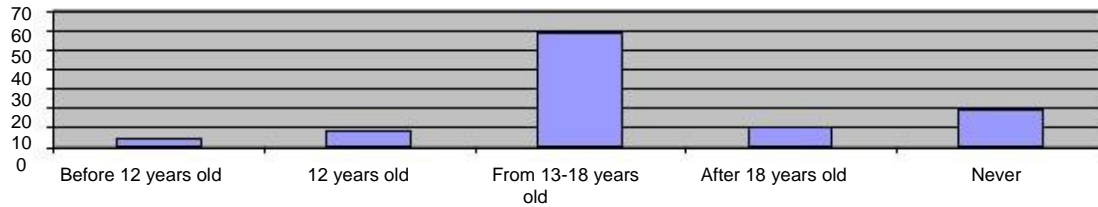


Figure 4: Verbal statements about childhood's limits.

### Students' artwork

We examined the paintings they create about their own childhood for the elements: presence of persons, type of scenery, type of actions.

The most students depicted one person in the painting. Many depicted two or three children (brothers or close friends) and some of them more than four children. They rarely represented parents (10%). They depicted landscapes without people (almost 12%) (Figure 6).



Figure 5: A girl's self-portrait with a balloon and a teddy bear standing alone in a meadow.

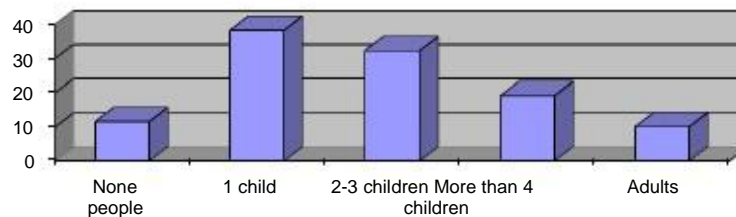


Figure 6: Presence of persons in students' artwork.

The scenery of most paintings was the natural environment, especially meadows and to a smaller number the sea ((Figure 7). A small percentage of students (26%) depicted urban environment (playing field, school, playground, interior of a house).

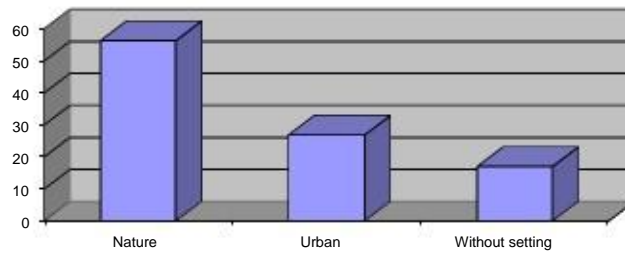


Figure 7: Type of scenery in students' artwork.

Four students (3,5%) depicted a small house in the meadow (Figure 8). Minus paintings referred to school environment (5,3%) but in those cases was depicted only the school yard and it was covered with grass (Figure 9). Some students (17%) left the background white and we cannot decipher where the depicted action took place.



Figure 8: A girl's picture of a small house in the meadow.



Figure 9: A girl's picture of a small school in countryside with grassy school yard and two children who play ball.



Action was in most paintings (56,25%) energetic, active (the children played football, hide & seek, they run, they swam, they played on the swings). In a smaller percentage (32,14%) the action was passive: a child stand motionless into the fields, kept a toy e.g. a doll or a balloon (Figure 5). They didn't depict new technology toys.

In many paintings the interpersonal relations were absent because they were not any persons in the picture (11,61%). Even when the action was active there were not any interpersonal relations because either there was only one person in the scene or the persons stayed still, one beside the other (Figure 10).



Figure 10: A girl's painting with four children who stay in a meadow.

Few students (8,92%) tried to communicate their message by words in balloons ("I love my life", "The game is joy", "Hello").

Most students (78,43%) depicted their self at the school age (7-12 years old) and some (21,57%) at the preschool age.

They justified the picture's content either because of their experiences ("that's what I play with my friends"), or because of their convictions about childhood ("childhood is only joy and games").

Ten male students kept a different stance to the task painting tags or words in graffiti style (Figure 11).



Figure 11: A boy's painting of the word "LASER" in graffiti style

One drew himself painting graffiti on the wall pulling the tongue out (Figure 12). He justified his choice according to his interest for graffiti. Another drew himself with black teeth and gave a humorous justification ("to show my handsomeness").



Figure 12: A boy's self-portrait while he paint a graffiti (his tag) on a wall.

Eight students painted in graffiti style their name or wrote a football player's name. Two of the eight students projected their name in a natural environment (countryside, seaside).

These ten boys were the only students that included a new technology toy (play-station) in their verbal statements.

### Responses to images

Students responded to both tasks (bedroom's decoration and resemblance to identity) almost with the same proportion (Figure 13).

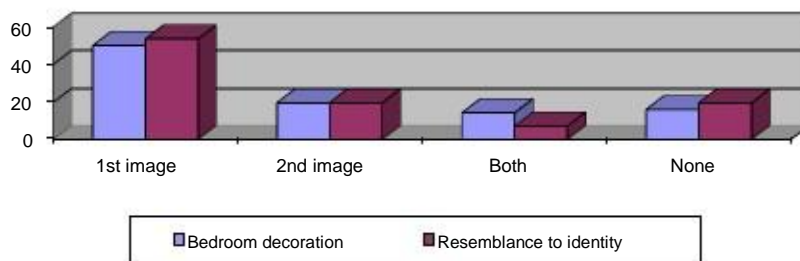


Figure 13: Students' responses to two images.

When they disliked both images, more students reacted negatively to their identification with the second image than to the first one.

More students (50%) chose the first image than the second one (20 %) to both tasks. The rest of them chose either both or none of them.

They justify their choices based on the resemblance to their experiences ("because I run into the house" or "I like jam", or "I like swimming") their preferences to colour ("I like the red colour"), their preferences to characters ("I like babies"), or their preferences to art style ("I like comics").



Many students justified their choice of the first image referring explicitly to the characteristics of the dominant discourse of childhood ("the children have to play", "the first image looks more child-like").

Some of the students who chose the second image they totally misunderstood the narrative; They thought it represented a humorous story and that was the reason to choose it ("it is more funny", "that's me, a human with humour and open heart"). Only 5% could observed the child's negative feelings and could found a resemblance to their self ("because I get angry easily", "because I nag and my face looks like baby's").

## Discussion

Most verbal statements referred to playful behavior and abstinence from public participation, the positive emotions and children's intrinsic characteristics of innocence. Students perceived childhood by the developmental and psychoanalytical perspective. They think childhood is an opposite condition of adulthood, a timeless unconcerned period without constraints, an idealized state, a discernible era without tensions, stress, malfunctions, negative feelings fundamentally different from adulthood (James & Prout, 1990). They attributed to adulthood only negative feelings, they are not willing to get to and they already feel nostalgic for their childhood. It seems that their autobiographical memory was influenced from their parents' talk about past (Gregory, 2001; Fivush & Nelson, 2006).

Even though they adopted the discourse of innocence and thoughtlessness that promotes the dependence and protection of adults (James & Prout, 1990), they didn't refer to parents but to friends. It seems that because of their age the students have cut the umbilical cord with the family and they put more value on friendships. This is a central feature of the socialization that takes place in the context of peer groups (Corsaro, 1997). This choice indicates a negotiated position to the dominant discourse of parents' protection.

They determined the childhood's limit according to the ideas about psychosocial maturation that dominate in contemporary social context and the institutional perspective concerning education. Their notions, especially girls' notions, are influenced by the visible biological changes on their body -the start of menses (Prendergast, 1999). Both genders associated the childhood's limit to some level of education (primary, gymnasium, lyceum, tertiary), the beginning of vocational activity in late adulthood and the departure of home. Their conceptualization of maturation are influenced by the kind of society the live in; everyone in urban industrial society needs a long time to learn the demanding social roles and be prepared for a profession (Wells, 2009).

They also adopted the psychoanalytical approach of childhood for the child we carry forward into our adult life. The idea of the eternal child is reinforced to our contemporary societies by the absence of transition ceremonies between different life phases, it is interwoven with the idea of childhood's glorification (the divine child), and the inmost adult's fear for the end of life (Lenzen, 1985). They adopted the idea of childhood's expansion in all phases of life that is wide spread in popular culture's utterances.

They negotiated the discourse of ignorance and vulnerability and the entailed need of parental protection and control by avoiding the depiction of parents and houses that are symbols of safety and protection (Bachelard, 1994). For the same reason the majority avoided to depict themselves as toddlers or infants.

Even though they wrote about friendships, most students in their paintings depicted their childhood as a lonely voyage: they made self-portraits and they avoided to depict wide social relations. Perhaps their self-portraits was defined from their experience as singletons or from the photographic practices of snapshots for the family album (Duncum, 2004). The majority of students who depicted social relations with other children, they limited to their brothers or close friend. Even though some students



depicted more than three persons, half of them chose to paint children staying shatteringly in the countryside without signs of cooperation. A minority of students gave signs of social interaction in a team work (football game). If we consider the absence of interpersonal relations and the number of the paintings without persons, we could infer that students negotiated the discourse of the collectivistic childhood (peer groups) depicting their lived experiences of individualistic environments at home and school (Triandis, 1993).

The dominant discourse of the romantic child who lives in countryside was evident to the scenery of their paintings. Although students live to an urban environment the scenery of their paintings was the nature and mainly meadows even though they live to a coastal town without meadows. They were influenced from the long exposure to Western fine art and popular culture imagery of little children playing in countryside (Holland, 2004).

The naturalization of childhood prevailed on the limited paintings of school environment. Students negotiated the idea of school's institutional function -its formal structure and restrains- that tries to bridge the two states between ignorant childhood and knowing adulthood (Holland, 2004); they choose to stay on the ignorant state of the childhood's side depicting only the school yard. Further it was covered with grass, which it's an inexistent reality of Greek school yards, expressing in parallel their acceptance of the romantic ideal of education.

Students depicted not only children's energetic nature through games but also the passive one. They communicate the passivity through body posture; motionless, smiling children who sit for a snapshot (Duncum, 2004).

Some girls depicted dolls or teddy bears that are considered visual standard of childhood (Thomas, 2002). The absence of the depiction of new technology toys indicate that the students espoused the discourse of romantic timeless child.

Some students tried to establish an active interpersonal relation with the viewers. They communicate their message about childhood's happiness through words in balloons in comic style. Their choice of comics style denote the use of a common representative sign of childhood (Hatfield, 2007).

Some boys use graffiti style and urban scenery. Since the graffiti style is a medium of expression of marginalized people and their resistance to conformity and control (Phillips, 1999) this choice signifies their attempt for self presentation in the public space to claim power and independence of the institutions like family and school, to communicate and construct masculinity (Macdonald, 2001). The style and the content of their paintings is an evidence of an oppositional position. Nevertheless two of them projected their graffiti on a natural scenery (e.g. they wrote their tag between two trees in the open air). This is a sign of a negotiated position rather than oppositional.

These ten boys included new technology toys with the old ones to their verbal statements about childhood, keeping a negotiated position to the discourse of timeless child through the linguistic mode of communication.

In general it seems that these ten boys stand in the middle of the negotiating and oppositional position and it was easier to express their opposition through the visual mode.

None of the girls chose a similar artistic style or content for their paintings. They internalized and enacted roles and rules assigned to girls within the dominant culture. They accepted the gendered divisions of "private" and "public", and the girls' displacement of the public sphere (Boler, 1999).

The influence of the dominant discourse of childhood also guided their responses to images. Their preference for the first image was prominent. They could identify themselves with it. They thought it is an exponent of childhood: two children who play happily with a little bird in an old-time house. The students who chose the second image they did it either for its artistic style (comic) or for their



preference to the implying action (the swimming). They failed to see the figure's negative emotions (sadness and anger). We jest by calling the phenomenon "blindness": they chose to see and read only whatever corresponds to the social discourse of happy childhood, they saw a boy in the water painted in comic style. Insignificant number of students recognized the boy's feelings, and could identify themselves with him. The students who could read the second image properly were not those ten students who took the oppositional position to the romantic discourse of childhood through their paintings. Those students kept different positions to the tasks. Probably for those boys it was easier to express themselves visually than verbally -as we inferred comparing their verbal statements about childhood and their paintings- or they did not take the necessary time either to look the images carefully or to reflect upon their responses to images and give a thorough answer.

## Conclusions

Students are influenced by the dominant discourses of romantic, eternal child and their visual representations of them.

In general the most students accepted the romantic discourse of innocent, ignorant child and its association with nature. They believed childhood is an opposite state of adulthood and its differences refer to the biological and cognitive domain. Its end is related with biological development, levels of educational institution and the start of a vocation. Many students accepted the psychoanalytical perspective for the maintaining of the child's identity for all lifelong. They influenced from imagery that depicts little children playing in the countryside and the practices of family snapshots. They used visual standards for childhood such as the childish, old technology toys and the artistic style of illustrations that are common in children's books.

Students took a negotiated position on the romantic discourse to the dimension of parental control over children. Most students chose not to mention or depict parents or themselves as toddlers. They also negotiated the idea of school's institutional function by limiting the references to the formal education.

A minority of students took an oppositional position, only through their artwork. They represented forms, actions and artistic style that oppose the discourse of the "romantic child" choosing to represent characteristics of the adolescent culture and to communicate their will to enter into the urban, social space and to claim power. However even those students kept a negotiated position when they communicate their notions verbally.

Acknowledging of the challenges of interpreting visual representations of children (Brown, 2002) and arguing that it should be added the category of age -between the others like the race or the gender- as a focus of critical inquiry, we suggest that there is a need to include in the visual art curriculum the critical analysis of social discourses of childhood as they are embedded in visual representations of children. The concern will be to help primary students to develop critical literacy skills, in order to be able to improve their understanding of how they interact with visual culture and how it influences their perceptions of various discourses including the discourses of childhood. The ultimate goal will be to acquire a critical deconstructive stance towards the stereotypes embedded in the visualizations of the dominant discourses.

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## Pinkalicious: A Visual and Poetic Inquiry into the Mean Girl Phenomenon

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### Abstract

The body and clothing are forms of socio-cultural and political capital (Bourdieu, 1985; Lurie, 1981; Butler, 1999). Inspired by Wiseman (2002), I examine the high school subculture of “Mean Girls” via arts-informed research (Blaikie, 2007 and 2009; Cahman-Taylor, 2008; Cole and Knowles, 2008) in which art forms and texts reciprocally inform and interconnect. I asked participants “How are your clothing choices determined by your embodied sense of self?” Notions of the body and clothing are associated with identity, culture, gender, age and a sense of belonging to or exclusion from groups, including social classes (Coupland, 1991; Howe and Strauss, 2000; Jackson, 2010, Ulrich, 2003). Arts-informed research (Cole and Knowles, 2008) provides the framework for this inquiry, drawing upon the idea that art forms (music, theatre, media, the visual arts, dance) and text have inherent meaning, individually and collectively. My female participants were Mean Girls themselves, and/or were affected by the Mean Girl phenomenon by being bullied and/or excluded. Using poetry and visual images, “Mean Girls” are presented through the lens of clothing as a negotiated socially produced expression of self and visual identity, with the body as mediator (Brazier and LeBesco, 2001; Holliday and Hassard, 2001; Butler, 1993, 1999; Davis, 1997). I select and present artworks and poems focusing on two participants, intending that these works, buttressed by text, speak viscerally of human being-ness, research-creation, arts-informed research and youth culture. The aesthetics of the body and clothing are hegemonic, affording or depriving individuals of social, cultural, economic and political capital.

### Key words

Arts-informed educational research; social theory, aesthetics

### Context

For some time in my scholarly work I examined the aesthetics of scholarship through arts-informed research and social theory on the body and clothing (Blaikie 2007, 2009, 2011). My focus has since shifted to youth culture, specifically, to young adults aged 18 to 25 (Coupland, 1991; Howe and Strauss, 2000; Ulrich, 2003). In conversations, my 25 participants told me of their experiences navigating early adulthood and their difficulties in individuating, becoming a young adult, and in creating a personal visual identity and a personal aesthetic. In reading the transcripts, a prevalent phenomenon emerged among my female participants: Mean Girls—the focus of this study.

Through their carefully managed bodies, very specific clothing choices, and artifactual accessories including hair, jewelry, make-up, shoes and handbags, these exaggeratedly “feminine” Alpha A-list females exert significant sexual, social, emotional and political power and control in high schools and beyond. One participant suggested I watch the Hollywood movie Mean Girls (2004), which was inspired by Wiseman’s (2002) book, *Queen Bees and Wannabees*. Some of my participants were Mean Girls; others were at the mercy of Mean Girls, and some were both.

This study resides in the arenas of identity (Jackson, 2010); social theory on the body (Brazier, 2001; Butler, 1993, 1999; Davis, 1997); clothing (Keenan, 2001) and arts-informed research (Cole and Knowles, 2008). Clothes perform as negotiated expressions of self and visual identity, with the body



as mediator (Braziel and LeBesco, 2001; Holliday and Hassard, 2001). The study is situated in Bourdieu's (1985) conceptualization of the body as a form of social and physical capital, and Connell's (2002) argument that bodies are agents of social process as much as objects of social process.

The lived experience of one's body and clothing is nested within a sense of belonging, or not, to particular groups (Jackson, 2010). As individuals functioning within socio-cultural micro-worlds, we position ourselves and are positioned by others in relation to social class (socio-economic and political status), religion, ethnicity, culture, gender and age. We eat, sleep, exercise, work, and live our lives in spaces and places, all the while conscious of our clothed bodies: We are subject to the force and power of our own critical gaze, and the critical gaze of others.

Clothing is a language (Keenan, 2001; Lurie, 1981). It is a visible outward expression of a personal ontology. Through our clothed bodies and accessories we create identities, consciously or not; we reveal subjectivities, beliefs and values about who we are, what we feel about ourselves within particular social contexts, and how we want to be "read" by those with whom we live life, even in passing. Through our clothed bodies we perform our lives, re/creating or conforming to an ongoing and un/evolving personal lived aesthetic of individual and group identities and values. To this end, the body is a mediator for clothing and accessories, a visible external expression of a viscerally lived and complete ontology of mind, spirit and body; an expression of ease/disease, and of the entirety of who one is as a human being in the world (Braziel and LeBesco, 2001; Holliday and Hassard, 2001).

In my conversations with young adults on their lives lived through the clothed body within youth culture, the phenomenon of "mean girls" emerged as a major theme. "Mean girls" are prevalent and visible in middle and high schools in North America and beyond.

The method for data collection was arts-informed research. Through conversations with and photographs of participants I created poems and artworks. In the AIR theoretical paradigm (Blaikie, 2007 and 2009; Cahman-Taylor, 2008; Cole and Knowles, 2008), collected and re-created art forms and narratives are situated within theory. They are inherently interconnected and meaningful.

## Method

Eisner (1993; 1997, 2008) played a formative role in laying out the theoretical framework for various forms of arts-based educational research that are prevalent currently within educational theory and practice. Arts-informed research (AIR) is the methodological approach that provides the framework for this inquiry into and about the clothed, embodied and lived identities of youth and young adults.

Arts-informed research (Coles and Knowles, 2008) is geared to enhancing understanding of the human condition "through alternative (to conventional) processes and representational forms of inquiry, and to reach multiple audiences by making scholarship more accessible. The methodology infuses the languages, processes, and forms of literary, visual, and performing arts with the expansive possibilities of scholarly inquiry for the purposes of advancing knowledge" (p.59). AIR is characterized by the following elements:

- There is a commitment to specific art forms; the data is gathered and presented via these art forms
- Art forms illuminate the research process and products in essential and irreplaceable ways
- There exists a creative inquiry process in which the researcher/s are open to emergent possibilities
- The researcher/s and participants are "present"
- Art forms illuminate the study: Texts informs artworks and artworks inform texts



- There is a connection to the audience and audience engagement because AIR aims to be accessible beyond academe ((Cole and Knowles, pp.61-62).

In AIR, the focus of the study and the researcher/creator's own artistic strengths inform data collection and presentation. Drawing on the creation of artworks within appropriate genres, including music, theatre, film, media, the visual arts and dance, data collection procedures including creation and research activities are designed to accommodate both one's artistic strengths and the research topic. In AIR, the combination of artworks and texts are key to providing new, arts-informed insights into a specific topic. Artworks and texts must be coherent and inter-connected. The focus is on searching for meaning via making visible essential truths.

### Data Collection

After gaining Research Ethics Board approval, I had conversations with and took photographs of twenty-five youth aged 18 to 25. At the time of data collection, participants were university students in Canada. They represent a variety of ethnicities, cultures and sexual orientations.

My central research question was: "How are your clothing choices determined by your lived sense of self?" Throughout data collection, analysis and presentation, I was guided by the following questions:

How do we dress to show we belong to or wish to belong to certain groups? How do we dress to claim our gender or to disavow it?

How do we dress to show what we value and believe?

How does age play a part in how we dress?

How do we reveal or conceal our own cultures in the way we dress?

How does our hairstyle show others who we are, what we value, and how we see ourselves?

How are clothes used to hide or reveal the body?

How is clothing used to manipulate others?

How is the body used to manipulate others?

How do accessories (jewelry, shoes, purses, sunglasses, hats and so on) play a role in creating our personal, social and visual identities?

How do people dress within specific youth subcultures?

### Data Analysis and Presentation

Transcripts of conversations inspired poems and narrative. I read and re-read transcripts in order to isolate specific phrases and words. Ideas were disjointed and disordered, so I ordered these discrete elements chronologically and conceptually in order to shape the first very long draft of text. Moving to creating a poem included much elimination of text, until a certain succinct completeness was found.

In order to protect the anonymity of participants, the photographs were re-created as collage creations. From print material I chose different facial features to re-form each face, while aiming to maintain a coherent "sense" of that person's essential look and way of being in the world. The collages were then re-created as paintings and drawings.

I select and present artworks and poems focusing on those participants who themselves were Mean Girls, and/or who were bullied and excluded by Mean Girls. I intend the poems and artworks to speak





viscerally of human being-ness, providing an opportunity for audience/participant engagement in research-creation, arts-informed research, social theory on the body and clothing and youth culture. My selected participants for this study are Hayley and Olivia. The participants selected these pseudonyms.

### Olivia

I went to a very small private Christian high school  
With cliques and drama  
You know the movie *Mean Girls*?  
You know the bullying assembly they had?  
We had to have a *Mean Girls* assembly about bullying in grade 9  
A bunch of girls were bullying someone  
She was a little overweight  
It was awful  
I didn't have anything to do with it  
But still, I did nothing to stop it  
The kids attacking her were confronted and penalized

In grade 9  
I became one of them  
I tried to look nice  
I curled my hair  
I straightened it  
I dyed it blonde  
I got my nails done  
I tanned regularly  
I did it for years  
I was a girly preppy type -- I still am

The worst time for me  
Was getting dumped in grade 10  
I was dating a guy--crazy about him  
He was a year older and everyone thought he was so hot  
So so amazing  
He was a jock, in all the sports teams  
He broke up with me  
Randomly  
Over the phone  
One Tuesday afternoon  
So he goes: "I don't think we should date anymore"  
I was devastated  
I just sat there  
"Okay" I said  
Hung up  
And burst into tears

He saw me at school



With all the girls circling me  
I'd be giving him dirty looks, as well as his next girlfriend  
It was my job to give him dirty looks during lunch hour  
It took a year to get over him  
He'd ask about me, and show up, magically, at outings and parties  
He's dating a real mean girl now

Mean girls are really pretty  
Thin  
Their hair perfectly straight and smooth  
Nails perfect all the time  
And nice clothes  
American Eagle is too low class for them  
The girls wear Hollister, Abercrombie  
With Versace or Louis Vuitton handbags

The guys were preppy too, with their collars up  
in Lacoste, Hollister and Abercrombie

Brand names were big because our school was expensive  
I wasn't right in the mean girls circle  
I was closely associated  
We'd go out with mean girls on weekends  
We'd hang out with them at recess or lunch hour

The mean girls were just brutal  
To this day, a lot of them are still brutal  
The bullying was always about a girl's size, hair, skin, and clothes  
The top mean girls were the most two faced  
Everyone knew  
One snatched my friend Ally's boyfriend out of spite  
Just to show she could  
She said Ally was "fat and ugly"

Weight was always my issue  
Near grade 12, I started to lighten up on myself  
My friends and I said "whatever, like it's just the way it is  
We're not going to keep dieting and having cabbage soup every day"

By the end of high school we were all sick of each other  
We were all pretty, preppy, identical  
We all dyed our hair blonde  
We wanted to look exactly the same as each other  
We thought that was the way to fit in  
We were Barbies

Recently, I saw the mean girls at a funeral  
It was just like high school



Judgment and gossip  
Someone said "Jade's so fat"  
And  
"What's up with Tiffany's hair?"

Here at university  
In a lecture  
I still see mean girls  
They come in  
Smug  
With their blackberries and Booster Juice or Starbucks  
They talk throughout the entire lecture  
I say "be quiet" --or someone else does  
They give you a dirty look  
That whole "I don't care" thing  
They're everywhere

Looking at high school pictures of myself  
I can't believe I did that  
I haven't gone tanning in a year  
Actually,  
I just went orange  
I thought I looked so great

A year ago, when I was 20, I dyed my hair brown  
I don't do dumb dieting anymore  
I eat healthy food and exercise

I learnt at school from the mean girls  
Not to be like them  
Constantly judging people for how they look  
Making up rumours  
Getting attention

I feel much better at university  
At ease  
I don't have to look like anyone else  
I am with people of different ages and backgrounds  
And I am really trying to be  
Just me



## Hayley

At first,  
Mom picked out my clothes  
Lots of pink, and shirts with monkeys

In grade 6, it began  
I was overweight, and I got picked on  
I was called “Burger” all through elementary school

I hung out with the popular girls  
But I was the one they picked on  
I really wanted them to like me  
They would hit me, or push me, and then run away  
At the end of grade 6 I was like “I don’t want to be that girl anymore”

Over the Summer holidays  
I controlled everything I ate  
I wouldn’t eat my parents’ food  
I ate just cereal and fruit

I lost a lot of weight

For the start of grade 7  
I bought a red sleeveless shirt with “punk princess” on it  
And a matching black flared miniskirt  
I wanted that outfit more than anything in the world



That outfit started it all  
It progressed into studded belts, bracelets  
All black  
I dyed my hair half black underneath, blonde on top  
Black eyeliner  
And piercings in my ears and belly button

Mom and I started fighting  
She'd get angry at me for wanting ugly, trashy clothes  
She wanted me in stupid, preppy little girl's clothes

At 13 I got a job and started buying clothes for myself

In grade 8, I still had body conflict  
I didn't see myself as thin enough  
When you're the only plump girl in a class of 50  
You're an easy target  
But guys were never mean to me  
They told me "you're so pretty"  
They wanted to go to the dance with me

But the girls were very mean

It was like the movie **Mean Girls**  
In this movie, three girls have a superiority complex in high school  
Popular, pretty, all the guys want them  
This girl Cady from Africa moves in  
She becomes friends with the out crowd  
They want to know the secrets of the three most beautiful popular girls  
They get Cady to get a makeover so she'll fit in  
She must go back to the out girls, the unpopular girls, and tell them  
all the mean girls' secrets

But Cady becomes a mean girl-- rude, backstabbing, manipulating  
There's a happy ending--Cady learns the error of her ways

Those three mean girls were the girls I had to live with in elementary school  
I wanted to be in the in-group  
One girl, she was first, the "top girl"  
The princess  
Two girls behind her, twins, would do everything the top girl said  
I was part of the next four girls in the top seven  
But still, you weren't one of the top three  
You knew you weren't one of the top three  
They made sure you knew you weren't one of those three  
If I wanted to hang out with one of the top three girls  
I had to ask the one in charge  
And I couldn't do it without the other two being there

They'd decide Tuesday was miniskirt day  
If I didn't wear a miniskirt, I couldn't hang out with them the whole day  
In grade 8, the girls made a photo album of theme days  
I wasn't in a lot of them, 'cause I didn't have the outfits  
They'd say: "wear short shorts and a tank top"  
I didn't have short shorts; Mom said "they're skanky"





So they go “Hayley, you can’t hang out with us today  
‘cause you’re not in the short shorts”  
I was wearing a tank top, skateboard shoes and regular shorts  
But it wasn’t good enough  
I was banned  
After that, all I wanted was short shorts

There was plaid shirt day  
Paul Frank day  
Pajama bottoms day

Our school was cliquey  
With three girl stars at the top  
And 4 of us below  
We were very mean to the other 43 girls in our grade  
Even though there was another group of 10 really nice girls, just below us  
I should’ve been hanging out with them  
We treated them worse ‘cause they were better people  
I didn’t participate-- it was always the top three  
We watched from behind  
Which, I guess, is participating

One new girl was gorgeous  
The prettiest little girl you’ll ever see  
All the boys liked her  
And that made the top three girls very angry  
One day, the mean girls pantsed her in the playground, in front of everyone<sup>32</sup>  
No one told on them  
I had been pantsed by them too, often  
They would run up to you, you wouldn’t see it coming  
And you wouldn’t ever dare pants one of them

Half way through grade 8 I said  
“I don’t want to deal with you anymore, I don’t want to be your friend”  
I began to hang out with nicer girls  
But that made everything worse, because I left them  
You can’t just leave them  
Even though they don’t like you and you don’t really like them

It had begun in grade 6 with calling me “Burger”  
Then pantsing  
Then pushing

It wasn’t the first time I had been pushed; I wasn’t the only one pushed  
Lots of girls were  
It never happened to guys  
One girl would be on her hands and knees behind you  
Another girl, she would come over and talk to you  
You’d think, “oh, she’s so nice, she’s talking to me”  
And then she’d push your shoulders back hard, and you’d fall back  
Right over the girl kneeling behind you

---

<sup>32</sup> “Pantsing” is pulling down someone’s trousers and underpants, typically in a public place.



I got pushed often  
The last time it happened  
I snapped my wrist, broke my arm  
I went to the principal  
They were only suspended for a week; after that, I had nothing to do with them

It ended with the big graduation dance in grade 8  
A boy I really liked asked me to go with him  
They told me I couldn't go with him  
One of the top three girls asked him—and he went with her

In grade 8 after I broke my arm  
I began listening to very angry music  
Punk, Good Charlotte, Simple Plan, Emo-ish music  
They sing about how hard their lives are

Then the mean girls teased me for my punk clothes and music

In grade 9 I started high school  
Everything changed  
I stopped wearing punk clothes  
I thought if I dressed more like everyone else  
There would be nothing wrong with me  
I went to Hollister and I bought a green pullover  
light blue jeans and nice new shoes  
I adopted the preppy style  
I wore jeans, loose tops and high boots  
In Summer, ballet flats and cardigans

Last year, in grade 12,  
The twin princesses  
Apologized to me for breaking my arm  
It didn't help  
What they did still hurts me  
Inside  
I think in some way  
It always will

In this study the body is a mediator for clothing and accessories, for performing the self. Through the body and clothing each person un/knowingly expresses a visceral lived ontology of body, mind and spirit, the entirety of who s/he is as a human being. The combination in arts-informed research of art forms and narrative anchored in theory brings about new and different findings from those to be found via other research methods, resulting in new and different sorts of insights into the topic.

Olivia, a high school mean girl, attended a private Christian school. She joined the mean girls in grade 9. Like all mean girls, she engaged in serious body management:

I became one of them  
I tried to look nice  
I curled my hair  
I straightened it  
I dyed it blonde  
I got my nails done  
I tanned regularly



Beauty parlor costs and the wearing of expensive clothing and accessories means that only a certain economic class of youth can afford to be mean girls. Youth living in poverty or even in constricted financial circumstances would not have the money to purchase such expensive clothing and accessories. So being a mean girl is not just limited to those who are “pretty” and slim, but also to youth with rich parents.

By grade 12 Olivia describes the mean girls as “sick of each other”—they were “identical Barbies”. She has since started studying at university, dyed her hair brown, and started eating healthy food rather than dieting constantly. Olivia claims

I learnt at school from the mean girls  
Not to be like them  
Constantly judging people for how they look  
Making up rumours  
Getting attention

For Hayley, mean girl troubles began in grade 6 when she would have been 11 going on 12. A little overweight but very pretty, cruelly, she was nicknamed “Burger” by the mean girls and physically pushed about. She describes her body management preparation for grade 7:

Over the Summer holidays I controlled everything I ate  
I wouldn't eat my parents' food  
I ate just cereal and fruit  
I lost a lot of weight

Hayley was never really accepted by the mean girls, primarily because she did not have the right clothes and accessories. Her mother resisted because of the cost involved and also because she



objected to her daughter wearing “skanky” clothes. In grade 7 Hayley worked hard at being accepted:

They'd decide Tuesday was miniskirt day  
If I didn't wear a miniskirt, I couldn't hang out with them the whole day  
In grade 8, the girls made a photo album of theme days  
I wasn't in a lot of them, 'cause I didn't have the outfits  
They'd say: “wear short shorts and a tank top”  
I didn't have short shorts; Mom said “they're skanky”  
So they go “Hayley, you can't hang out with us today  
'cause you're not in the short shorts”  
I was wearing a tank top, skateboard shoes and regular shorts  
But it wasn't good enough

In grade 8 she continued experiencing significant rejection including name-calling, pushing and “pantsing”. During this school year Hayley immersed herself in a new fully Punk phase of dressing and accessorizing herself, knowingly isolating herself from the mean girls. She dyed her hair black underneath and blonde on top, like a skunk. She got piercings, wore studded jewelry, and punk clothes.

The punk style for Hayley communicates a different kind of power, expressed through strength, fierceness, a rejection of social norms, and the potential for aggression. Embracing clothing as a language (Lurie, 1981), the new punk style rejects over-feminized sexualized pretty little girls and their callous and cloying pink femininity. Instead of being a mean girl using femininity and sexuality to exert power by masquerading as pretty and feminine, Hayley evolved into a mean girl masquerading as threatening, anti-social and tough. In reality, the punk is hurting.

Hayley was punished for leaving the mean girls group in grade 8, even though she was always kept on the periphery: Her arm was broken.

It wasn't the first time I had been pushed; I wasn't the only one pushed  
Lots of girls were  
It never happened to guys  
One girl would be on her hands and knees behind you  
Another girl, she would come over and talk to you  
You'd think, “oh, she's so nice, she's talking to me”  
And then she'd push your shoulders back hard, and you'd fall back  
Right over the girl kneeling behind you  
I got pushed often  
The last time it happened  
I snapped my wrist, broke my arm

Although Hayley received an apology from the mean girl twin princesses in grade 9, she believes she still has not recovered fully from this event.

## Conclusion

The essential issue is the exertion of power and control through the aesthetics of the body and clothing by bullying. In North America, mean girls claim and exert power and authority utilizing sexualized teenage femininity, through a managed body and clothing. This exertion of sexualized power continues into adulthood, and is apparent via the media in reality television shows such as “Real Housewives of Vancouver”. The mean girls phenomenon is an accessible topic because the girls self identify through their clothed bodies. They advertise themselves. They are branded and named in the media and on the internet. One just has to google “Mean Girls” to find results including how to dress like a mean girl, how to be a mean girl, mean girl quizzes, and how to be just like Regina George.



Mean girls operationalize and make visible a prevalent form of bullying that is evident in schools and beyond through the expensively managed, clothed, accessorized and performed body. The body is a form of social and physical capital (Bourdieu, 1985); the body and clothing are agents and objects of social process and change. Clothing is a language (Lurie, 1981). Olivia, accepted as a member of the mean girl elite at her private Christian high school, managed her body and clothing through diet, tanning, dyeing her hair, having her nails manicured, and wearing expensive brand name clothing. Hayley was rejected as a mean girl, although she did try to belong, dieting and trying to wear the right clothes. But through parental control, she did not have the money or permission to wear certain clothes on specified days (short shorts day). As a consequence, Hayley was the subject of significant mean girl bullying. Like others, she was publically “pantsed” and pushed many times, finally breaking her arm. Mean girls demonstrate that there is an aesthetics of the body and clothing which is hegemonic, affording or depriving individuals in high schools and beyond of social, cultural, economic and political capital. Mean girls knowingly utilize a policed aesthetic of body and dress. Their aim is to exert economic, sexual, social, political and aesthetic power and control over others through subjugating them into believing that they are not as beautiful, popular or powerful as anyone else at school, or, for that matter, anywhere else.

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## Urban Museums – more green steps

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### Abstract

From all gathered listed and documented resources scanned for museum data the researcher is going to use data gathered from recent research titled (urban Museums - go green towards a new century) to be planned for application in a second part research application place will be the museum of college of art education (MAE) included and presented program plan in (Paint a tree – Plant a picture 2012\2013) program as part of creativity art center of art education collage as an outreach program (CAC)

this research will be planning for gathering data from visitors( school management) and (student visitor), workshop trainees( college students), college employees, and documenting steps of formatting and transferring a green exhibition and workshops in Cairo Egypt ,Helwan university, college of art education

### Keywords

Green museums, museum education, culture, college outreach programme, community

### Preface

In Egypt, history speaks for its own words and documentation only needs museums to interpret for visitors different aspects of history and artifacts stories and personalize translations. Education programs have been an issue for we need to read the art work? or the arts speak for its own? Museum education from 2000 have been on and off situation planned and defined or a hunt for the immature, arguing using materials in museum setting workshop or producing copies .In the ministry of culture, fine arts sector, museum education department lost its track for the main aim and purpose of museum meaning and introducing new concepts for Cairo trends though out museums and collaborating with Giza schools to fulfill a meaning of affiliation, which mostly happens in worldwide community partnership.

The problem this research was acknowledging paraphrase the urban green museum as an idea for the future museums in Egypt considering this data gathering as a step one (urban museums- go green towards the new century) for research series in action as in step two (urban museum –more green steps) and may be applied in the near future as part of the step three (museum green education program) the (Pain a tree-Plant a picture) college outreach program.

### Museum significance to be green:

As educators we are models for our visitors. We exhibit good museum behavior. We model good learning. We sometimes even model having fun! We set the tone for a visit and provide the take home messages. Many times we also provide the take home stuff. We therefore must consider carefully what it is that we want people to learn and do while in our museums. How can their experience with us inspire, remind, illuminate, and encourage?

### Steps to become greener:

To be sustainable in our programming we need to examine both content and process. Some content is obvious and arises out of our missions – recycled and found art projects in an art museum, in an art education historical society. But other content requires creativity and new ways of thinking. Raising awareness about sustainability isn't just the job of educational museums; it is a responsibility that we can all share. By weaving green topics into what we present and green strategies into what we do, all institutions can make an impact.

Infusing education department goals and values with a green vision is one way to start. This is both philosophical and practical. What do we believe as a staff? What is inherently green (or un-green) about what we do? Can each of our programs include green themes and/or strategies? The practical is a bit more obvious. What materials do we use in our programs? How many resources are we using? What is wasteful? What do we serve as refreshments? What can be reused, repurposed, or re-imagined? What can be donated or found? How can our programs have small footprints?



### What should be our goal?

The International museum association suggests that educators should undertake programs to educate themselves and their visitors about sustainability. The education department is a key in meeting this goal. Through well-crafted programs and leading by example, educators can play a major role in greening the museum.

### Green Exhibits

Museums are taking a more active approach to the project development of their exhibits. Children's museums were the initiators of the green museum movement, mainly out of health concerns for the young visitors. Using toxic materials and chemicals on structures intended for children became a high worry for both the museum staff and parents. "In its 2004 expansion project the Children's Museum of Pittsburgh used only adhesives, sealants, paints, carpets, and composite wood that are certified formaldehyde free with near-zero off-gassing."



- Before the reduce, reuse, recycle mantra became mainstream, a small number of museums had already begun promoting sustainable decision making thru exhibits. One museum in particular,

the Boston Children's Museum, developed a concept known as "The Recycle Shop". In 1970, this exhibit promoted the benefits of using manufactured waste materials, and turning them into artistic creations. Students, teachers, and the general public were allowed to collect art materials not otherwise found in regular stores. The Recycle Shop closed its doors after 15 years in operation, due to the recycling program that was later introduced across the United States.

- Throughout the last several years, exhibit designers have expanded their businesses by building eco-friendly exhibits. Using environmentally-safe materials such as low Volatile Organic Compound (VOC) paints, formaldehyde free wood products and fiber wood (composite wood) are the trademark tools for defining green exhibits. Some exhibit furniture products are also constructed to be shipped for flat packing. This helps to decrease shipping costs, reduce packing material, and increase fuel efficiency which minimizes the overall carbon footprint of the exhibition.



- How does a museum understand the criteria that are required, needed to build green exhibits? Organizations are working to develop a standard rating system, for the specific needs of green exhibitions. In 2007, Oregon Museum of Science and Industry (OMSI) created an aid to help museums assess the sustainability of their exhibits. OMSI, a scientific, educational, and cultural resource center looked to the U.S. Green Building Council (USGBC) Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) rating system, to create the OMSI Green Exhibit Certification.



The guide provides a checklist for organizations that follows eight elements regularly used in exhibit design. After evaluation, they are awarded 0-4 points:

elements	Steps
Rapidly Renewable Materials	To reduce the use and depletion of finite raw materials and long-cycle renewable materials by seeking rapidly renewable alternatives example: Bamboo, Cork, Sunflower seed composite, and wheat board
Resource Reuse	To reduce demand for virgin materials and reduce waste, thereby reducing impact associated with the extraction and processing of virgin resources example: furniture (benches, stools), aluminum extrusion, metal legs, speakers, buttons



Recycled Content	To increase the demand for construction materials that have incorporated recycled content, thereby reducing the impacts associated with the extraction and processing of virgin materials examples: regrind HDPE, recycled rubber flooring, steel aluminum
End-life Assessment	To reduce the amount of waste that ends up in the landfill examples: using 80/20 for structures: not adhering graphics to acrylic so acrylic can be recycled modular construction so exhibit could be modified with new content
Low-Emitting Materials	To reduce the quantity of materials that emit volatile organic compounds (VOCs), either in processing or after installation, because of their threat to the environment and indoor air quality strategies include using low or zero VOC paints adhesive and sealants and choosing formaldehyde-free medium-density fiberboard(MDF). Materials to avoid include polyvinyl chloride (PVC). Rated by the Greenpeace as the most toxic plastic, as well as styrene and sintra. Polyethylene and polypropylene are less harmful alternatives
Certified Wood	To encourage environmentally responsible forest management: does the exhibition use wood certified by the forest stewardship council(FSC) as an alternative to standard wood products
Conservation	To design exhibits that conserve energy, water and materials Examples: exhibit that turn off when not in use, using motion sensor to activate components choosing durable consumable with longer life – expectancy using large banners to create environments instead of structures, using LEDs over fluorescents
Regional Materials	To increase demand for building materials and products that are extracted and /or manufactured within the region (500mile radius), thereby supporting the regional economy and reducing the environmental impact resulting from transportation.

### College outreach programs

Most of art education outreach programs are being taken as activities for college collaboration with community projects or company supported potential collaboration in relation with geographic place or district related to college services to wards community surroundings .Schools community centers or daycares, Museums ,and art gardens are considered research points for outreach application and activity visitor source.

### The CAC center project

It was a suggested idea for the researcher as an out reach creative activity center to develop and handle the art education college mission and vision for the Cairo, Egyptian community initiated through college board and science of art education department professional formalities by January



2012 , very new to our college but surely strong steps supported by college graduate club and docents from NGO's assisted in initializing the seed for that center of the arts

The CAC activities took place in college studios and classes and college museum (adding more dimensional aspect for visitors of art education practice and applied life)

The CAC programs are prepared for several educational levels:

- 1) level one (kids from 4years old – to 6 years old)
- 2) level two ( kids from 7 years old- to10 years old)
- 3) level three (teens from 11 years old –to 17 years old)
- 4) level four (collage students from 18 years old- to 25)
- 5) level five (grades Adults from 26 years old- to 59 years)
- 6) level six ( seniors from 60 and up)

The CAC programs are designed to involve most wanted subjects taught at Art Education College and named to attract participants from different ages and levels taught through three month period of time, workshops are once a week for every program separately on the off college days Saturday or Friday for 12 weeks :

- 1) I am an Artist
- 2) Make your own toy
- 3) Your museum your place
- 4) Paint a tree –plant a picture



### The Paint a tree – Plant a picture program

This program is targeting the first three levels (age 4 years-to 17years) helping kids to discover their own environment , recycled materials , food, and energy

#### Take care of a baby sprout workshop

Kids should bring their own baby sprout to the college field trip, drawing steps of plant growth and flowering step adding their comments on (can a plant feel)

#### Understating a tree workshop

Kids will be using parts of tree bark, branches, and dry leaves to create an expression said by a tree to the Egyptian community

#### Plant a picture workshop

Plant a wooden frame or ceramic piece of pottery and have a seed in planted in it all around it



### Grow your painting

Every thing you need to know about growing a baby tree and having a seed cultivation to fruits and flowers

Questions answered by the visitor student:

Do you know any schools, classrooms, or students who might want to put their "green" awareness to the test?

Tell them to participate in the Go Green Initiative Earth Day Contest!

the contest is a perfect opportunity for students to learn more about their communities and earn Earth Day-themed prizes for themselves, their classroom, or their school.

Students start off by choosing one, two, or all three of the following systems in their communities to focus on: the water system, the food system, and the energy system.





Then they create a Glog, which is essentially an online poster (there's a really good example here) with text, images, audio, and video demonstrating how a system works in their community and ways it could be greener or more sustainable. The most informative and creative Glogs by individual students, classrooms, and schools will win!




This is a really fun contest, and we loved that it supported environmental education and awareness building at a local level. College faculty supporting the contest by providing a prize: while visit a school and give students art tools.



Pre- study preparations

Following the green steps designed and applied by climate path and accordingly our Art Education collage museum can use tips for how we green our museum event

	No Climate Path point of view and roles	What can be done in art education collage green museum
1.	<p>Set a waste goal and arrange for recycling. The more you can keep out of landfills, the better for the planet. With a little planning you can divert 80% or more of your waste. Make sure that you or your site/facility has recycling and compost bins available, and that they are visible and placed in the right locations. Choose recyclable and compostable materials and avoid single serving items when bulk will do. Getting rid of items like bottled water can actually save you money as well as reduce trash.</p>	 <p>Using recycled clay statues that were items when bulk will do. Getting rid of items like not biscuit burned to form practice on clay molding and clay shaping skills as reduce trash.</p>
2.	<p>Watch your energy use. Energy generation creates green house gas emissions that leads to climate change. Decide how much lighting you really need, and turn off equipment between sessions.</p>	 <p>working out side I natural light using the sun energy for forming better colors</p>
3.	<p>Think about transportation needs. How will attendees get to your event? If you can, select a location that is central, convenient, and accessible via public transportation. Aside from providing information on public transportation options, encourage carpooling.</p>	 <p>Walking distance 50 meters away from college area</p>
4.	<p>Offset your carbon footprint. You can offset this carbon footprint by supporting projects at ClimatePath for roughly \$11/ton, or \$0.25 per attendee.</p>	

<p>5.</p>	<p>Less paper, please. Events tend to waste a lot of water. Print materials and handouts on recycled paper, and use both sides when possible. Encourage emailing or web posting of handouts rather printing them. Try to make banners and posters reusable. Ask vendors and exhibitors to take back whatever collateral isn't used, rather than throwing it out.</p>	<p>Used recycled fabrics to paint on a flagpaper, which requires trees, energy, electricity, and</p> 
<p>6.</p>	<p>Preparing green Egyptian season vegetables provided by local and home Food and other sourcing: Providing local, organic grown farmers and house wives and vegetarian food options is always appreciated. Less meat means a lower footprint. Ask food vendors what they do to be greener, to minimize packaging, and arrange to donate extra un-served food. For extra credit, ask for fair trade coffee and tea. It's grown more sustainably and helps farmers.</p>	
<p>7.</p>	<p>Art education practice office sending posters to every school in the district Spread the word. Let your attendees know about telling about the green events your efforts, and ask for their cooperation. You'll be surprised by the enthusiasm. You can make a difference, and event goers appreciate the effort!</p>	

## Conclusion

From all gathered referenced listed and documented resources analyzed for museum data the researcher used data recently research titled (urban Museums - go green towards a new century) to be planned for application in a second part research application place was set to be the museum of college of art education (MAE) included and presented program plan in (Paint a tree – Plant a picture 2012\2013) this program as part of creativity art center of art education collage as an outreach college community program (CAC)

This research was planning for gathering data from visitors (school management) and (student visitor), workshop trainees (college students), college employees, but with the economy situation for Egypt now and the unstable political climate the researcher decided to do only a pre study for what was being planned for trying to create art climate for school kids fifty meters circle cord around





college area , mostly international schools to overcome the obstacle of activities cancelation for political awareness or revolutionary Fridays(Tahrer stands) isolating college district and closing schools

Documenting pre- steps of a program formatting and transferring a green exhibition and workshops in Cairo Egypt ,Helwan university, college of art education, hoping to help the Arabian spring with a fresh green museum ideas.

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Green Museums Initiative — Created to inspire and offer practical ideas to green your museum. Sponsored by the California Association of Museums and the Green Museums Initiative

PIC Green — PIC Green is an America Association of Museums's Professional Interest Committee, established to position museums as leaders in environmental stewardship and sustainability through education, advocacy, and service.

Solais Lighting Selected for Smithsonian American Museum of Art

AIC Sustainability Resources - A link to the American Institute of Conservation of Historic and Artistic Work's comprehensive list of sustainability resources.





## Teaching about controversial issues through art education

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### Abstract

Social conflict is a global phenomenon although the form it takes varies in different places and at different times. The participants in this panel discussion all believe that schooling should address and not deny situations of human conflict. The session commenced with brief presentations of art based curriculum strategies designed to address situations of conflict in Israel, India, Cyprus and Germany. This was followed by a critical discussion of these strategies by panel members. Then the audience was invited to participate. The focus of the session throughout was on the challenges and ethical dilemmas educators and students face when they engage with controversial human issues and on identifying the strengths and weaknesses of using visual arts education as vehicle for social change. Each panel member will submit a background paper for the conference report.

### Keywords

Art, curriculum, society, conflict

### Panel session

This panel session took the form of a discussion based on four academic papers submitted to the CYPRUS InSEA Conference Proceedings. Although social conflict is a global phenomenon the form it takes varies in different places and at different times. As chair and convenor of the panel. I was keen to invite an international group of discussants with art education expertise to participate. In the event they included: -

- Carl Peter Buschkuehle. Justus-Liebig-University, Giessen Germany.
- Fotini Larkou, Ministry of Education and Culture, Cyprus.
- Nurit Cohen Evron. School of Art Beit Berl College, Israel.
- Mousumi De. Indiana University Bloomington, USA.

I also invited Dr Spyros Spyrou, an anthropologist from the European University Cyprus and an expert from outside art education, to participate.

The choice of topic arose out my involvement in the European funded curriculum development and research project *Images and identity: improving citizenship education through digital art.*<sup>1</sup> It was informed also by my long-standing research interest in cultural diversity, curriculum and art. For the purposes of the panel a controversial issue was defined as one that deeply divides society and generates conflicting explanations, definitions and solutions based in alternative value systems (Spradley 1984). Controversial issues are routine curriculum content in some school subjects like Social Studies and Civics where interactive dialogue and reflective discussion about them are the most common teaching learning strategies (Harwood 1990). However a preliminary survey of curricula conducted for the *Images and Identity Project* suggested Civics and Social Studies teachers seldom use visual images as an educational resource. The scope of an issue that might be considered controversial is quite broad and it covers a diverse range of local, national and international problems; for example, immigration policy, the drug culture, honour killing and violent crime. But the rationale for promoting this kind of curriculum content (and the panel discussion) was that the essence of a healthy education is classroom dialogue about issues of public concern.

Teaching about controversial issues is difficult and requires time, preparation and in-depth study.<sup>2</sup>



However my experience of supervising postgraduate students from Cyprus has convinced me that the complexities of the international and intercommunal conflict on this island and its protracted nature mean this is especially important there. When I first invited the panel members to participate I asked them to read three published papers pertaining to this conflict written by Cypriot academics. Namely: The politics of shame in intercultural education, by Michalinos Zembylas (2008); Developments in the Cyprus conflict: a conflict resolution perspective, by Maria Hadjipavlou (2002); and Images of the other, by Spyros Spyrou (2002).

The planned format for the panel discussion was as follows. Each contributor was asked to briefly outline a particular curriculum strategy with which they had personally been involved together with the underlying theoretical approach. Following this they were invited to question each other about their ideas. In the event Spyros Spyrou commented on them from outside the specialist field. Then discussion of the topic was opened up to the audience. (Unfortunately Mousumi De was unable to attend. so Carl Peter Buschkuele presented her ideas on her behalf.)

In hindsight this plan was rather too ambitious given the complexities of coordinating an international panel of speakers, some of whom were unfamiliar with the conference discussion format and problems that arose with the audiovisual equipment. There was a lively audience response but in role as chair I experienced difficulty keeping track of specific lines of argument. (I realise now I should have structured the individual panel presentations more precisely in advance and appointed a scribe.) Whereas I had anticipated being able to coordinate a public debate about panel members' ideas and arrive at some helpful conclusions for other art teachers, this did not happen and a proper analysis of the theory and practice they presented must await another place and time. Consequently a brief overview of the content of their background papers is what follows.

### Overview of papers

The controversial issues preoccupying the minds and professional interests of three of the panel members are longstanding political and social problems with international ramifications involving interethnic conflict and violence (terrorism and war). The papers by Cohen Evron, Mousumi De and Larkou all explore ways in which art educators have sought to address such conflicts.

Cohen Evron's paper discusses four instructional strategies arts educators in Israel have used to address violence and conflict their students experience in everyday life. Some Israeli art educators understand artistic creation as a form of therapy encourage them to express their feelings and thoughts about their experiences of the conflict, whereas others are more concerned to pay respect to the enemy culture and get students to develop a more differentiated view of it. Still others strive to re-examine and change how the conflict and those involved are conceptualized. They may involve students in critical analysis of art works and imagery representing the conflict and focus students' attention on examining truths and falsehoods that construct the conflict culture and /or use their imagination to reconsider their personal positions on the Israeli Palestinian conflict. Cohen Evron urges art teachers to align artistic creation with the practice of freedom. What she calls 'a pedagogy of possibilities' emphasizes the role of artistic creation as the means to unframing how young people living in violent conflict situations currently perceive their lives, so they can envision alternatives. While she admits art education cannot change a political situation like the one in Israel or bring peace, it can provide opportunities for students to listen to 'other' narratives and strive to unsettling simplistic dichotomies of 'them' and 'us.'

Mousumi De describes herself an independent artist and researcher who uses visual arts, media and new media for peace building and education projects. The interethnic conflict she engages with in her paper is Indo-Pak relations; and specifically the Mumbai Terror attacks on Indian civilians by an Islamic militant organisation in 2008. For a project with girls at a high school in Mumbai shortly after



the Pakistani terrorist attack, she used the creative power of art making to help them visualize, conceive, express and communicate “the re-imagined possibility of (good) Indo-Pak Relations”. Mousumi De understands art as a powerful medium for transforming conflicting attitudes, and perceptions about the “other”, as well as envisioning new possibilities for the present and future. If I understand her right, following visual expression of their perceptions of Pakistan, these students researched Pakistani society and culture and explored their own notions about peace in relation to self, community, nation and the world. After this they illustrated their perceptions of “the possibility of peace between India and Pakistan”. The project methodology was largely informed by Paulo Freire’s concept of critical pedagogy and adopted what she calls a conflict transformation approach. She understands it as an important principle of critical pedagogy that teachers facilitate conditions in which learners interact with one another and learn to utilise their transformative potential as ‘creative individuals’, and ‘dreamers of possible utopias. The classroom was more informal and flexible than usual to encourage interaction and dialogue and emphasised concepts more than technical skills, so students could devote time to thinking critically about issues. Those students who researched the problems in Pakistan society learned not to label all Pakistani people ‘terrorist’. However a lot more work to be done to transform their stereotypical images of Pakistani women.

The controversial issue Fotini Larkou’s paper addresses is the ongoing conflict between the Republic of Cyprus and Turkey, over the Turkish occupied northern part of Cyprus. The international complications of this long standing dispute dating back to 1974 extend far beyond the boundaries of the island of Cyprus itself and involve the guarantor powers (Turkey, Greece, and the United Kingdom alike), along with the United States, the United Nations and the European Union. As the paper by Spyros Spyrou points out the school is a major site for children’s identity construction and in ethnically divided societies like Cyprus, nationalism as it manifests itself in the education system plays a key role in defining a political sense of self in relation to others. As his research in primary schools established Greek Cypriot children grow up with well-constructed stereotypical images of Turkish people understood to be the principle enemy of Greek Cypriots and of the Greek nation at large. The educational experiment Larkou’s paper reports sought to change Greek-Cypriot school children’s attitudes towards this enemy. To achieve this end she devised an art curriculum unit around the theme of jugs for carrying, serving and storing water and invited them to make comparisons with past and present containers from Cyprus, Greece, Egypt and Turkey. Although the students were indeed very prejudiced against Turks, challenging them to consider their similarities resulted in modifications to their views. She concluded they were at the very earliest stage in Bennett’s (1993) developmental model of intercultural sensitivity and in the Greek-Cypriot educational context cultural awareness, rather than ‘cultural understanding’. is a most appropriate educational goal. In the paper he circulated to panel members in advance Spyros Spyrou posed the question, “How do teachers challenge stereotypes of the other in the absence of interaction with the enemy (in this case Turks) and how do they construct their identities meaningfully in the face of the multiple adverse messages they receive about them from inside and outside school?” Indirectly this is a question to which all three panel members from art education attempted to respond.

As Buschkuehle’s paper points out, for the present time at least, German youth are not growing up in the midst of such extreme political social conflicts. Thus his concern is how to use art education to get schoolchildren who are disinterested in or unaware of public controversies to engage with and confront them. The other art educators on the panel all share his belief that participating in art processes changes the people involved in them and Buschkuehle’s paper elucidates a particular theory to explain how and why. With reference to Joseph Beuys and a project he taught as part of the *Images and Identity Project*, he argues that the process of making an artwork has “revolutionary power”, in part because it opens up different perspectives on reality from the clichéd images provided in the mass media. Making artworks about a complex public issue for which there is no right or wrong answer forces school children to reflect on both public and personal ideas and values, acknowledge



preconceptions and formulate their own positions. Concentrating on expression as an artwork develops increases the challenges of critical self-reflection and attentive perception and draws on all the cognitive powers: including perception, reflection, imagination and intuition. Thus the revolutionary potential of artistic education lies in its potential to provoke all the mental capacities as school children seek to create meaning in confrontation with the unknown.

Together with art education and critical pedagogy, these papers submitted to the Conference Proceedings draw art educators' attention to less familiar theories of conflict resolution and transformation, social studies and human rights, civics, and intercultural education. It seems that peace education studies are especially appropriate for informing art education projects like the ones they report in Cyprus, Israel and India that engage with violent human conflicts like terrorism and war. In closing all four authors believe schooling should address, not deny situations of human conflict. They identify some challenges and ethical dilemmas educators and students face when they engage with controversial human issues and explore strengths and weaknesses of using visual arts education as a vehicle for social change. Taken together I believe they have potential to make an important contribution to Cypriot art education, since each one draws attention to relevant educational theories for teaching about human conflict and contains a descriptive account of a particular educational strategy the author has actually tried out.

#### List of papers

- Rachel Mason. Introduction: Teaching controversial issues through art.  
Nuhrit Cohen Evron. Art curriculum strategies addressing deep-rooted and ongoing conflicts.  
Mousumi De. Moving beyond 26/11 and re-imagining the possible: creative conflict transformation through art.  
Fotini Larkou. Promoting cross-cultural understanding in Cypriot primary schools.  
Carl Peter Buschkuehle. Confronting past histories and the unknown through art.

#### Notes

1. See <http://www.image-identity.eu/>
2. According to Clarke (2006) such discussions should have four steps. (1) What is the issue about? (2) What are the arguments? (3) What is assumed? (4) How are the arguments manipulated?

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## Art curriculum strategies addressing deep-rooted and ongoing conflicts<sup>33</sup>

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If we are to teach real peace in this world, and if we are to carry on a real war against war shall have to begin with the children.

Mahatma Gandhi

Mahatma Gandhi's suggestion becomes a controversial issue for art educators who teach in places where deep-rooted and ongoing conflicts exist, such as Cyprus and Israel. In these places the conflict becomes an inescapable part of daily life for the members of the communities, and it constructs and influences their experiences and their social world. The characteristics of such a conflict include: existential fears, the "us and them" mentality characterized by negative collective images about the other, who is perceived as a carrier of hostile intentions, un-addressed historical grievances and traumas, economic asymmetries, and the frustration of collective human needs such as identity, security, recognition, dignity, participation and justice (Raviv, Oppenheimer, & Bar-Tal, 1999; Spyrou, 2002). Because these conflicts are central to society and accompanied by violence, promoting programs which have "emotional" goals such as adopting different attitudes toward the conflicts, or unlearning stereotypes, involves taking risks. As Nel Noddings, (2007) explains, in times of national conflict universal sympathies are condemned and are regarded as dangerous.

Therefore, it comes as no surprise that the majority of the art educators in Israel prefer to ignore the conflict. Nevertheless, because they are situated in an educational system which promotes a nationalistic and militaristic agenda, they actively participate in the mechanisms of perpetuating the culture of conflict, constructing national identity and pride, building collective memories of past traumas and celebrating Israeli heroism.

Based on a study of their practices (Cohen Evron ,2005, 2007), this paper describes four strategies: (i) art creation as an act of voicing, expressing feelings and thoughts related to the students' violent experiences; (ii) promoting peace and tolerance toward the 'Other' through broadening the gaze beyond the conflict; (iii) critical analysis of art works and imagery which represent the conflict, and (iv) creating alternative situations and imagery as a pedagogy of possibilities.

These strategies differ in their goals and in the risk inherent in their effort to promote moral commitments aimed at cultivating mutual understanding and social solidarity between those who are in conflict (Simon, 1992). Whereas the issues these Israeli art teachers were trying to cope with are embedded in a specific political and ethnic conflict, they offer relevant practices for other arts educators who believe that schooling in general and arts education in particular, play an important role in the construction of identities and understanding human experience.

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<sup>33</sup>The paper is the fruit of a learning process initiated by Rachel Mason who convened a panel to discuss the theme above. In preparation for the panel she introduced us to the papers of the other panel members and engaged us in a learning process. As a result of this process I redefine some of the ideas, first published in the article "Art educators' positions towards violent conflict in Israel", in: Eca, T. & R. Mason (Eds.), (2008), *International Dialogues about Visual Culture, Education and Art*, Bristol, UK: Intellect, pp.223-230.





## Art creation as an act of voicing feelings, fear and thoughts

Children and adults affected by violence and tragedy often turn to arts creation to express and understand these events. Their coping strategies include restructuring painful experiences, finding alternative imaginary solutions and ‘traveling’ into imaginary worlds. Access to fantasy, imagination and symbolic thinking can be a source of strength and protection (Punamäki, 1999). Arts creation can help people connect to former identities and form a bridge to the future. It serves to document events and can be an act of resistance (Dokter, 1998). When victims reconstruct situations of fear and helplessness, they gain a feeling of control over reality. Arts creation teaches them how to work through losses and envision a better life than the one offered thus far. Emil Tanay describes such a process in *Heart in the Middle of the World* (1995), a book about his work with displaced Muslim and Croatian refugee children during the war in former Yugoslavia.

Israeli psychologists and counselors treating victims and eyewitnesses directly affected by tragedies and traumatic events regularly ask them to create images that voice their feelings of fear, loss and grief as a way of getting violent situations ‘under control’. Art teachers in Israel who work with students living in a protracted violent conflict apply similar practices as ways to help students voice their feelings and opinions. In many cases of developing personal projects through visual art, the students express positions and feelings about their experience of protracted violent conflict through creating images dealing with death, violence and war.

The line between art making and therapeutic activity that adapts feelings of helplessness and fear through recreating them in a controlled situation is questionable (Freedman, 2000; Orr, 2002). It is blurred when art is used as a means not only to communicate spontaneous feelings in response to violent events, but also to express political consciousness in thoughtful acts of visual representation. Many artworks by Israeli art students and artists respond to long-term effects of the conflict rather than dramatic events, and explore how it constructs the collective and individual identities of people living there. Figure 1 is an example of this blurred situation. Through this digital image, the 9<sup>th</sup> grade student represented what childhood meant to him. The image, created in a controlled and thoughtful process, shows a twisted imaginary creature, which looks like a tennis ball. It is shot out of a soldier's gun instead of a bullet that can kill. The fearsome creature has one eye and its mouth open - similar to the soldier's face behind the gun. One cannot avoid connecting this image of childhood to the fact that this Israeli student lives near the border with the Gaza Strip and constantly witnesses falling rockets.

Expressing unpleasant topics in art lessons is widely construed as a ‘safe’ practice in schools; probably because it is embedded in the natural tendency of art to express feelings. This practice is also connected to political art works created and exhibited in the contemporary art scene. Nevertheless, the images of victims and of violence children create in art lessons tend to unsettle the controlled discourse and distance from political issues regulated in schools (Cohen Evron, 2005).

## Promoting peace and tolerance toward the ‘Other’ through broadening the gaze beyond the conflict

In arts education, developing concepts such as tolerance towards others, cultural pluralism and social equity are dealt with as part of multicultural art education (Efland et al., 1996; Chalmers, 1996). Promoting tolerance and peace, implies teaching students to respect one another regardless of differences such as race, sexual preference, ethnicity or nationality and ‘correcting’ cultural ignorance.

I identify two strategies that aim at pursuing this multicultural approach. The first is based on cooperative art-making activities like playing music together, creating joint dramas, painting peace murals, and creating a large scale mosaic. The other strategy is based on teaching the art and the



culture of the 'Others'. In Israel these two strategies of broadening the gaze beyond the conflict are important because the school system divides students according to ethnicity and religion. Jewish Israelis do not study with Arab Israelis until they reach higher education, and there are only five elementary schools in the entire country which are bilingual and intentionally mixed the communities. Even though Arabs make up 20% of the population, Arab literature and culture are not part of the Israeli curriculum at Jewish schools. Arabic language is an elective subject, usually introduced to Jewish high school students as an opportunity to increase their chances of serving in the military intelligence.

These Israeli-Palestinian cooperative arts projects are usually an initiative of nonprofit peace organizations which work with individual students and schools. They provide opportunities for students who study in separate school systems in Israel and are labeled as 'Other' or 'enemy' to meet each other (see figure 2 as an example). These activities emphasized similarities between the participants and used the arts to foster a sense of unity among students by stressing shared qualities and characteristics of arts making (Efland et al., 1996). According to Clark (1996, p.54), arts activities that attempt to create a bridge between groups and individuals can 'foster self-esteem, promote group identity, reduce stereotypes and eliminate systemic biases and prejudices'.

Daniel Barenboim, an Israeli pianist and conductor, who in 1999 initiated a workshop for talented young Arab and Israeli musicians with Edward Said, a Palestinian scholar, explains the benefit of establishing the cooperative West-Eastern Divan orchestra:

An orchestra requires musicians to listen to each other; none should attempt to play louder than the next, they must respect and know each other. It is a song in praise of respect, of the effort to understand one another, something that is crucial to resolve a conflict that has no military solution. (Barenboim, 2000)

The effort of creating music together taught participants to listen to one another; and being treated as equals was a meaningful experience. However, many joint projects are merely well-intentioned creative events; there is very little space for examining attitudes towards, and stereotypes of, the 'Other' in a joint painting project. The aim of creating 'a positive atmosphere' sidesteps critical examination of conflicts, hierarchies, oppression or abuses of power. Such occasions rarely create opportunities for listening to collective narratives of the 'Other' entailing long and painful memories of the past that affect the way individual members understand and interpret the conflict. They do not encourage students to reflect on their own positions toward the 'Other' or understand how they were formed. Conceptualizations of the conflict and of the 'Other' cannot change without this.

The second strategy aimed at expanding knowledge about the art and culture of those who are considered enemies, beyond the way they are portrayed by the culture of the conflict. Learning about the culture of the biggest minority in Israel, which is also the culture of the Middle East region, permits the Jewish students to reframe not only their relationship with the 'Other', but also with their regional surroundings and landscape.

An example of this reframing was a curriculum unit on Islamic Art co-planned and taught by an Arab and three Jewish student art teachers<sup>34</sup>. They were working with 6<sup>th</sup> grade students at a Jewish elementary school in a small middle-class settlement near Jerusalem. As part of this unit the students looked at slides of important Muslim buildings such as the great Dome of the Rock in Jerusalem<sup>35</sup>. This famous building with a golden dome is a visual symbol of the capital for these students and symbolizes the place where the Jewish Temple once stood. But the slides provided a different view on familiar scenery. They examined the decorative tiles and marble patterns covering the interior and

<sup>34</sup> The majority of Arabs who live in Israel and in the occupied territories are Muslims.

<sup>35</sup> In recent years it was forbidden for Jews to visit this place.



exterior of the building, learned about the Islamic traditions associated with it, and the reasons it was built. The focus in this lesson was on excellence in Islamic design and ornamentation and representing spiritual ideas. As part of this unit the students also learned about contemporary Islamic art and experimented with creating Islamic patterns and paintings influenced by them.

In assessing the learning, the student teachers distributed a questionnaire that asked students how important it is to study Islamic art. The majority equated it with learning about an 'Other' with whom they were in political and ethnic conflict, although this was never mentioned in class. For example, they wrote: 'We are surrounded by Arabs, and they also live among us. So it is important that we know them and understand them a little.' 'Now we know something about those who throw stones at us.' 'There are other things we can study about them. Usually we discuss important things such as their terror attacks.' From these answers it is clear that offering knowledge of the 'Other's' culture was meaningful, although a few students resisted it.

### Critical analysis of art works and imagery which represent the conflict

The third strategy relates to critical multicultural art education and social reconstruction as discussed by Jagodzinski (1999), Freedman (2000), and Stuhr (1995). Critical multicultural art educators aim to educate students to be more analytical and critical thinkers, capable of examining their life circumstances. Addressing deep-rooted and ongoing conflicts, this pedagogy seeks to change and uncover negative collective images, and to unlearn some of the biases constructed by a variety of socialization agents such as the media, parents and schools (Raviv, Oppenheimer & Bar-Tal, 1999). As part of this process, narrow perceptions and stereotypical representations of 'Others' perceived as threats and enemies are questioned and art lessons provide an alternative context for discussion.

An example of questioning the Other's image was provided by an art teacher at a vocational high school who asked her 10<sup>th</sup> grade students to document a short interview with someone they considered 'Other' on videotape. The objective of this assignment was to learn something new about the person. The students' videos recorded interviews with a variety of 'Others' including newcomers, a street sweeper and an Arab woman living in Jaffa. Engaging with people labeled 'other' encouraged the students to re-examination their positions and to ask questions about the labeling process. From their videos they learned that everyone can be the 'other', and that 'otherness' is situated. Learning about an individual from the Arab minority challenged their stereotypical image of this group as a threat and an enemy.

Another example was the critical analysis of war photographs. The art teacher who employed this strategy wanted her high school students to inquire into the way authoritative discourses and institutional knowledge constructed their positions and identities within (and against) the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. She designed a unit that led the students to reveal that war photographs are visual images, fragments which depict life, but do not mirror reality. The photos were a departure point for questions raised by Roland Barthes (1957) such as: What and who is represented and what is ignored? Whose view is represented and whose is ignored? What are we looking at? How do we look at this image? What can we understand about it?

With this understanding, the students worked in groups creating staged photographs of themselves as heroes and victims of the war. In the first photographs, the victims were always Jewish (women) attacked by Arabs (men). Then students began to replace the same stereotypic images with more complex representations. For example, one group staged a photograph of an Israeli soldier helping an Arab. In another, they staged a scene with a sheep, an Arab and an Israeli drinking coffee together (see figure 3 and 4). In the last lesson they used these photographs to create a collage expressing their view of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. The art teacher summarized the process the students went through:



Experiencing the possibilities of manipulating the viewer through deciding purposely on the way the image expressed positions, the students became aware of the representation mechanism of the media and the way it affected them. Using the same means, the students tried to express different views regarding the violent conflict than those they saw in the local media. (A., reflective diary, 2003)

Dealing with political art and imagery in a way that connects it to students' experience is another strategy associated with critical pedagogy and social reconstruction. An interesting example of this strategy were art history lessons by a teacher who incorporated photographs depicting the Israeli-Palestinian conflict into the unit she taught on Picasso's *Guernica* (1937). Picasso's protest against the outcomes of war and the effects on innocent victims informed the theme 'political motivation for art creation,' included in the high school's art history curriculum for matriculation exams.<sup>36</sup> After the teacher presented the material required for the test she showed the students a photograph of a Palestinian suspect arrested by the Israeli army in the morning newspaper. Together they explored the means the photographer used to document the event, and compared it to Picasso's use of newspaper photographs as resources for *Guernica*. This comparison was extended with reference to two black and white staged photographs by Micha Kirshner, a Jewish Israeli photographer. The art teacher read the stories of these Palestinian victims of the Intifada while the students looked at the accompanying photos. One depicted a wounded Palestinian baby girl who was shot in the eye. The other showed a Palestinian woman holding a newborn baby and her house demolished by the Israeli army leaving them and four more children without shelter.

When they analyzed the representations of the victims in the photographs and Picasso's painting, the students found similarities. For example the 'crying woman' in Picasso's painting and the Palestinian mother were both holding babies in the traditional position of the pieta of the dead Christ. Through comparing the newspaper photograph, staged photographs and Picasso's painting, the students learned that the subjects of war and war victims are interpreted differently in various media and that artists adopt a range of perspectives and foci.

However, this knowledge was extended by what happened in class. Because the subject of the Spanish civil war was related to the conflict the students experienced in daily life, an uncontrolled political argument began. The staged photographs raised questions they had resisted, like, "Can 'Others' be victims? If they are, then who are the victimizers?" They challenged the hegemonic narrative depicting this reality via a simplistic Hollywood dichotomy of 'good' against 'evil' in which Israeli 'heroes' are 'innocent victims', and 'violence', 'cruelty' and 'terror' are Palestinian traits. The students found it hard to accept the photographer's position presenting Palestinians as victims. But they re-examined their own positions in the following studio lesson when they were asked to create a political artwork of their own, using newspaper photographs as a resource.

The addition of photographs depicting the conflict the students experience changed the learning process. Instead of presenting Picasso's famous artwork as an idealized version of a conflict embedded remotely in the past, the teacher evoked a moral conflict in her students and confronted them with its meaning in their everyday lives. Whereas learning about political artworks limits lessons to accumulating knowledge, learning from them crafts it in the light of tacit understandings students derive from life experience and the mass media (Britzman, 1998). Picasso's painting was experienced more meaningfully once its concern for innocent victims on both sides of a conflict was illuminated. At the same time, their understanding of their own reality was complicated by the revelation of unpleasant aspects of war and a blurring of the dichotomy between 'us' (good) and 'them' (evil).

<sup>36</sup> Art (art history and studio) is an elective subject in high school which students can add to the core curriculum in order to complete their matriculation exams. The art history curriculum consists of 170 Western artworks the students have to learn for a test prepared by the Technological Educational System in Israel.



Art teachers applying critical pedagogy take risks in teaching 'unpopular subjects' that call into question what is taken for granted. Violence and political art are not unpopular as such. It is the way they are presented - as problems connected to students' life experiences - that are brought to the surface in classroom discussion. Talking about and reexamining student experiences complicates the normative pedagogical situation because they are confronted with 'difficult knowledge' (Britzman, 1998).<sup>37</sup> This kind of knowledge is often resisted by students (and teachers) because it brings them face to face with moral conflicts in real life. It puts the way they view themselves and everything they learned beforehand at risk. In situations in which students' experiences and emotions are at stake, teachers may have to face pedagogical difficulties like racist discourse by students (Cohen Evron, 2005).

### Creating alternative situations and imagery as a pedagogy of possibilities

Roger Simons (1992) regards pedagogy of possibilities as displacing "desire onto images and activities that refuse the closure of possibilities provided by existing forms of authority and relations of power" (p.8). Using art activity as a way of thinking the unthinkable, of departure from the conflicting situation while designing an imaginative solution, is not escapism. The imagination in this pedagogy is not a way of ignoring the reality in a romantic or hedonistic way, but part of critical pedagogy. It is a reaction which resists the reality and the mechanism which constructs the conditions of seeing and understanding the reality in the language of the culture of the conflict. This pedagogy uses the ability of imagination in the way Maxine Greene describes it:

"...imagination is what, above all, makes empathy possible. It is what enable us to cross the empty spaces between ourselves and those we teachers have called "other" over the years... of all our cognitive capacities, imagination is the one that permits us to give credence to alternative realities"(Greene, 1995, p.3).

In research I conducted between 2007 and 2010 about art education at four out of five bilingual Hebrew-Arab schools<sup>38</sup> in Israel, I identify this strategy used for addressing the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Rejecting the segregation between Jewish and Arab students which exists everywhere else in the public education system in Israel, the bilingual schools are also bi-national and multicultural education institutes. In light of the deep-rooted conflict which is part of daily life for the members of both communities in Israel, the existence of these schools is considered a daring enterprise (Bekerman, 2005).

The schools provide an educational environment which doesn't object to art projects aimed at enhancing understanding of the nature of conflict, listening to one another, and developing empathy (Salamon, 2002). These schools also create an opportunity for encountering students who have a common language to communicate, and who know one another as classmates. Nevertheless, most of the art teachers I interviewed regarded the achievement of teaching art in this context as "the existence of a place where Jewish and Arab kids grow up peacefully and feel comfortable with one another."

Different examples of using imagination and representation processes as part of art creation and critical pedagogy were also provided by the art teachers at these schools. One of them planned an

<sup>37</sup>The term "difficult knowledge" was used by Britzman (1998) to describe information that students (and teachers) resist because it causes them to face moral conflict in their own reality. It puts the way they see themselves and everything they learned beforehand at risk.

<sup>38</sup>The bilingual schools aim at creating opportunities for meaningful interactions and increasing cultural understanding through living an alternative routine reality; sharing one classroom, studying with two teachers, one speaking Arabic, and the another Hebrew, and celebrating the holidays of Jews, Christians and Moslems (Bekerman & Maoz, 2005; Amara, et al., 2009).





integrated unit on the Galilee region together with the 4th grade classroom teacher. In this region Jews are in the minority, and they live in separate settlements from the majority of the Arabs.<sup>39</sup> The art project began by studying photographs of houses from nearby Jewish settlements and Arab villages and observing the special architectural characteristics of each. Then the art teacher asked her students to design a three dimensional model of a mixed Jewish-Arab settlement. Each of the students built a house from cardboard according to the elements he or she had chosen, then they placed their houses on a large wooden board which became their settlement.

The assignment of designing a place within limited grounds, posed many questions for the students. The questions related directly to the dilemmas they experienced daily: How should a mixed settlement look? Should they plan separate neighborhoods for the Jews and Arabs? What buildings other than their private houses should be included? Should it contain a mosque? a synagogue? a complex for all the religions? Should they plan a mall? a football-stadium? a play-ground?

When I asked the art teacher how she had facilitated this critical thinking process which dealt directly with the political problems her students experienced, she answered;

The first time I went through this process, the Arab students built a huge mosque, which left hardly any space for the private houses. I was shocked. When I planned the unit I thought that they would design gardens and streets. How should I react to this huge mosque as a Jewish teacher? Eventually the students had to resolve the problem through negotiation and to find space for all the houses. The process was very interesting... In the following years, it became easier, because the students saw the model planned by the students of the previous year which was exhibited outside of the art room.

Through the process of designing an imaginative situation, the students struggled with questions which constructed their reality of living in separated settlements, and their different (and common) cultural and national identities. It is interesting to note that the processes of finding a solution for a Jewish-Arab settlement, changed the following year, because the students had seen an alternative reality, even though it was made out of cardboard.

Using imagination in this project was an act of resistance against reality, and against the mechanism which constructs the conditions of seeing and understanding their experience of the conflict. Living through an art process which reconstructed the students' reality was an act of leaning and unlearning at the same time. Through it the students could question discourses and practices which construct their life outside of the school space.

## Conclusions

I have provided examples of four curriculum strategies used by arts educators in Israel who believe they have a substantial role to play with regard to their students' experience of violence and conflict. Some art educators understand the arts as a way to voice feelings and thoughts, or pay respect to the 'Other's' culture. Others strive to reexamine and change how the conflict and those involved are conceptualized.

The pedagogy of possibilities emphasized the role of art as "unframing" (Rogoff, 2002) the ways in which we perceive our lives in order to look at them in alternative ways. These art projects required the art teachers as well as the students to reconsider their own positions in the real/unreal situations. They use the power of arts creation as a practice of freedom (Freire, 1970; hooks, 1994). The freedom comes not from being defined by the cultural-national situation, but from being limited by it.

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<sup>39</sup> Each of the Jewish settlements, has a committee that decides who can become a member of the settlement. None of the Arab citizen, who applied to enter these settlements in the Galilee, succeeded. On 2010 the Israeli parliament passed a law that protected legally these decisions.



While arts programs cannot change the situation or bring peace, they can encourage understanding and provide opportunities for listening to the 'other's' narratives. In unsettling the simplistic dichotomy of 'us' (good) against 'them' (evil), art educators risk working against hegemonic discourse and facing pedagogical difficulties. However, art curricula that critically examine conflicts and their narratives are based on the premise that art has an important role to play in constructing the hybrid, unfixed personal and cultural identities of students. Teachers who take these risks are aware of the choice Maxine Greene described:

"We who are teachers would have to accommodate ourselves to lives as clerks or functionaries if we did not have in mind a quest for a better state of things for those we teach and for the world we all share" (1995. p.1).

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Figure 1.

Childhood (2012). A digital image created by a 9<sup>th</sup> grade Israeli student, who lives near Gaza strip's border, witnessing constantly rockets falling.



Figure 2.

Dinner party, (2008).A cooperative art work created by Jewish and Palestinian students at The Israel Museum, Jerusalem.



Figure 3 and 4.

Staged photographs of students as heroes and victims (2003).



## Moving Beyond 26/11 and (re)imagining the possible: Conflict Transformation through Art

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### Abstract

Political relations between India and Pakistan have remained strained since partition with three wars and several unsuccessful bilateral peace talks. In November 2008, the Mumbai terror attacks, also known as 26/11, further dented the relationship and reinforced misattributions about ordinary Pakistani people amongst Indians, leading to negative and conflictual attitudes towards them. This paper describes a case study of a conflict transformation project through art, implemented in a school in Mumbai with young Indian girls. The project draws its conceptual framework from discourses in peace education, conflict transformation and critical pedagogy, and uses the creative power of the arts to help young people visualize, conceive and communicate the re-imagined possibility of peaceful Indo-Pak relations. The paper further discusses strategies for teaching controversial issues through art, and the challenges and strengths of such curriculum.

### Keywords

26/11, Pakistan, peace education, conflict transformation, critical pedagogy

### Introduction: The incident of 26/11

On November 26, 2008, nine members of an Islamist militant organization belonging to Kashmiri irredentists - Lashkar-e-Taiba, came to Mumbai via sea and targeted over a hundred civilians, both national and international, by coordinated bomb blasts and killings at several locations. Some of the locations with heavy causality include the Chatrapati Shivaji (CS) railway station, Leopold Café, a Jewish Cultural Center, the Oberoi Trident hotel and the Taj Mahal Heritage hotel. The attackers also burnt down two floors of the Taj hotel, which later became an iconic symbol of these attacks.

As the events unfolded, the incident attracted unprecedented media coverage, which not only jeopardized the counter military operations (Chandran, 2008), but further reinforced the purpose behind the attack, which was to provide a spectacle of the carnage to a world audience (Zizek, 2002; Ganor, 2005), especially Indians both in India and abroad. Media's sensational coverage of the events served as a fear multiplier instead of a shock absorber (Mitra, 2009) for the people witnessing the events, which came to be known as the 'Mumbai Terror Attacks' (D'Souza, 2008; Palshikar, 2008; Padgaonkar, 2009). These attacks are also referred as "26/11" (Chossudovsky, 2009; Roy, 2009; Tankel, 2009) especially by the mainstream media after John McCain, the US Presidential Nominee in 2008, interpreted the incident as India's 9/11.

### The impact of 26/11 and Indo-Pak Relations

The incident not only dented the already strained political relations between India and Pakistan but also the perceptions about ordinary people in Pakistan. The fact that the attackers have roots in





Pakistan, reinforced misattributions about the general people of Pakistan, which also percolated down to a skewed perception of Muslims within India (D'Souza, 2008) and the religion of Islam as a whole. Mumbai, being the financial capital of India, has been targeted several times in the past; however, this incident severely dampened the spirit of people, especially the residents of Mumbai. Since November 2008, people all over India have found various expressions of collective memory and have been commemorating this incident each year, in different community settings, including schools.

Whilst these commemorations serve to honour the lost lives during the incident, these also keep the memories of the incident alive, and continue to reinforce misattributions and conflictual attitudes associated with it. These further influence the perception of Pakistan and its people, and serve as inhibitors for peaceful Indo-Pak relations. Memories of conflictual pasts play a crucial role in the formation of relationship between groups of people. These memories further influence their attitudes and behaviour towards each other. Miall (2004) suggests that attitudes are shaped by previous relationships and that behaviour is influenced by their memory of what happened in the past and expectations of what may happen in future (2004, p75-7). These memories are socially constructed understanding of a situation shaped by culture, discourse and beliefs of a particular group of people. Hence, the ways in which these groups construct and remember their past is crucial in both mobilizing conflicts as well as in transforming conflicts.

Further, Enns (2007) has suggested that relationships and memories are also marked by selective remembrance, which may be accompanied by a tendency to nurture a sense of victimhood that serves as a serious impediment towards any conflict transformation process. Thus, transforming negative memories and selective remembrance of a conflict is critical in a mobilizing transformation and reconciliation process. In relation to 26/11 thus, there is a need to find ways of attenuating the negative impact of the incident, its memories and misattributions associated with it, especially amongst young people that can help in fostering peaceful Indo-Pak relations.

### Educating for peace and conflict transformation

As a researcher and practitioner in the field of arts and peacebuilding, and an educator, I felt the need to conceive and implement a conflict transformation project through the arts that can contribute towards transforming conflictual attitudes as well as enhance peace literacy skills amongst youth and children. Various peace researchers have widely acknowledged the crucial role that civil society actors that include educational organizations independent of the state, as well as individuals such as activists and educators play in conflict transformation and peacebuilding (Assefa, 2005; Kritz, 2009; Kriesberg, 2007). An early proponent of education for peace was John Dewey (1923) who suggested the need for a curriculum that would discourage feelings of hatred amongst children, and nurture feelings of respect and friendliness for other nations and people of the world (1923, p516).

In the recent years, organizations such as the UNICEF (1999) have strongly advocated for peace education in schools not only in countries that have undergone conflict but all countries in general. UNICEF (1999) advocates for peace education as 'the process of promoting the knowledge, skills and attitudes needed to bring about behaviour changes, that will enable children (and youth & adults) to prevent conflict and violence, resolve conflict peacefully and create conditions conducive for peace at an intrapersonal, interpersonal, intergroup, national or international level (see also Reardon, 1988; Hicks, 1985). More recently, Abebe et al (2006), suggest that peace education should also incorporate education of values that will enable learners to identify and understand sources of local and global issues, acquire positive and appropriate sensitivities to these problems and resolve conflicts to attain justice in a non-violent way (p 14). While there are several approaches and methods employed in peace education, the visual arts can serve as a powerful medium for transforming conflicts as well as teaching controversial issues that may otherwise be difficult to teach.



## Conflict transformation and visual arts

Conflict transformation refers to transformation of mentalities, both within the society and the individual (Melone, 1997 p188), and falls under the broader umbrella of peacebuilding. While peace is a multi-faceted concept, meaning different things to different individuals, cultures, communities and contexts, the most widely accepted conceptualization of peace as defined by Galtung (1996), is 'what we have when creative conflict transformation can take place non-violently' (p 24-36). Peace can further be defined as **positive peace** and **negative peace**, wherein the former relates to a state of social justice with the 'prevalence' of attributes such as integration, cooperation, harmony and so on and the latter relates to the 'absence' of direct violence of all kinds (Galtung, 1969). Whilst there are many perspectives on peacebuilding, Curle (1971) suggests that peacebuilding requires the establishment of a social order that is characterized by 'peaceful relationships', that concerns moving unpeaceful relationships to peaceful ones. An unpeaceful relationship, as in the case of Indo-Pak relations is one in which either or both of the parties are damaged, possibly through physical violence, or in economic or psychological ways (1971, p1).

Further, Assefa (1993) suggests that peacebuilding requires 'reconciliation politics', which is politics of co-operation, encouraging the building of consensus and looking for common ground (1993, p31). Reconciliation requires building relationships between individuals, groups and societies, through which a society moves from a 'divided past to a shared future' (Bloomfield et al. 2003, p12). Changing relationships requires a better understanding of the "other"; it requires one to be open and tolerant to new ideas, visions and possibilities and to resolve conflicts within relationships creatively with critical thinking and imagination. From these perspectives, the visual arts can play powerful role in contributing towards a conflict transformation process.

Visual arts encompass a wide variety of creative practice that involves multifarious applications of skills, imagination and intellect, as a means of engaging with and responding to the internal and external world an individual is exposed to. Various researchers and educators have elucidated the power of the arts in the development of the creative, cognitive and intellectual, as well as emotional and social skills of individuals. Eisner (2002), for example states that engagement with the arts enable us to experience vicariously what has not been experienced directly, and provides 'permission to engage the imagination as a means for exploring new possibilities' (2002, p9-10). Imagination, as Efland (2004) explains, is the 'power of forming mental images of what is not actually present to the senses and has not been experienced. It is the power of creating new ideas or images through the combination and re-organization of images from previous experiences (2004, p771). According to Eisner (2002), art making and art appreciating are cognitive endeavours that contribute towards the development of complex and subtle forms of thinking and intricate connections between thinking and learning. This encourages the development of dispositions to tolerate ambiguity and explore the uncertain.

Engagement with the arts can thus help explore thoughts, opinions and feelings through critical self-reflection, which can shape and transform individuals' perceptions about themselves as well as the world around them. It can serve as a powerful medium in a conflict transformation process by exploring conflictual attitudes and perceptions about the "other", as well as reflecting and envisioning new experiences, possibilities and relationships that was impossible in the past or may seem impossible in the present. In view of these insights and the need for transforming conflictual attitudes related to 26/11 and peace education, a conflict transformation project through the arts was conceived and implemented amongst young Indian girls studying in a school in Mumbai. The project was titled *Moving Beyond 26/11: (Re) Imagining the Possible*



### Methodological framework of the project

The methodological framework of the project is largely informed by Freire's concept of critical pedagogy and transformative social action. An important aspect of critical pedagogy is to make possible conditions in which learners through their interaction with one another and with the educator can assume themselves as 'transformative' and 'creative' individuals, and as 'dreamers of possible utopias' (2001, p45). Freire sees education as a form of 'intervention in the world' (1998, p90), which is based on a dialogical and an interactive approach between learners and educators with a sense of 'openness towards others' and 'open-minded curiosity towards life' (1998, p120-1). Freire's pedagogy encourages learners and educators to think critically about conditions of their social realities for constructing and creating solutions, which Freire refers as action. Freire suggests that reflection and action can be achieved through collaboration and dialogue, which are interdependent and concurrent processes needed to enact praxis.

A key attribute of this praxis is the ongoing partnership between action, reflection and dialogue, which forms the basis of Freire's concept of 'problem-posing education'. In this form of education, knowledge is constructed 'through invention and re-invention'. It recognizes the relationship between people and the world, the social context within which they exist, encourages enquiry and hence leads to transformation. This is in contrast to the 'banking education' approach, that sees knowledge as a possession, which educators need to give to students, that they should accept the world as it is and fit into it, refraining from any inquiry and transformation (Freire 1970, 2000, p58). Our role as educators is thus to empower learners to reflect on their own worlds continually and engage in critical consciousness, that can lead to transformation. In the project, I also refer to Schön's (1983) concept of reflective practice, which is when we pause to think back over the activities in our work and explore the understanding that has been brought to bear on the task. Reflective practice would encourage participants to explore and reflect on the personal experiences of the issues addressed in the project, and enable purposeful learning derived through their participation in the project.

**Aims and objectives of the project...** In view of these frameworks, the overall aim of the project was to enable young people to gain a deeper insight about ordinary people of Pakistan, and use their imagination to visually illustrate peaceful relations between the two countries. This was achieved through the following objectives: (i) To explore the "other" and gain a deeper understanding of the other. (ii) To explore the notion of peace within self, community and the country in relation to the world. (iii) To explore the notion of positive peace as a concept and relate it to the incident of 26/11 such as what could be the opposite of 26/11. (iv) To rethink the notion of "us" and "them" and deliberate on issues of conflict and peace in relation to India and Pakistan. (v) Finally, conceptualize how peaceful relations between India and Pakistan may be achieved. These objectives would be realized through research, and using imagination and critical thinking, to create visual artworks using a variety of media that illustrate the above-mentioned perceptions and ideas.

**Participants of the project...** The participants of the project involve 13 young Indian girls aged 13 to 15 years, who are grade nine students at the JB Petit High School in Mumbai. They are students of art teacher Purnima Sampat, who is also World Councillor representing South East Asia at the International Society for Education through Art (InSEA). The project was conducted over a period of six weeks as part of their regular art class. The student made artworks during their art classes, and used additional time in researching their topics of interest in relation to the project and conceptualizing and finishing their artworks. Sampat coordinated with the author, who is based in the United States over skype and implemented the project in Mumbai. Once the project was complete, Sampat collected the data, which included all the artworks and video recording of participants'



conversations and discussions for all the project sessions and shared with the author. The author applied grounded theory (Glaser and Strauss, 1967) in analysing the content and narrative accounts of the artworks and conversation analysis (Atkinson & Heritage, 1984) for analysing discussions in the video recordings, following which author also conducted an informal semi-structured interview of Sampat who facilitated the project.

### Curriculum Strategies in teaching controversial issues through art

**Reframing the language...** Reconciliation is a difficult subject and something that can be “too much to ask for” amongst residents of Mumbai in relation to 26/11. Thus, a conflict transformation project was integrated into an art project and required a ‘reframing’ of language (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980) for implementing the project. Cognitive linguist George Lakoff explains how we use frames and language in understanding our worldview and the complexities embedded in it. Language structures our perception, how we relate to the world and how we relate to people. Language thus plays an important role in defining our everyday realities (Lakoff and Johnson, 1980). The frames through which we shape our language are important for understanding complex issues such as how we perceive conflict, peace or even political ideas. According to Lakoff (2004), framing is about getting the language that fits our worldview. Language carries and evokes our ideas (2004, p4) and can further our attitudes and conditions towards these ideas in the world, our willingness to accept them or not and to what degree.

Reframing is changing the way people see the world. Since language activates frames, new language is required for new frames. As Lakoff (2004) puts it succinctly, “thinking differently requires speaking differently” (2004, p. xv). Thus, changing negative perceptions and attitudes towards more positive and peaceful ones, requires changing the language of how we address the issues. Firstly, the project was titled “Moving Beyond 26/11: (Re) Imagining the possible” to reinforce the need to ‘move beyond’ the spectacle of commemorating the incident each year, and find opportunities to reimagine a peaceful future and relationship with ordinary people in Pakistan. The phrase re-imagining the “possible” was used instead of re-imagining the “impossible”, to evoke a sense and language of possibility rather than imagining something that may be seen as impossible such as peaceful relations between India and Pakistan. Secondly, the focus of the project was shifted from a ‘conflict related project’ to an ‘art’ project that required researching, critical thinking, reflection, imagination and divergent thinking, apart from art skills – all of which contributed towards a better understanding of peace and peace between India and Pakistan.

**Emphasis on positive peace...** In relation to educating for peace, an understanding of positive peace was encouraged such as the presence of peaceful relation between India and Pakistan and how one can achieve it, rather than negative peace such having no wars between India and Pakistan. Fell (1988) states that definitions that are couched in the language of opposites (such as peace being absence of war), are passive, in that they have no real meaning other than by contrast to their corollary (in Hicks, 1988, p71). Positive concepts, which become the active “presence” of something, provide a realistic vision. Fell (1988) thus argues that it is important to encourage dissemination of positive peace and identify more dynamic and action-centered ones that can inspire people in everyday life (in Hicks, 1988, p71).

**Informal interaction and critical thinking...** Another strategy that was used was the informal structure of the class. The class sessions were structured but flexible and informal. Interaction and dialogue was encouraged in class both amongst participants as well as with the teacher. Further, emphasis was put on conceptual skills over technical art skills, so students could devote their time on thinking critically about the issues rather than feeling the pressure of creating masterpieces, although they were encouraged to do so as well.



### Project Outcomes

Participants' perceptions of Pakistan and its people were varied in nature. Comparatively few participants had strong negative perceptions about Pakistan and/or Pakistani people. For example, according to one participant, Pakistan was causing terrorism in India and in other parts of the world (see figure 3), while another participant presented a Black piece of paper to represent her notion of Pakistan as 'negative' (see figure 2). Another participant viewed Pakistan as a breeding ground for terrorism, where young children are snatched away from their families and indoctrinated for terrorist activities while their families suffer and pray for their children and for peace (see figure 1).

#### Participants' perception of Pakistan and its people



Figure 1



Figure 2



Figure 3

Some other participants expressed their perceptions about Pakistan focusing on women's position in their society, such as being very oppressed and not able to use their potential to accomplish their dreams, also leading to a high suicide rate (see figures 4, 5 and 6). Few other participants expressed that both positive and negative attributes co-exist in Pakistan, although these vary in different degrees. In figure 7 for example, the participant used shades of green to manifest their national flag, Islam, social sentiments such as angst, which the participant mentioned Pakistani people might feel because their country is yet to progress as well as other neighbouring countries. At the same time, she portrayed shades of red to illustrate bloodshed due to terrorist activities as well as the passion people have for their country as citizens of Pakistan.

#### Participants' perception of Pakistani people, especially women



Figure 4



Figure 5

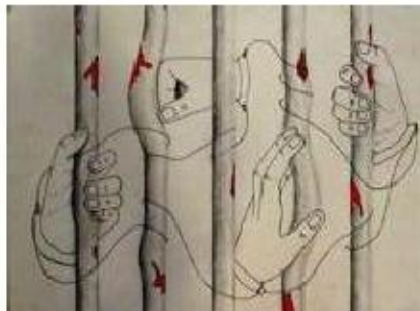


Figure 6



Figure 7



Some participants with mixed views about Pakistan felt that Pakistani people are largely misunderstood both in India and abroad. Participants who researched about the problems in Pakistan sympathized with them and realized that they are a lot like “us”. Some participants also expressed their admiration for Pakistani cricketers. Through their research and subsequent discussions, participants realised that incidents such as 26/11 are terrorist activities that are a part of terrorism, which is distinctly different from the nature of ordinary Pakistani people. Following their expression of their perception of Pakistan, they expressed and discussed their notions of peace in relation to their self, their community and their country in relation to the world. In their discussions, many participants agreed that peace begins with the self and at home. Following these discussions, they visually illustrated their perception of the “opposite” of 26/11, as a possibility of positive peace between India and Pakistan. The participant, who presented a black paper (figure 2) as her perception of Pakistan, presented a white paper as an opposite of 26/11 and peace with Pakistan (see figure 9).

Participants’ perception of the “opposite of 26/11”



Figure 8



Figure 9



Figure 10

Another participant illustrated fairies extinguishing the fires at the Taj Heritage Hotel (figure 8) and several participants illustrated symbolic notions of peace between India and Pakistan (figure 10). In relation to finding solutions for peace between India and Pakistan, participants worked in groups to deliberate practical solutions that can transform conflicts and lead to peaceful relations, such as confront issues together and have a ‘dialogue’ (figure 11). One group illustrated the need to educate youth in both countries to trust each “other” and work towards peace by addressing conflictual issues together (figure 12).

Participants’ perception of solutions leading to Indo-Pak peace relations



Figure 11



Figure 12

### Challenges and strengths in teaching controversial issues through art

**Challenges...** In teaching controversial issues through art, there are several challenges both for the educator as well as the learner. Firstly, even though a conflict transformation project was woven into an art project, as educators, we have to maintain transparency in the purpose of the project. Since the subject is sensitive as well as controversial, it may invite resistance from the learners themselves or their parents. In this particular case, the facilitator was asked to inform the methodology at the onset of the project, so learners could decide for themselves if they wanted to participate in the project or not. Further, we also need to consider ethical concerns within a “local” context. For example, the author based in the United States asked the facilitator to seek informed consent from the parents of the learners since they are below the age of 18. Whilst seeking informed consent is a common norm in many countries, such as the US, one needs to be mindful of the local contexts and cultures of where the project is implemented. Sampat has been a resident of Mumbai for several decades and understands the culture, norms and practices of Mumbai. She advised that the “act” of asking for consent with parents, which is not a norm, might run the risk of sensationalizing the project, which can even lead to misinterpretation of the project as a pro-Pakistan propaganda. This would not only threaten the implementation of the project but also raise questions about the project.

Another challenge for educators is that we need to be open and respectful of students’ opinions during and after the project. Some students might have very radical views and perceptions, (for example Pakistan as a breeding ground for terrorism in the world), which may or may not be in reality. However, as educators, we need to avoid “correcting” one’s perceptions by assigning any “right” or “wrong” views. Instead, as educators we need to be tolerant and patient with students’ perceptions, and take the responsibility of providing diverse view points, so learners can broaden their view, clarify misperceptions, and transform any negative feelings to hopeful and positive ones. Our responsibility is to help learners think critically and decide for themselves. It could also be very challenging for learners who may feel sceptical about sharing their honest opinions with educators for fear of being judged and apprehended. It is therefore important for educators to develop a trustworthy relationship with the learners for them to be comfortable in sharing their views and perceptions.

Another challenge of learning about issues, such as peace, which is a very universal concept, is that it can be interpreted as being very esoteric and even elusive. For example, some participants visually expressed notions of peace that were abstract perceptions of peace between India and Pakistan confined to symbolism in art such as a CND symbol (Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament) with smiley emoticons (figure 13) or a dove spreading light from the sun as peace (figure 14).

#### Participants’ Abstract perceptions of peace



Figure 13



Figure 14

A challenge for educators is thus to encourage responses that relate to positive concepts of peace as the active presence of justice, equality etc, and visions of peace that is as realistic in the world. This requires helping participants identify more dynamic and action-centred ideas, such as asking questions like ‘what must be present for a situation to qualify as being peaceful?’ (Hicks, 1988). Finally, in recent years, the practice of arts-infused curriculum or arts integrated curriculum is increasingly becoming popular for teaching non-art related subjects such as math, science, multicultural, peace and intercultural education, and so on. One of the issues that several educators and researchers have addressed is the notion of “transfer of learning” (Catterall, 2002), i.e. the extent to which learning in one context is transferred from one domain to another. Hence, as educators, we are faced with the question, as to whether learning from such projects are transferred from a classroom setting into everyday life, and if so, then how long will the transfer last and how can we assess it? This concern is by far the most challenging in such curriculum.

**Strengths...** While there are several challenges when teaching controversial issues through art, there are also strengths in teaching art this way. In this particular project, learners spent a substantial amount of time in understanding concepts in art such as color and symbolism, critically thinking about their ideas, conceptualizing them and visually illustrating their abstract and concrete ideas through art. For example, figure 15 shows an example of a participant’s vision of peace, where in “man’s need for peace and sustenance, would always supersede man’s greed and use of terrorism as a means to achieve their greed”. In another example as shown in figure 16, a participant visually illustrated the commonalities between Indians and Pakistanis in various aspects of historical, social and cultural life, as well as the co-existence of a strong divide between us despite having common ground.

Participants’ illustration of abstract and concrete ideas through art



Figure 15



Figure 16

Further, participants were asked to use any medium of art to visually illustrate their concepts, and they used a variety of techniques and media that included a storybook (figure 17), three-dimensional model apart from two-dimensional works of art. Figure 18 for example, is a three-dimensional model that shows the prevalence of peace as a result of peaceful relations amongst various institutions in the socio-political ecology of both countries. Another example (figure 19) shows a three-dimensional box with a projector that is projecting onto an artwork signifying that the participant’s perception of Pakistan (which is negative illustrated by the artwork) is based on the projection of her brain and boundaries of her knowledge. This project thus served as a productive experience for introducing conceptual art, for fostering imagination and divergent thinking, which are critical components of creativity.

### Participants' artworks in different media



Figure 17



Figure 18



Figure 19

Apart from the learning outcomes related to art, this project allowed the participants to interrogate and introspect their perceptions of ordinary people in Pakistan, their experiences and views in relation to conflictual issues between the two countries, and possible ways of achieving peaceful relations.

### Future directions

One of the outcomes of the project was that it brought to light the myopic view some participants have about Pakistani women, as only being oppressed. There is therefore a need to broaden their outlook and knowledge about emancipated women in Pakistan, as well as about social realities such as 'oppression', which exists even in India as well as in developed countries in the West. This will enable students to not generalize social realities that prevail in some sections of a society within the nation as a whole. Equally important is to expand the project in ways that enable participants to translate esoteric concepts of peace into more action-centered approaches that can be transferred in every day life situations. Finally, it would help to connect these young Indian girls with young Pakistani girls to further their ideas of peace and peaceful relations between the two countries and translate their reimagined vision of Indo-Pak relations into reality.

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## Confrontation with the Unknown through Art

Carl-Peter Buschkuehle

### Abstract

Regarding images of mass-media and art can confront the student with unknown aspects not only of the theme of the image but also of themselves as individuals. The project "Freedom and Dignity" confronted German students with the youth of their parents and grandparents under dictatorship and gave impulse to critical discussions of identity, freedom and human rights. The production of posters led to a deepened individual work on these issues.

### Keywords

Images, confrontation with the unknown, identity, human rights, project-work

### Art as a revolutionary power

Joseph Beuys states that "art is a revolutionary power". This quote has different layers: As a special form and narration of an author an art work opens different perspectives on the reality. Thus it contrasts to clichéd images provided by mass-media, irritates the perception-routines of the beholder and forces him or her to reflect on those routines, on personal notions, preconceptions, values and probably lack of knowledge. Regarded in terms of art-production the author is forced to formulate his or her own position on the topic. This increases the challenge of critical (self-) reflection on relevant aspects and of attentive perception which is now especially concentrated on the expression of the developing work. Both – regarding and producing images in art-processes - demand all cognitive powers: besides perception and reflection imagination and intuition. Thus the revolutionary potential of art is to provoke all our mental capacities in controversial processes of creating meaning in the confrontation with the unknown. Art-processes are processes that change the one who is involved in them.

### Project "Freedom and dignity"

This educational power of art shall be prosecuted with examples of curriculum strategies in the project "Freedom and Dignity" with class 9 students of a German secondary school. Those students were living in a rather harmonic world with hardly any social or cultural conflicts. They shared comparable values and dreams that centered around fun in their present life and future careers. As part of the "Images & Identity" research project the main topic of the curriculum was "identity". I used images of mass-media and art to confront the pupils with hidden aspects in their family history since all of them had parents or grand-parents who grew up and lived in a German dictatorship. Images were used as sensual means of confrontation with the unknown or suppressed that is close to the personal history. They stimulated not only intellectual reflection but emotional tangency as well as imagination about the past and the persons shown in the pictures. Regarding images stimulates discussions and rises questions that lead to other images which open further perspectives. Thus the discussion can be lead from personal experiences to political and even philosophical issues related to the theme. The reading of correlative text-passages can enhance the discussion.



The core of the art-process and of the artistic-learning as well is the production-process. The students were invited to create a poster about the topic “Freedom and Dignity” that originated from the discussion we led regarding images and reading texts. The production of an individual work on a theme demands the relation between acquiring knowledge, critical reflection and sensitive imagination. The discussion continues and is led among the students, presenting and debating their works, the teacher as a helpful but critical tutor in individual conversations, and in classroom-talks about questions, problems and perspectives arising from the production-process.

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## An Investigation into integrated Art and Design in Public Space in relation to Sustainable Development for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century City and its Society.

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### Abstract

Integrated art and design as a specification for new public spaces is not a new development, but public spaces still encounter endless problems. Many spaces have become unwelcoming, unusable and unapproachable. When designed correctly and to the requirements of modern society, art in public spaces can create places of identity and areas of sociability, which in turn promotes our cities and societies. Sustainable Development for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century City is required to meet the needs of the present day without compromising future generations and their needs. By working productively and cohesively, public spaces can create sustainable environments which benefit the social and economic areas of society and in turn promote the development of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century City. The exploration of interactive art and design is a key aspect in promoting sustainable development for the city of the future. New public spaces needs to address, tackle and solve problems in order to promote sociability within our communities and educate society.

### Key words

Integrated Art, Interactive Design, Sociability, Public Space, Sustainable Development

### Introduction

“Learning happens when we ask questions, and public art prompts vital and primary questions about our environment and ourselves.” Public art is seen as “a distinguishing part of our public history and our evolving culture which reflects our society, adds meaning to our cities and uniqueness to our communities.” (Public Art, Network Council. 2010)

Education is not simply classroom based; we are also educated through everyday interactions and experiences, known as visual culture and communication. This paper outlines how, integrated art and design within public space can develop our societies and expand cultural knowledge, while in turn promoting sustainable development for the 21<sup>st</sup> century city and its society.

If society is given safe and productive spaces to enjoy they will in turn learn and benefit from cultural interactions. Public space was once a place where people met, interacted and socialized not only with friends and family but by sharing experiences with strangers. Despite this research has shown that many 21<sup>st</sup> century public spaces have become unwelcoming, unusable and unapproachable. By working productively and cohesively, public spaces can create sustainable environments which benefit social and economic areas of society.

An issue at the forefront of almost every design project in the past decades is sustainability. When discussing Sustainable Development for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century City we are required to “meet the needs of the present day without compromising future generations.” (Communities and local government. 2005) In order to do this successfully we must encounter day to day social interactions.

### Problems with Public Space

Public space is defined as an area which is “accessible to everyone at all times.” (Yam, 2006) Many problems with public space can be linked to the complexities of modern society; spaces are no longer

being used as they were in the past. Open public spaces have been seen as environments which can segregate people from one another and in a discussion by the Joseph Rowntree foundation (2005) it is said that public spaces today are pulling people in opposite directions. Stating that, “at one end, the core ideal of public space – free and open access to all is being undermined by a focus on safety,” and at the other end “the increasing diversity of individual lifestyles is splintering public spaces into a patchwork of specialized enclaves, defined by income, age, ethnicity and taste.” Project for Public Spaces, (2000) explain that, poor quality design, a segregation of certain social groups along with a fear of crime, is segregating society rather than bringing people together. In agreement Public opinion shows that declining sociability of the public is an increasing issue, strangers no longer interact and our communities are growing further apart. Project for public spaces (2000) outline acute problems with public space which are; poor access, bad seating, a lack of activities, and discouraged sociability which is evident in figures 1.1 – 1.4.



Poor Entrances  
 Figure 1.1



Bad Seating  
 Figure 1.2



Lack of Activities  
 Figure 1.3



Discouraged Sociability  
 Figure 1.4

### New Public Spaces

Despite increasing issues with public space, when designed to the requirements of modern society, integrated art and design can create places of identity, which in turn promotes our cities and communities. It is important to highlight that integrated art and design as a specification for new public spaces is not an original concept. Gaventa (2006, pp.10) states that it is now an “exciting time for the design and creation of new public spaces,” and that “high-quality, well-designed contemporary spaces are the way forward.” Public spaces are not only about the design, although this is an important aspect to attract the public, there are other issues which need to be addressed. Worpole and Knox (2005) believe that “moving beyond mono – cultures and encouraging diverse groups and activities to share common spaces,” is important to society. In agreement with this the Joseph Rowntree foundation (2005) suggests that “places do not principally derive from their aesthetic design,” they “need to engage with and cater for people in all their diversity of needs, aspirations, backgrounds and resources.”



Figure 2.1  
 New York’s Lincoln Centre  
 The new building for the  
 Juilliard School  
 Diller Scofidio + Renfro  
 2009 New York (USA)



Figure 2.2  
 Tower Place,  
 Norman Foster,  
 1992-2002  
 London (UK)



Every design must start with a basic layout but it is clear through observations that unless there is an apparent purpose for a public space, there will be minimal use. Figures 2.1 and 2.2 demonstrate two high quality, contemporary designed seating areas, but what we are actually seeing is a minimal use space.

In conclusion, it is obvious that a balance between a good design and public needs need to be considered equally. We can no longer assume that the public do not want to use open spaces, but what is needed is a new thinking “in light of how people use different places.” (Worpole and Knox, 2005)

### Movement within Public Space

Movement within a space is an issue which designers are focusing on when thinking about the design of new spaces. Castells as cited by Hudgins (2006) describes “the contemporary city as networks of information exchange and physical and virtual movement and flow.” Hudgins (2006) concludes from this that “mobility spaces of the city are the most vital of the public realm.” Nothing is static and there is always a constant flow of movement, new public spaces have to represent or reflect this movement. The movement within a city or space is considered as an experience, many architects and designers strive to create these experiences. Doedens and cited by Gaventa (2006, pp.13) states that when architects “talk about the quality of space we mean its spatial qualities and the quality of experience it provides.”



Figure 3.1  
Cloud Gate  
Anish Kapoor  
2004  
Sculpture  
Millennium Park  
Chicago (USA)



Figure 3.2  
Crown Fountain  
Jaume Plensa  
2004  
Millennium Park  
Chicago (USA)

The two large scale public art projects both situated in the millennium park in Chicago, USA have become sites of exchange and communication for the local society as well as visitors to the city, showing how the element of fun within public space can enhance cultural experiences. One question which is left open is the staying power for this type of public art. Will there still be the same reactions in 20 years time or will they have blended into the surrounding landscape as something which was once so popular and exciting? Gaventa (2006, pp.159) discusses new spaces as “temporary and transient, spaces that are actually mobile and those that are almost invisible to those hurrying by,” concluding that new public spaces push “the boundaries of public space definition.”

### Design Framework

In order to create a valuable tool for designers and researchers the investigation aimed to produce a framework which set parameters for new public space design. Conclusions of quantitative data collection, design testing and case studies set specifications and design solutions.

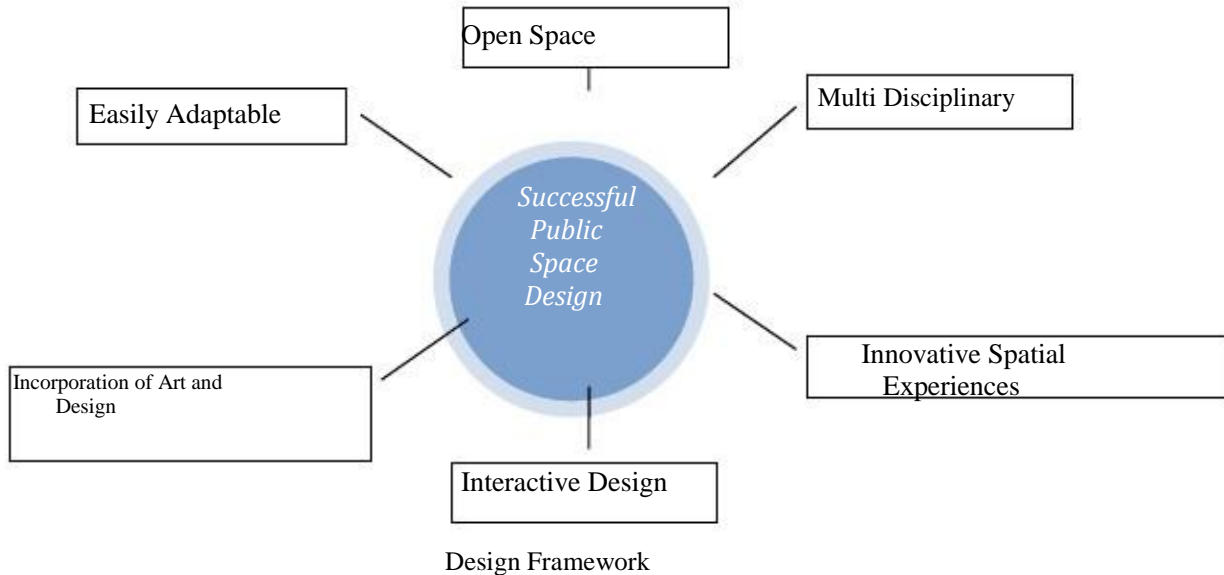


Figure 4.1 Elephant Installation  
 Figure 4.2 Thomas Heatherwick Spinning Chairs  
 Figure 4.3 Large Green Furniture  
 Figure 4.4 Red Ball project  
 Temporary Installation 2009  
 Temporary Installation 2011  
 Temporary Installation 2011 - Present  
 2011

#### Innovative spatial experiences: (To create a space with various interpretations)

Theoretical research indicates that movement, experience and illusions of space are all key elements in new public space designs. First hand observations concluded that spaces with various interpretations leave the individual to create their own analysis of a space. Depending on spatial qualities and quality of experience which the space possesses the viewer is left to interpret their own unique memories. Taking the red ball project figure 4.4 as an example it leaves ambiguous interpretations for the user. The user is left to wonder why a large red ball has been wedged between the buildings of their city, what is the purpose and what does it signify. This leads on to the question of how experiences can be created within a space, one solution is interactive design.

### Interactive Design: (low tech)

Movement, experience and illusions of space are all key elements in new public space designs, this leads on to the question of how experiences can be created. One solution is interactive design. Interactive design has been defined as “Immersive reactive experiences that depend on human behaviour to convey messages.” (Lowther and Schultz, pp. 242) “Interactive design environments tackle a large scale urbanism” they have the “power to transform people’s experiences and perceptions.” Castle (2007 pp.4). Castle also believes that the point where interactive design is at its highest will be reflected and the sociability will also be at its peak. Interactive design can be used as “a tool for exchange, cohesion and communication,” (Castle, 2005, pp.4) communication is when sociability happens. She states that “the interaction between viewer and what is viewed can be physical or remote.” (2005, pp.7) By implementing interactive elements into public spaces a new type of space is created which reflects the world we live in today. Figure 4.2 conveys the interaction between strangers by sharing a fun and unique experience.

### Incorporation of Art and Design

The incorporation of art and design was primarily recognized through public opinion, but when research was taken further to professional artist and designers it was concluded that the display of art was important for both the local artists and surrounding community. A space that incorporated art and design was seen as inspirational and beneficial to the city. “Public art does something that neither a public space without art nor even a museum with all its art can do: it can capture the eye and mind of someone passing through our public spaces.” (Public Art, Network Council. 2010) The implementation of the elephant installation and big green furniture along London’s Southbank (figures 4.1 and 4.3) became a high talking point for the city and its visitors, people began to interact with the elephants through verbal communication and through photography, it prompted questions and discussions in the public thus heightening sociability.

### Easily adaptable: (flexible)

Project research suggests that over time, spaces become tiresome, indicating that there is a definite line between the successes of permanent or temporary designs. A space which has the properties to change easily becomes an innovative feature. Spaces need to be defined to give experiences and definitions, otherwise we would never know what a space is used for, but spaces no longer have to be segregated, and cut off from one another, spaces can create relationships between each other using materials, windows and openings. Time never stops there is always a continuous flow of people moving through spaces, especially public spaces. Picking up on a theory about creating places by Cresswell (2004) “Places are never finished,” there is a continuous growth and movement. Figures 4.1 to 4.4 show implemented installations on London’s Southbank, the space otherwise used as pedestrian walkway (figure5) allows for designs of a temporary nature gives excitement for the users each time they visit the space.



Figure 5. London, UK (Southbank)

The framework set basic parameters which can be interpreted by designers in numerous ways depending on their design aesthetics and philosophy. By following the suggested steps and the needs of new public spaces it can create countless numbers of successful solutions.

### Design Research

In order to demonstrate the framework implementation, the case study of the re-development of Derby's (UK) market place from concept to final design planning was analyzed. The market place is situated in the heart of the city centre, surrounded by historical, cultural and functional buildings which experience a high volume of pedestrian traffic every day. (Figure 6.1)

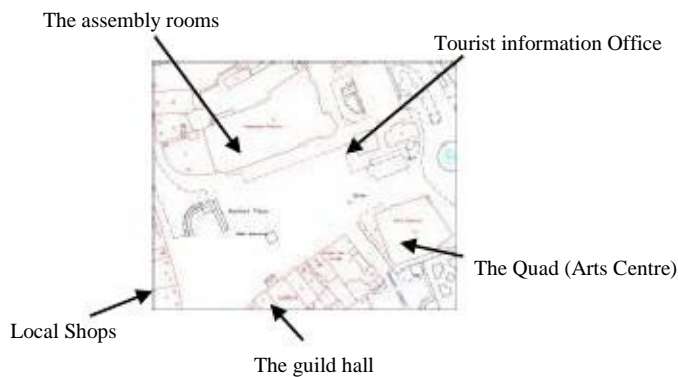


Figure 6.1

Market Place, Derby (UK)

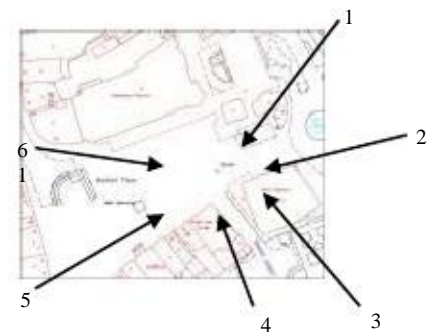


Figure 6.2

There are various entrances to the space (figure 6.2) all of which are inviting and do not pose safety problems, giving the space the potential to be a prominent centre of cultural diversity for the local community.



Entrance 5



Entrance 4  
Various entrances to the space



Entrance 6



Figure 6.3

Market Place, Derby (UK)



Although the market place has various advantages, the centre of the market square is left empty and unused. (figure 6.3) Pedestrians avoid the centre area by walking around the square, the sociability of people is discouraged and the local public feels exposed when using the space. This is where two previously mentioned points can be highlighted: a) **lack of activities**, and b) **discouraged sociability** as two fundamental problems with public space. By regenerating the space it would create a new social area for the people of Derby, and will attract more visitors to the city. The space aimed to provide an overall good quality environment providing a ‘sense of place’ rather than the nothingness that the space currently provides as well as relieving the stresses and strains of modern life, by incorporating interactive art. This would add elements of cultural education, entertainment and fun.

### Framework Testing

A) The framework was tested through a design comprising of two major components. The first element is a grid structure which has been implemented into the floor. By night this grid is lit by LED lights in order to attract users.

B) The second element is adaptable panels which are slotted into the grid structure. These panels can be moved and manipulated into countless configurations in order to create multiuse spaces which will host various mediums of art and design.

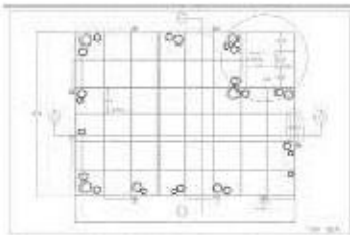


Figure 7.1  
Overall Site Plan



Figure 7.2



Figure 7.3

The design concept is based on minimal design where neutral colours and limited materials are used. This style of design has the possibility to be enjoyed by all as there is no underlying messages or cultural references. Through the integration of art and design the full advantages of the new space can be seen. Soft play which comprises of larger than human size balloons has been implemented into the space as a temporary installation; the short-term nature creates excitement as it will be a short lived experience. (Figures 8.1 and 8.2)



Figure 8.1  
Soft Play Installation



Figure 8.2



Figure 8.3  
Photographic exhibition



Figure 8.4



Figure 8.5  
Live Shows

One concern of the professional artists and designers was the inability to get their work seen freely by the public. The flexible panels can be used as displays and in this case photography of a local artist, Elena Smith has been implemented to show the possibilities of the space. (Figures 8.3 and 8.4) Lighting within the floor benefits any display as it acts as accent lighting on the boards, giving great effects during dark hours. The free and open space allows for large scale shows such as dance





performances. (Figure 8.5) The theory of many temporary, adaptable designs became an innovative feature for the project. This allows artists and exhibitors to adapt the space freely giving infinite uses and solutions.

An important part of any design is to evaluate the aesthetic contribution it has created for the user. The design of the grid floor reminds the user of a game allowing the user to choose their own path of movement, leading the users to move freely about the space whilst at the same time guiding them through structured pathways. All cultures and ages respond to this design as the square, grid and geometrical shapes are universally known. In some cases consciously and in most subconsciously people respond positively to regular patterns. The response to the design enhances the idea of interaction on a subconscious level, prompting the user to follow continuous lines, or move about the space in regular patterned movements. It is important to note that the design of the floor can be a standalone piece of interactive design, without the added element of panels it is a successful design in its own right as it draws the user in to admire and explore.

Earlier research highlighted a need for temporary installations to be implemented into the site, the adjustable nature of the space, allows for any possible situation. The modular nature of the panels allows the movement and flow of pedestrian traffic throughout the space to be manipulated, thus promoting interaction within the space. The panel system was introduced to give the space staying power, by using the panels new and interesting configurations for the public as well as ambiguous spaces have been produced as well as structured spaces with meaning.

Referring back to an earlier quote “Public art does something that neither a public space without art nor even a museum with all its art can do: it can capture the eye and mind of someone passing through our public spaces.” (Public Art, Network Council. 2010) The space has now become a place of cultural diversity displaying art that the public may otherwise avoid.

The exciting, high quality and fun redesign of the market square has the ability to be reproduced in any size for any site plan. Most of our cities and towns are comprised of similar configurations, whether they vary in shape or size the framework has the possibility to be adapted and improved upon. The design can be enjoyed by all from any age or background and is aimed to strengthen the profile of any city by promoting previously unused areas, and enhancing social interaction of the public and the cultural education of society learning through the displayed and performed art works.

### Design Summary

One research specification was the benefits to the surrounding city. A large majority, (82%) of participants saw the design as a benefit to the wider city. Stating that it fitted well with the surrounding area, promoted the town centre and added character to the city. Candidates were in turn asked if they would be inclined to use the space. The results returned at 85% yes. It was mainly viewed that the additional lighting provided a warmer, more exciting, safer space which gave a new meeting space for the city at night. Although negative comments suggested that the new space may attract unwanted behaviour that currently exists.

It was seen that the new redevelopment would give opportunities to display work to a large number of people and to people who would not usually visit a gallery. The space would become a positive space for the art world.

Through various interviews the following opinions were gained:

- “The design would bring life to an otherwise ‘wasted’ space; it would bring the space to life and bring groups and people together.”



- “It allows the public to interact with tangible art, which is rare and far between. The proposed design will spark new found communication in the community whether its love or hate people will have a new subject to discuss. This stunning visual piece would definitely attract positive energy for the whole community, by hosting art shows, dance shows and a great meeting location for young people to interact.”
- “The design has so many benefits, it provides a visually pleasant scene as well as being interactive and used for various things. It adds character to a vast empty space, located in a good area to attract the public and promote social and economic ideas.”

### Discussions

Through the implementation of interactive design the case of sociability is addressed, designers strive to create more sociability between the public and it is the general view of the research that interactive design is an answer. “Interactive design environments tackle a large scale urbanism” they have the “power to transform people’s experiences and perceptions.” Castle (2007 pp.4).

The proposed framework impacts on city functions and movement promoting the use of unused spaces and promoting sociability of the users. As discussed previously it is important to note that although the proposed design has been displayed within the framework of Derby’s Market Place, this is only an example of the potential of the design as it has the ability to be integrated into any site in any city due to the simplicity of design, structure and minimal design elements which allows for integration.

It has been argued that localism is the answer to a sustainable world and city. (Dresner, 2006, pp. 29) In order to achieve a more productive and localized city and community it is key to have good city links and an enjoyable city atmosphere and places of interest. The proposed design aims to strengthen the profile of the city by providing a hub, or centre linking existing city elements.

### Conclusion

Through new centres of attraction, movement and information, the public is provided with places for exchange, cohesion and communication, in turn promoting sociability and cultural education. Spaces which promote an overall good quality environment can provide a ‘sense of place’ rather than the emptiness that original sites currently provide. In turn the fear of crime is reduced, thus giving the public back their free space, the city in turn will also be rewarded with economic benefits.

Human exchange is vital for the sustainable cities of the future. (Rodgers, 2000, pp.205) But in order to create human exchange new designs and spaces need to reflect and allow for human communication and exchange, without this the use of public spaces will decline further.

It is now an extremely exciting time for the design and creation of new public spaces. We have seen that new public space design needs to address, tackle and solve problems to promote sociability and educate our society. Successful solutions lie in the incorporation of flexible, adaptable and interactive elements which have been outlined in the designers’ framework for successful public space design. Interactive public art has the ability to enhance our cities and create sustainable spaces for the future. This Framework aims to be taken by designers and adapted to the aims of each new public space design in order to make the general public more culturally aware.



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## PAPRIKA: A cross-cultural visual communication exchange project for teachers-in-training.\*

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### Abstract

InSEA members are open to opportunities to engage in intercultural education and involve their students in exploring the world through art. Recently, two professors, one in Budapest, Hungary, and one in Atlanta, Georgia, USA, decided to establish the groundwork for a mutually beneficial exchange involving future art teachers in both cities. Since meeting in Finland at the InSEA regional congress in 2010, Gabriella Pataky and Melanie Davenport recognized the many parallels in their professional activities and teaching philosophies and embarked on an effort to cultivate cross-cultural collaboration through art between their students.

Beginning in Fall, 2011, our students have built greater understanding of each other and the world of art education through visual dialogue. The 22 art education students at Georgia State University exchanged artworks and ideas with 40 Hungarian Students of ELTE University Teacher Training College who have also produced art messages for students in Flensburg/Germany. Among other projects such as animations, photo galleries, collages, and postcard art exchanges, students have also created and shared personal map-based artworks showing their own communities from the perspective of a local, to communicate identity to other art students on the other side of the world with the help of visual language. This ongoing project is expected to build into a rich, mutually beneficial relationship between campuses so that students might gain intercultural professional understandings as well as shared respect and friendship. Of course this effort is fraught with challenges, as everyone engaged in cross-cultural work can appreciate. Besides language barriers, time differences, and limited funding, the demanding curricula already in place in each program leaves little freedom to add in other components, no matter how exciting. Despite these challenges, we are determined to work out ways for our students to share their artful perspectives on teaching, on life, and on the local-global connections that define our world. Various resources on the Internet have proven to be effective in support of our project, and we would like to share with others some of the ways we have been able to overcome some of the challenges of this international project.

This presentation will also examine the students' own experiences, analyzing how these students solved the problem of representing their own location or personal journey for someone they have never met, and sending the work for others for interpretation and response.

The PAPRIKA project is a bridge between continents, students, cultures, and campuses, but is also an invitation for every InSEA member who would like a glimpse into distant classrooms, to learn new methods, to share ideas, get feedback, and broaden the global perspective of their own students.

### Key words

InSEA, contemporary art, multicultural education, teacher training, visual art education, internet exchange.



## PAPRIKA PROJECT: An international educational project thoroughly rooted in contemporary art

At Eötvös Loránt University (ELTE TÓK, Budapest, Hungary), we train elementary and kindergarten teachers: throughout the entire training they have weekly art classes and also the possibility of working on a concentrated project once a year, lasting about six consecutive weeks. The students initiate this project, also choosing the tutor best suited to coordinate and facilitate their work. The ensuing proposal is both a description and an invitation: an invitation to every teacher in training to join this online art venture, to communicate, to share their cultural identities with one another in visual dialogue. The first to venture into this new territory of special communicational forms were some art education students from Georgia State University, USA and students from Flensburg, Germany.

Here in Hungary, our students made an important contribution to the organization and management of InSEA's world congress in Budapest/2011. Forged together by the experience, they form the core of this particular project. They wanted to continue to work together, and to initiate a dialogue with other students of their age who live in different cultures while enjoying the effervescent international atmosphere of arts education.

Different cultures, countries and languages. What they share is the culture of vision, the language of art. This was what the participants made use of in their works of art, which they uploaded to an online interface.

The project is entitled PAPRIKA. (The Hungarian word means pepper.) The acronym also stands for a stereotype commonly associated with Hungary.

P=projekt

A=Atlanta,

the headquarters of our American partner institution. Without the discovery of America, Hungary would not have its emblematic foodstuff, paprika.

P=BudaPest

R=FlensburG, the headquarters of our German partner university. Their seafaring merchants played an important role in bringing the goods of America to Europe. The wall of their oldest church bears not the picture of saints, but models of ships.

I=InSEA, but also for Internet, sharing our artworks on the web.

“-ka” is a diminutive suffix in Hungarian, and served to emphasize our humility towards high art. It can also stand for the Hungarian words for “adventure” (kaland) and “creation” (alkotás).

Using the means of contemporary art, my students concentrated on certain parts of their lives to create something personal that highlights life at the university, in the city, their immediate environment, their national or global identity. These perspectives added up to a view of Hungary that cannot be found in any guidebook.

In addition to the individual creative projects, we made joint works, actions and performances. They were inspired, above all, by lights, the lights of the city, and consequently we worked much after dark, in night-time Budapest. We sought to emphasize our identity as a group by all wearing red clothes. This conspicuous look contributed to a great many unexpected encounters, chats, new acquaintances.

### Types of works:

Making use of the city lights and the artery of Budapest, the Danube, we sought to create luminous, moving inscriptions (rocking, floating, some of them very large). When choosing techniques and





materials, we wanted to be sure they are not the common means of art, yet evoke NOW, the artistic and social issues of the moment.

In addition to the photographs that documented the work, the exhibition space also featured light-boxes made from lunchboxes (referencing paprika, the foodstuff), and a symbolic object, “the travelling pepper”, which we always took with ourselves. It travelled throughout the whole country, not only Budapest.

The individual projects were presented on 12 digital workstations. Photo montages, photograms, blueprints, subjective maps, installations, animations and films served to illustrate how much we love or hate what surrounds us, what we consider special, worthy of attention.

### Endnote

\*The summary of the original idea’s birth about a creative collaboration and partnership in arts education by Gabriella Pataky with Melanie Davenport



**New information concerning the cultural and individual identities of the Inhabitants, Greek Cypriots and Westerns, particular from Florence in Tuscany of Italy in the Medieval Kingdom of Cyprus (12<sup>th</sup> – 16<sup>th</sup> century) which led to a cosmopolitan culture.**

Philippidou-loannidou, Christiana

**Abstract**

Through unpublished and mainly published sources consisting of notary documents and referring to commercial transactions mainly between Venetians, Genoas and Tuscans, we draw on indirect and dispersed information for the cultural and individual identities, the intercultural understanding and the cosmopolitan spirit of the Westerns in Cyprus, especially the Tuscans. The favorable privileges of the Francs kings of Cyprus, especially of Henry II to the Westerns led to their fast incorporation to the Cyprus society. These conditions consisted of the imposition of low taxes to the above merchants on the products of importation and exportation and in sequel to the release of the taxes to the above merchants. Another important element was the Westerns incorporation to the feudal class of combination with the good quality of life, the low cost of living and the low cost of the merchandise led to their fast incorporation to the higher classes of the Cypriot society. Furthermore, this is revealed from the influences that the island had to the literature production of Florence. Many of the inhabitants of the latter that had visited Cyprus had included their experience that had lived to the island in their works, mainly literal and travel.

**Keywords**

Cultural, individual, identities, cosmopolitanism, spirit

**Introduction**

This paper is part of my PhD Thesis in Medieval History with the title “The economic relations between Tuscany and the island of Cyprus during the Medieval Era”.

Firstly, I would like to mention that I had met many difficulties in the collection of information and elements concerning the topic because the resources are heterogeneous and fragmentary.

Questions that concern us are why and for what reason the Westerns and more in particular the Tuscans arrived in Cyprus and how favorable were the cultural and social conditions of their settlement into the island to be able to incorporate easily to Cyprus society and also to be led to the creation of new cultural and individual cosmopolitan identities.

**Historical Context of Commercial-Cultural History of Cyprus**

The Medieval period in Cyprus extends from 1191 to 1571. This period is divided up into Lusignan and Venetian Period. The Lusignan period starts in 1191 with Guy de Lusignan as the first king and ends in 1489.

Later on the Venetian period begins and continues until 1571, year when the island falls into the hands of the Turks.



The most important commercial period in the history of Cyprus has been the golden age period which started in 1291. At that time Saint Johannes of Acre falls into the hands of the Muslims. At the time Cyprus and Armenia were the only Christian bases of eastern Mediterranean. The golden age of commercial history ends with the death of Peter I de Lusignan who gave a great contribution to the flourish of Feudal society of the island.

Most information we collect over this period is through Genovese notarial documents on Tuscan traders in Cyprus which are indirect and occasional. The above mentioned primary sources are limited and incomplete and supplemented by literary sources which are related to the cultural identities and the spirit of cosmopolitanism presented among the inhabitants of Medieval Cyprus and in particular among traders.

The important geographical position of Cyprus, which is located into the crossroads of three continents, between Europe, Africa and Asia and near the trade centers of the Near East and also the Cyprus products that were requested in the markets of the west were the main reasons that led the westerners into the trade centers of the island. The very important geographical but also commercial position of Cyprus is recognized by different Western nationalities that used to have the island as their main base and had economic transactions and political relations with the East. After the fall of Acre in Syria the Pisans, the inhabitants of Ancona along with the Franks and the Catalans were given the right to pay 2% less taxes to enter and exit the ports. All Florentines, except of the trades of Bardi and Peruzzi had to pay a respective 4% tax for their products. Genovese, Venetians and the inhabitants of Famagusta were excluded from taxes.

The above mentioned reasons, soon (in 1291) had lead king Henric II of Cyprus to give the tax exemption to Genovese and Venetians the right to pay the 2% to the inhabitants of Pisa, Ancona, Provenza, Narbona and the Catalans. In the first half of the 14<sup>th</sup> century, time when Hugo IV was King of Cyprus, all western traders included the Florentines were gradually excluded from import and export taxes (1323-1327).

Samples of cultural and individual identities that led to intercultural understanding and cosmopolitanism in Medieval Cyprus:

The indigenous inhabitants and the Westerners

The indigenous inhabitants in relation with the Westerners

Cyprus in the middle ages was divided into feudatories. The Westerners, who moved into the island, like the Venetian Andrea Cornaro, owner of great extensions of land in Episkopi, were feudists. Other Feudatories were presented in Lempa of Paphos and Kolossi of Limassol. Feudists used to call themselves "latini" and later on they were called "Cypriots".

On the other side, the native Greek-Cypriots who belonged to the Greek community and to the orthodox dogma used to be shepherds, farmers and artisans and they used to live in the villages of the province. They were serfs to Feudatories and they were called "Greek-

Cypriots" or "poor-Cypriots" according to Leontios Machairas. During the Frankish domination (1192-1489) the last mentioned used to pay heavy taxations to feudalists lords and that make it impossible for them to change their social class. Leontios Machairas who was a Greek-Cypriot secretary to the Frankish court, was an exception to that rule.



During the Venetian Domination period (1489-1571) the life conditions of Cypriots were improved and they were allowed to deal with trade and buy different kinds of courtesy titles, like the aristocracy title and that is because the Venetian Democracy was in the need of economic resources.

Cypriots social rise and especially of the traders, had led, after the union of the churches at the synod of Ferrara-Florence, to mixed marriages. Many Western nobles adopted the orthodox dogma and married with Greek-Cypriots. This fact is depicted as dedications of donors on hagiographies in Byzantine churches of that time in the island. We recognised this from their names. Paolo as Polo and Mandalena Zaccharia, donors to the church of Panagia at Galata. Considering the above we come to the conclusion that while the synod of Ferrara-Florence on 1438-9 divide east and west and create a Schism, in Cyprus on the other hand was the reason for a “cosmopolite” religious syncretism in favour of the Orthodox dogma. It was also created a cosmopolite spirit in religion during the Venetian domination period.

### The Westerns

It is worth mentioning that the Westerns, who moved in Cyprus after 1191 but also those who move into the island after the fall of Saint John of Acre, formed the nobility class of the Feudal society of Cyprus that used to have as a model the respective western medieval states and call themselves “latini” in other words westerns in order to differ from the Greek-Cypriots inhabitants of the island who used to be serfs. The privileges that Henric II gave to the Westerns in 1291 placed them in the middle class aristocracy. Such privileges were the most important element for their integration in the highest levels of Cypriot society.

The information found about the origin and profession of the Tuscans is only indicative. In 1300 Bertozis declare to be Florentines *speciari*, while in 1307 a member of the same family is called Berthozio latino *speciario*, one qualified to practise medicine.. In addition to that, in many notarial deeds the city of origin of the Westerns is not so well defined and often they are called residents or aristocrats of Famagusta the inhabitants and aristocrats of Famagusta. Also in 1300 the Pisan Bartholomei de Garnecio...de Accon, who was probably a

trader refugee from Acre, moved in Cyprus. In 1320, 29 years later, we found a deed that shows how the son or brother of Gerardus de Guarnerio Pizanus, resident of Nicosia, participated in a notarial act with the quality of the resident of Nicosia. The above mention example shows how after 30 years of domination in the island, which more or less corresponds to a generation, the Westerns settle in the island as *Cives* and *Burghenses*, in other words citizens and nobles in the social organization of the kingdom. As these two examples demonstrate, the Westerns integrate to Cyprus Society in two different periods.

What characterizes a western compared to the Greek-Cypriot inhabitants of the island is the Medieval Latin language, the medieval Italian and French language and also the catholic religion. During the second period they were calling themselves inhabitants of Cyprus, *Ciprioti*, leaving on their own choice whether to declare or not their western provenance and city of origin.

This leads us to the creation of individual Latin identities. As I mention before, the Latin language and the Catholic religion that characterize a western but also a cosmopolitan trader or Mediterranean *Borghese* who settled in Cyprus “Resident or inhabitant of Nicosia or Famagusta”.

We localize the mobility of goods but also of individuals and we come to the conclusion that different cultural identities were created. Like the Latin identity that refers to the Western civilisation citizens with a cosmopolitan spirit: Cypriot Resident of Nicosia or Famagusta, cities that in the Middle Ages were the most important trade and economical centres of the island. Nicosia as the island’s capital and Famagusta as the city with the biggest port and at the same time a trade center not only of the island



but also of the Mediterranean in the Middle Ages. Limassol and its port were of a secondary importance at that time.

The cultural and individual identities of the westerns and of cosmopolitanism of the time are indicative of another example of a western native of Cyprus who went to Italy to study Medicine and settled there, in Florence precisely, at the second half of the 15<sup>th</sup> century. His reputation as a doctor and his ethos were so great that the Florentines honoured him with the title of the resident of their city. He describes himself as “Georgios Baglianus de Flartis de Nicosia Cypri”, as a native of Cyprus and resident of Florence.

Considering the above examples we can see how the Western inhabitants of Cyprus were placed among the highest social levels of the island. They were inserted very quickly and loved the island so much that even when they went back to the west permanently, as the example we just mentioned demonstrates, they continued to declare and feel Cypriots.

### Florentine's life experience from Cyprus in the Florentine Literacy.

The Florentines arrived in the island by the year 1300. Fifty years later the commercial and cultural relations between Cyprus and Florence became more frequent. In this phase the Florentine Giovanni Boccaccio, son of an employee of the Florentine association of Bardi's in Naples, writes Decameron. Boccaccio was a direct testimony of the close relations between this city and Cyprus which is perceived by the good quality wheat from Apulia that the companies of Bardi and Peruzzi used to send to the island from their branch in Naples.

In Decameron there are many references of Florentine traders who moved in Cyprus. Probably Boccaccio had heard these stories from his father. Decameron which is a temporal novel is composed of these stories treated by Boccaccio. There are many examples presented in Decameron and the most characteristic are:

The seventh novella of the third day refers to Florentine Tedaldo degli Elisei. This man, after a fight he had with his wife, left Florence to start dealing with trade and after a short period of time he returned and made peace with her. Later on, together with another Florentine merchant, he left from Ancona to go to Cyprus where he became very wealthy from the profits of commerce. Afterwards he returned and established himself in Ancona. Many years later he went back to the island and heard a “canzone già da lui stata fatta, nella quale l'amore alla sua donna portava e ella a lui e il piacere che di lei aveva si raccontava”. In a free translation, he heard a song created by him where he describes his love for his wife.

That novel demonstrates that Cyprus wasn't just a transit center of exchange of goods but was also a cultural exchange center, a cosmopolitan center of ideas where everybody embraced what thought better and were successful, like for instance the love song of Tedaldo that became and continued to be popular and lovable in the island for many years after its creation.

Another example of goods and human mobility, cosmopolitanism and most of all the individual and cultural identity derives again from Boccaccio's Decameron. On the ninth novella of the tenth day Sultan Saladino, during a secret trip to Lombardy, met some Cypriot merchants in Pavia who told him the following: “Noi siamo mercatanti cipriani e di Cipri vegniamo e per nostre bisogne andiamo a Parigi”. “We are Cypriots merchants and we are going to Paris for our work”. Apart from the fact that merchants arrived in the island and pilgrims went to the Holy Land passing through Cyprus this last mentioned novel demonstrates how Western traders went to the most important commerce centres of Italy and the rest of Europe.





It is worth reminding that Boccaccio's Novellas had as a source of inspiration the 14<sup>th</sup> century trade environment and through the stories of Decameron we can see that along with the trade of goods also cosmopolitan and cultural ideas were exchanged. We also notice that some of the novellas of Decameron give us information on the very important Mediterranean island of the 14<sup>th</sup> century.

The geographical position of Cyprus, which is located between Europe, Africa and Anatolia and also near the trade centers of the Near East together with the Cyprus, western and Eastern products render the island one of the most important centers of East Mediterranean in the Middle Ages. The privileges that king Henric II gave to the Westerns like the abolition of trade taxes, the easy integration into the Feudal class of the island and the good quality of life, lead many westerns and especially Tuscans to move into the island. In the Middle Ages the more cosmopolitan people were mostly traders. Most of them travel a lot and the ones who decided to settle permanently into the island, at the beginning used to declare their city of origin and after a generation were integrated into Cyprus society and stopped mentioning their city of origin but only the fact that were westerns. Inside a cosmopolitan environment the western's personal identity loses its local character and expands to the entire Europe. In this way the city of origin of traders, citizens of a determinate western city becomes **Cipriota** and **Latino** and that is what characterizes a western: the language and religion unlike the native "Greek-Cypriots" who spoke Greek, were orthodox and used to be serfs during the Frankish period. The life conditions of Greek-Cypriots changed during the Venetian period when the Serenissima Democracy of Venice was in need of economic recourses.

Along with the mobility of the western traders in the Mediterranean and buying-selling of goods, also cultural exchanges were made. Perceptions, habits, ideas and life experiences like for example the ones that Boccaccio mentions in the Decameron. The most important fact is that westerns who permanently lived in Cyprus, loved the island so much that they were hellenized and became one with its destiny.



## The concept of visual literacy behind visual arts education classroom practices: a study on images, activities and strategies used by teachers

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### Abstract

In this paper I intend to report the methodological decisions I have made by the process and, especially, give an overview and discuss some results of a study conducted during the school year 2010/11 which was attended by 59 teachers from preschool to 9<sup>th</sup> grade in Portugal. The sample was intentionally constructed and data were collected through the internet. Teachers sent, throughout the school year, the pictures displayed to their students in the classroom while responding to a questionnaire where they were asked about the objectives, activities, strategies, contents and feelings associated to the work developed with each image or set of images. Knowing this information is particularly relevant in the context of my research because the pictures, being the main vehicle of learning and construction of subjectivities within the school environment, have predictable implications in the development of students' visual literacy, as well as in their conception of art and visual culture. The analysis of these evidences, when adopting the perspective of the so-called new literacies studies and the studies on visual culture, while simultaneously putting in contrast the scholar universe with the visuality of "youth cultures," will allow to enclose teaching practices, to find their main framework and to discuss the possible effects that images, discourses and practices have on the development of students' visual literacy.

### Keywords

Visual literacy, visual arts curriculum, visual culture, art education, teachers' classroom practices



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### Introduction

This paper results from a research held in the PhD in Arts and Education (University of Barcelona) in which I investigate on "the role of school in development and social highlighting of visual literacy". The thesis will try to gather around the same problem three different discourses that will help to understanding it:

- The discourses of scientific field from art education;
- The administrative discourses (laws, curricular programs and official documents of the education ministry);
- The discourses of the individuals (students and teachers).

This article centers only in an investigation procedure made to gather teachers discourses, trying to disclose the conception of visual literacy that is behind its practices in the classroom.



The study that I present was done during school year 2010/11, period in which teachers shared with me the images that they showed to their students in class as well as information's about the activities they developed.

At this time the evidences collected are still being analyzed. So, what I present in this text are my first impressions about the collected material that intends, above all, to evoke the debate and to get teachers and academics feedback in order to incorporate other perspectives in the subsequent analysis.

### Some notions of visual literacy that coexist today

The breakage whit the classic models of vision in the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century was much more than a simple change in the aspect of images and artworks, or in the conventional systems of representation (Crary, 1990: 3). It was, above all, a massive reorganization of knowledge and social practices that modified in several ways the productive and cognitive abilities, and the desire of the human individual. These changes in the regimes of visibility over the 19<sup>th</sup> century, as well as the profound alterations registered in the school institution around the world, led to the massification of school and had direct consequences at scientific and technical level in society, but also pedagogical and curricular consequences at school (Fernandes, 2011; Paraskeva, 2011). The "school for all" led, in first instance, to the normalization of curricular contents, essentially with social and economical goals. However, soon it was concluded that the pedagogy and the organization of the teaching-learning process was inadequate to the increasing heterogenic public that attend school. This misadjust between school and public that started to accessing was in the origin of the pedagogical progressive currents of the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century (Fernandes, 2011: 20).

The technical and scientific progress in society took to the emergence of new resources to education that demanded also new knowledge, maybe because of what Edgar Dale wrote in is book *Audiovisual methods in teaching*, in 1946, he identified visual literacy as one of the main ways of literacy, side by side to written literacy (press) and hearing. In the late sixties, there was already the conscience that the penetration of the *new media* gave a big emphasis to visual representation as communication practice (McDougall, 2004: 25), specially with the diffusion of the press and color TV. The notion of visual literacy was based in the existence of a visual language that supported it (Lin, 2008: 26). Following the conception that it was fundamental to dominate visual language to be considered a visual literate Dondis published, in 1973, the book *A primer of visual literacy*.

Across time the concept became more complex and in 2003 Bamford considered that being a visual literate is to dominate a combination of syntax (structure and organization of the parts that constitute an image) and semantic (the way that images make sense in the relation with the world) and that the actual proliferation of images takes to consider visual literacy as primary on achieving information, in the construction of knowledge and in getting good grades in school (Bamford, 2003).

However, the lack of consensus about who named the term visual literacy still remains. What seems right is that visual literacy is not a recent phenomenon and nowadays it appears as a vast area of investigation, that became wider with the impact of new technologies (McDougall, 2004: 26). It was exactly the advent of those new technologies, and the impact that they have in our lives, that led to a review of the concept of literacy, and today people talk about multiliteracies or new literacies, concepts that articulate the multiplicity of communication channels made possible by them; the significant increase of cultural and linguistic diversity in contemporary societies; and the global interactions in social, cultural and technological levels (Baker, 2010; Cope & Kalantzis, 2000, Hernández, 2007 ).

Now, when we talk about the new literacies, it also means new competences, strategies, dispositions and social practices associated to the use of new technologies of information and communication, and



are fundamental to a complete participation in the global community. This new literacies, in which is included, with special highlight, the visual literacy, are in constant change such as technology itself; they are multifaceted and our understanding about them results from different coexisting points of view (Baker, 2010: x).

According to this, it is recognized a parallel between evolution of vision technologies and the revision of the notion of visual literacy, that continues developing and changing due to the social construction that validates it. This parallelism led to the conclusion that our look has been made by the vision technologies and by the different discourses and contexts that legitimize them. This could be the reason why several authors stand for a necessary education of the look, settled in the perspective of the new literacies (Hernández, 2007; Jesus, 2012; Rodrigues, 2011; Sicard, 2006; just to cite some), in the attempt of taking observers to understand better the process and places of production, distribution and consumm of images, as well as the strong and constant relation that we established with them.

### Visual literacy and art education

The relation between visual literacy and art education was widely scrutinize by Ching-Chiu Lin (2008) in her Phd thesis. She refers that, in art education, the term visual literacy is related with an ample set of competences from students that framed so much in the understand of visual arts and other images such as their ability to express, interpretate and communicate visual messages transmitted through different visual means (Lin, 2008: 33).

According to this author there are few things written about visual literacy specifically related with art education and this led to consider this area less progressive than others.

To relate the notion of visual literacy with art education allows teachers to have possession of a tool (conjecturing that theorization of a concept might be a useful tool for teachers work) that stands up the position of visual and visuality in a range dominated by the written text, making use of the enormous presence of the visual in contemporary culture (Raney, 1999).

Christina Hong (2006) in her text *Developing literacies in postmodern times: the role of arts in education* refers to an increase of the use of the concept trough time and defines that evolution based on three distinctive stages:

- i) as coding and decoding of symbolic notations. This conception of visual literacy is related to the ability to “read” and “write” using visual symbols;
- ii) as answer to artworks. This conception of visual literacy is related to the development of fancier and experts of art. This understanding of the concept is much wider than the first stage and includes the ability to give answers in front of the artwork, to understand the qualities of the art form, to criticize and to know the context in which the artwork emerged and lives;
- iii) as a consequence of making, creating and also, as an answer and reflection related to objects, process and context. This conception of visual literacy is closer to the perspective of the meaning of new literacies.

In this last stage of ampliation of the use of the concept we can frame the perspective of Hernández (2007: 22) when he says that “acquiring visual literacy should allow students to analise, interpretate, evaluate and create, form relations established between knowledge that circulate in oral, hearing, visual, written, corporal texts and, specially to those linked to images that saturate the representations mediated by technology in modern societies”.



### Why this research procedure in the context of the thesis?

This procedure of investigation shouldn't be understood by itself, but in the context of the PhD thesis *The role of school in development and social highlighting of visual literacy*. This study fits in the procedures related to the gathering of discourses from teachers and intends to collect evidences that allow me to deduce which are the referents of visual literacy that can be identified behind the images that students see in class room and the practices of their teachers. This procedure has special importance in framing the reality of education on visual arts in basic education in Portugal, because I don't know any other study that provides me those evidences.

While I thought about the study and how to operationalize it was clear that it wasn't enough to me to know which images teachers show to their students. Context was needed. It was needed to know how the images were showed, why and for what. It was needed to know what feelings teachers intend to arouse in their students; which contents they wanted to work with; the activities they proposed. I decided to get together some questions related to didactic materials used in order to avoid that teachers only send me "loose" images, forgetting all the images that are in books, in several didactic materials, or even in museums when doing school trips.

Knowing images, knowing how they are visualized and framing them in themes, contents and practices seemed essential, but perhaps not enough, to recognize the referential in which entail teachers' practices and the images that they show to their students, allowing to have a clear idea about the underlying visual literacy concept.

### Implementing the research

#### Who were the collaborators?

The sample was built based on the principle of intentional samples (Patton, 2002). I choose peoples that, somehow, had an implication with the object of study but also with me, something that could ensure a great involvement of each one of them in the work that they had to do. I also asked them to send my request to some of their contacts, so the number of participants could rise. Thus, what seemed to be an "intentional sample with criterion", in which the participants were chosen according to the in predictable quality guarantee and involvement that they gave me, became a "snowball" international sample (Patton, 2002: 236-7) in which teachers brought to the study others that they considered to fit the defined goals, and those brought others, too.

From the 59 teacher who collaborated, from preschool to 9<sup>th</sup> grade, 43 were women and 16 were men. The relation between women and man are closer to the relation observed in all educational system in Portugal. Teachers were from all over the country, but with higher incidence in Center Region, Lisbon and Setúbal Peninsula. Most of participants teaching visual arts in second cycle (students between 10 to 12 years old). A bit more of half participants have between 6 and 15 years of experience as teacher. I can consider they are not novice teachers but with some experience.

#### The questionnaire

A questionnaire was created to collect the evidences through a web-based technology, the answers sent were kept in a confidential database, that only I could had access. The questionnaire, where was asked about the objectives, activities, strategies and contents associated to the work developed with each image or images set, was done based on three main concerns that guide the definition of the questions:

- i) Knowing the images that are visualized by the students in the context of the classroom;
- ii) Knowing how the images are visualized;





- iii) Framing the images in themes/contents and practices in classroom. I think it's important that the frame should be given by the participants and not inferred by the researcher.

### Answer the questionnaire and share the images

The questionnaire was online and accessible to the participants – that had a personal identification code – during the time of the study. There was a storing space, a **web storage** service associated to the database of the questionnaire, and the collaborators could upload the images to a personal file.

The first idea was a weekly participation in the study, but soon I found out that it was an impossible task because they complained about the lack of time and also because they don't show images to the students every week, there were weeks in which students do some task and the teacher role is to follow up them. So, we defined that which one will decide what and when to share, compromising to share everything they considered relevant to the study. The adoption of this strategy gave more responsibility to the participants, because they would be the ones who decide what to share, but release them from the obligation of filling in the questionnaire weekly. This new strategy introduced a new data that will be relevant in the analysis of evidence: teachers shared (images and critical answers) what they considered the most relevant in their work, that is to say, what seemed to be the most representative of their discipline and action as teachers in their visual art classes.

### Images, activities and strategies: analyzing the evidences

Analyzing evidences is a process that means to look at them from a certain point of view, that is to say, from a place where I stand and what I see, interpret and understand, from there. So, these evidences were observed from the point of view of a visual arts teacher that is also a researcher: someone who knows the school from the inside and the visual arts disciplines. Someone that knows the curricular programs and, because the activity of teachers trainer (continuous formation and post graduated), knows different ways of doing and recognizes in them different perspectives about Art education in general.

This place from where I analyze the evidences, is at first, a privileged place, but also a place of prejudice because looking and knowing are mutually constitutive (Mirzoeff, 1999: 15-16) and I could only see what I see if I know what I know. Thus, I will start to analyze the evidences, look at them not as a teacher who thinks "what an interesting activity" or "I will do it in a different way", but essentially I will look at them as a researcher who look for the genealogy of practices and discourses, framing them in a group of references that will give them meaning to. I intend to look to the evidences based on the idea that the results of the researcher constructed through a hermeneutics and dialectics interaction between the researcher and the participants, in a joint effort and collaboration (Latorre et al., 1996: 200).

All the images are **pre-existing** (Banks, 2001, 2010) and they weren't created by the researcher nor by the participants, specifically to this study. Participants sent images shown to the students, which mean they already existed before they were shared with me and they were already used in other context. Image by itself, the way it was shown and what was told about it is very important to the interpretation made by student (see Cotner, 2011), however, I don't know it if I will not have the answers to the questionnaire. I analyze the information according to the things teachers wrote. Therefore it isn't an inference or a conjecture. The analysis means to be real, respecting what teachers wrote and shared.

Thus, a first analysis to the evidences shared by teachers led to the construction of six categories. I will show them, not as closed categories, but as a possible organization of evidences in order to encourage discussion and debate between teachers and academics.

## Images of artworks and the painting predominance

Teachers exhibit lots of images of art to their students, especially paintings (Figure 1). This is not only to show them the technique but also to make them understand the presence of (saturated) colors which is the guarantee of success among the students, because of its stimulating properties.

Figure 1. Some images shared by teachers. Artworks from Nadir Afonso, Van Gogh, Picasso e Kandinsky



I verified that the chosen works fit in the canonic criteria's of Art History, by presenting the same works of the same artists. Those artists are easy to find in the Internet, have printed works or are common in museum exhibit or educational programs. Most of the presented images of Art are from modern period and belong to European Art. Representations from other periods (previous or subsequent) or no Europeans are rare. There are also references to Portuguese artists' works, especially from XIX and XX centuries, but also of contemporary artists like Joana Vasconcelos, wich use a "pop culture" language.

On the Art Education field, the expressionist tendency of preserving children from the contact with artworks and Art History seem to be gone. Nowadays those images are more frequently at school. The use of artworks (essential figurative or, when abstract, geometrical with elementary forms and colors) seem to correspond to the idea that children are innocent beings with few knowledge and for that reason this kind of work is more appropriate to their age.

### "Geometry in art"

The criterion to choose the images is, frequently, the suggestion of the activity that the teacher has already thought and proposes to the students. Thus, art is presented in a contextualist perspective and not in an essentialist one, because the extrinsic and utilitarian values are privileged.

Figure 2. Some images shared by teachers about the theme "Geometry in art". Artworks from Kandinsky, Sónia Delaunay e Matisse



The use of artworks that presents points, lines, squares, rectangles, triangles and circles, and simplicity of chromatic saturated colors is recurrent (Figure 2). The realization of activities of rigorous drawings from geometric figures or visual compositions is usually associated to the presentation of these works.

### Academism in work proposals

The evidences collected show that mainly activities are directed to know the artist biography and his works, classify them according to the stylistic criteria of Art History. Images used in the classroom often appear as representation models instead of motivation or a way to get new knowledge. Some work proposals show a kind of neoacademism revealed in activities such as: reproduction of artist's works, simulation of his way of painting or even in repetition of mechanic procedures as cutting or dotting (pointillist technique) (Figure 3); by respecting face and human body representation canons; or even in the study of the elements of form.

Figure 3. . Images shared by teachers with some activities done by students inspired in artists work



According to the images shared with me, I can state, according with Agirre (2010: 39) that the Art Education predominant concept is oriented to “the knowledge of the arts, instead of using arts to develop the knowledge”.

## The “reproduction of boring” and the legacy of Crafts

There are some activities repeated again and again, every school year by experienced or novice teachers, for instance: students make a portfolio to put their works and illustrate it with their names (drawing the letters). The teachers seems to reproduce immediately the work methodologies they have learned, that is to say, do “the reproduction of the boring” (Acaso, 2009: 16). Other recurrent activity is to make useful objects, according to a predefine model, given by the teacher with the guarantee of quality in the final product (Figure 4). This way of doing things has its genesis in old crafts (educational manual labor) where work proposals were related to a repetition of models or a settled and repeated making process.

Figure 4. Images shared by teachers with some examples (models) of Christmas decoration.



## What do we talk and don't talk about

Some images are used to talk about daily matters (economic crisis, for instance) or topics related to citizenship (environment protection, multiculturalism, etc.). In general, images that have been shared show the need to keep children apart from real life, trying to preserve them from social issues, images of violence or sexual content. We let our children live in a world without conflicts, a world full of happiness, peace and welfare, that is to say, a world of fantasy, color and joy.

This is not just an esthetical problem. It is a pedagogical problem whose origins lay in our own conception of childhood. In the Enlightenment rises the idea that children are born innocent and pure until corrupted by society and it was consolidated along the XIX century, but it stills valid nowadays, although there are other narratives aggregated to it (Hernández, 2010: 50). This hegemonic narrative helps to ground the teachers' resistance to deal with topics usually associated to visual culture, as genre and race issues, social stereotypes, enjoyment and body representation.

## Mediate vision

The easy access to technology has a great influence in the way images are displayed to children. Most answers reveal that images are almost projected in a multimedia projector and rarely are given privilege to the direct contact, or to a contact not mediated, with the world. This way of visualization brings some advantages to the teacher, because he/she can project the images in a larger dimension, capturing students' attention more easily. However, we mustn't forget that visual representations (mediated vision) are different from the perceptions of natural (not mediated vision), because they are intentional forms of communication, codified and because they are a representation of something, not the thing itself. This type of visualization mediated by technology it isn't new or unknown to students, it seems to me, by analyzing the evidences, that what it's new is the massive use of technology at



school, it leads to the omnipresence of simulations and they enter more and more in the experience of reality.

One possible conclusion: what could be the notions of visual literacy behind the practices in the classroom?

At this moment, without analyze all collected material, I can risk some partial conclusions that seems to me more evident in my first sight to the collected evidences. These first impressions help me to conclude that art arrives at school, dominated by painting, and students see few images of contemporary visual culture, increasing the gap between the “in” and the “out” of school.

It is important be aware that teacher’s action isn’t innocuous: each image he/she selects, each activity he/she proposes, each decision he/she makes while he/she is acting pedagogically has, deep inside, the conceptions about Art Education, about what their students must learn, or about what he/she thinks their students are; although he/she doesn’t have full conscience of that.

In a word, teachers’ practices seem to be closer to an approach to Visual Literacy as learning and mastery of visual language, because, mainly purposed activities are based on: formalist analysis of artworks; learning techniques and their mechanic reproduction; reproduction of esthetic models considered “more adequate” to the students (Agirre, 2010; Reis, 2011). These work purposed activities lay down in the idea of forming a “good eye”, capable of distinguishing, of analyzing deeply; an eye that knows visual grammar, that distinguish form elements and know History of Art, but it has difficulty to relate, interpret, evaluate or create (Rogoff, 2002).

During the process of this research I think we can learn more about:

- the conceptions of art education that guide the practices in the classroom
- the practices of vision and visuality at school
- what teachers think their subject is (or is not) about
- what visual literacy conceptions teachers have and what are their referential

Although, I think is important bear in mind that the concept of Visual Literacy in Art Education isn’t a settled concept because it is in constant changing, especially by the diversity of teaching-learning methods, by the development of curriculum and pedagogical theories and also, by the impact of new.

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## Championesse - women's boxing in the media

Siebermair, Helene

### Abstract

The aim of the presentation is to show an analysis between gender and sport through the media. The presentation is connected to the subject of arts and society, and focuses on visual culture education pedagogy. As an art educator and filmmaker I want to give an example how students can find out more about the rules between media and reality and develop a broader view on women in sport in general.

### Keywords

Gender, sport, media

### About the image of female boxers in the media

I am interested in the image of women in general and especially in the image of women from my generation. What does a young successful strong woman look like. When zipping through television channels or leafing through magazines we always find three types of young successful women: actresses, singers and models. When searching for young successful men it will be a rather similar line-up but with one new group: the sportsmen.

Images of sportswomen can almost exclusively be found in sports magazines. These magazines show men and women in equal measure but usually in a different way:

Whereas men are often shown as winners with winning attributes such as raised arms and gold medals, women are more often shown while exercising their sport. The snapshot frequently captures women in sexy positions with a wide décolleté. Another difference is the sort of the sport: Whereas we often find images of men exercising hard sports like football and boxing images of women often show them while exercising soft and more elegant sports such as ice dancing and athletics. A third distinction is remarkable when reading the subtitles that are usually written beneath the photography. In many cases sportsmen are called “powerhouse” or “muscleman” whereas we find women subtitled as “tennis beauty” or “running cat”.

This difference becomes even more obvious when looking on the Internet and searching for sportsmen and sportswomen by name. I tried this experiment with Rafael Nadal and Anna Kurnikowa who have both been rather popular around the year 2000. Whereas Rafael Nadal is shown as a successful tennis player, Anna Kurnikowa appears almost exclusively as model or pin-up girl. There are only a few images focusing on her tennis carrier and these images are again very sexy.

For sure there are big differences in sport reports and you will also find informative and serious ones but all in all there is a tendency for cliché-images. Boxing, an archaic, martial and “manly” sport, is a good example:

When going back to the early beginning of female boxing we will find newspaper articles and images of women showing them not as sportswomen but as attractions. In the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century female boxing was always related to fair attractions, variété theatre or the red light scene. Later female boxing became more civic. Strong young women like Marlene Dietrich or Leni Riefenstahl chose this sport but – as the nature of women pretended - they only exercised in trainings and not in fights.



Literature reflects this lack of female boxers. Novels from Berthold Brecht to Wolf Wondratschek tell about boxing but their heroes always are male. Although boxing has changed and there are a lot of female fighters nowadays, sport magazines do not show this development. This could be because of the fewer female sport reporters as well as because of the target group that is considered to be predominately male. There are still hardly any images of female boxers and these few ones are frequently shown in a very sensational and sexual way.

One example of this thesis is Regina Halmich, Europe's most successful female boxer. She was already world champion 38 times when she became famous for a broader audience. This was not because of one of her world championship fights but because of a show fight, in which she defeated the TV entertainer Stefan Raab. Although Halmich fought in the flea weight class she was able to defeat a much taller and heavier man. This success combined with the fact that seven million people watched this fight convinced Germany's public television: From then on ARD started to screen all world championship fights, not only the male ones. There is no doubt that Regina Halmich has achieved a lot for female boxers but – as she said herself – this was only possible because she gave the media what it wanted: She fought with Stefan Raab, she took part in several galas and talk shows and she always performed in a very female way. Furthermore, Halmich provided images showing her in a “normal” relationship with a man, showing her doing “normal” girl stuff like shopping and showing her as a male fantasy. Therefore she did several shootings in men magazines such as Maxim or Playboy.

This shows a development that already had been published in studies about female boxing: Due to the pressure of the media-addicted management female boxers compensate their martial and hard side as boxers with a very female performance outside of the ring. In this way the traditional role model of a woman becomes justified.

When doing my documentary I was lucky to gain other experiences. I accompanied seven female boxers from Austria and Germany to record the status quo of contemporary female boxing. While doing intensive interviews with them I noticed that most of the women not only see through the game with the media but really use the media for a greater good: My younger protagonists often focused on their individual development and their own punch. My older female boxers and female trainers were more eager to the society's development: They saw in boxing an opportunity to achieve a more independent society with strong participation of women and girls.

The most remarkable project was realised by the Canadian boxer Heather Cameron. As amateur boxer and Professor of the Free University of Berlin she was able to found a project in Berlin Kreuzberg, which became the world's largest female amateur boxing association with partnerships in other places such as Cape Town and Nairobi. Now this association counts several thousand members and enables in particular a lot of migrant girls to box. Female Muslims are very often not allowed to exercise sport but boxing, having a character of self-defence, is possible. Heather Cameron used this fact to start a project that connects sport, media and politics: Her boxing association collaborates with schools, youth centres and voluntary institutions such as the maltase and the fire brigade. While boxing the girls feel the power and develop a strong ability to assert themselves, while collaborating with all these other institutions they notice, that they really can change their surroundings.

From my point of view there is a pedagogical value in Heather Cameron's work. Although female boxing is a rather particular topic I can imagine it being part of a media reflected art education. The history of female boxing illustrates media's influence on the success of sportswomen and - reliant on that fact - shows the justification of stereotypes and female role models. Sports, media and stereotypes are complex phenomena, which create norms that are deeply encroached in our culture. They concern everyone and it is important to start already in school debating about their meaning.



## Tom Hudson: Art Education and Society

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### Abstract

This paper presents Tom Hudson's core ideas regarding the relationship between art education and society between 1958 and 1995, found in both published and unpublished papers from the Hudson collection at the National Art Education Archives, England. An artist and educator, Hudson represented concerns that reached beyond art education into the wider society. Instrumental to the revolution in art education and establishment of the Basic Courses in the 1960s, he maintained a career as an educator until his death in 1997. He did not regard art education as simply a tool to produce artists; on the contrary, he felt it a fundamental right for all to understand the visual world. Hudson felt that to foster understanding and appreciation of the environment in the consumerist society important changes needed to take place, and visual literacy would need to be embedded within post-adolescent stages of art education (Hudson 1968). Despite their age, many issues raised by Hudson can be seen to relate to our current situation. By reintroducing and analysing Hudson's views of art education within society, this paper seeks to determine the relevance of his ideas to contemporary thinking in the new millennium. The paper concludes that Hudson's ideas continue to raise important and relevant questions applicable to the increasingly electronic media-dominated world we now live in.

### Keywords

Hudson, art education history, society, visual culture

### Introduction

Tom Hudson, both a practising artist and art educator, was also a powerful writer. His numerous papers not only comment on the problems he saw in art education and how these affected society, but also offer advice and solutions. Recognised by Herbert Read, at the opening of *The Visual Adventure* exhibition of student work in 1964, as having 'done more than anyone else to change art education in Britain' (unpublished and uncatalogued document in Allison collection, NAEA), Hudson played a significant role in the restructuring of British art education in the 1950s and 60s. However, despite ground-level impact, his contribution to art education is largely unacknowledged beyond brief reference in histories of Basic Design (Macdonald 1970; Thistlewood 1990), and more recently, published papers regarding Computer Art (Mason 2008; Edmonds 2008; Busby, Parrott & Olsen 2000). Of the Basic Design 'pioneers', only Hudson's pedagogy progressed into the digital age, including the production of various television programmes for the purpose of distance learning, as well as the introduction of courses in Computer Art at Emily Carr College of Art and Design in Vancouver, where in 1977 he was appointed Dean of Education. This paper reintroduces Hudson's ideas about the role art education can play in society, as found in published and unpublished papers from the Hudson Collection in the National Art Education Archives at Yorkshire Sculpture Park, as well as interviews with his past colleagues and associates, and considers the currency of his ideas within the contemporary context. What this paper cannot expand upon here, are the methods Hudson employed or the content of his curriculum.



## Tom Hudson

In his numerous published papers, ranging between 1959 and 1995, Hudson is highly critical of the state of both education and society. He believed that the twentieth century had brought with it a realisation of the individual, and hence a need for both a personal and a collective reality. Hudson speaks of a prevailing society with disorientated values; 'our morality, virtue and sensibility are as expendable as the proliferation of products, the junk, which one half of the world makes for the other half to consume' (Hudson 1969, 2). Hudson maintained that materialism and visual illiteracy was causing an 'aesthetic/functional' problem and, if allowed to continue, the world would be populated with 'depressing junk' (Hudson 1966; 1967a; 1969), 'and what is more, make Man subservient to it' (Hudson 1967). What Hudson saw as necessary was the 'development of human sensibility, of individual selectivity, brought about by the maturing of the senses and the growth of intuitive power,' something he considered 'absolutely essential to the well-being of our society; a guard against the pressures which beset us, such as conformity and orthodoxy, and against the fatty tissue of materialism' (Hudson 1966).

The key to this development lay in the education system, whose responsibility he believed it was to address this, to allow man to 're-orientate himself according to a personal psychological point of view' (Hudson 1969c, 2). He felt that the adverse effects of a materialist culture could be treated only if art educators embedded an understanding of visual languages within general education itself (Hudson 1965; 1966; 1969). Idealistically, Hudson felt that the necessary understanding of complex visual systems in the contemporary world should not be the privilege of only artists and designers, but rather that it was a fundamental need across society (Hudson 1971; 1982; 1987; 1988). In many papers he issued a stronger caution, naming the consequences, such as that of society imposing regulations from above. He warns: 'they will do this.' (Hudson 1967b, 6). Changes to the earlier stages of learning, where all students could be reached, were essential 'if the consumerist society of tomorrow is to understand and appreciate aesthetics' (Hudson 1968b, 11). Not only for the formative years, Hudson also saw education as a life-long process 'of constantly revitalising and recharging' oneself (Hudson, n.d. Liverpool Tapes).

By 1984, and with increased pedagogical experience, Hudson addresses the broader socio-economic problem more succinctly. His tone has a sense of urgency and the writing maintains cautionary statements. In *Reconstruction or Retrenchment* (1982) Hudson closes with a warning of the destructive powers of men; 'the continuing, terrifying dichotomy exists – all of that beautiful culture, all of that evidence of man's better nature amid all of that horror and terror' (Hudson 1982). It is during the 1980s that Hudson's socio-political voice is strongest. His experience appears to have shown him that the unfulfilled changes he called for in the 1960s have led to a society still very much lacking a general training in effective visual literacy. In the 1990s, Hudson comments that one is 'bombarded' with visual messages, and reiterates that education still does not do enough to prepare students for their complex interpretation and use (Hudson 1990).

## Background

Born into a working class family in Horden, a mining town in County Durham, North-East England, Hudson was introduced to strong old Labour politics during his formative years. Whilst not often citing his political positioning within his writing, socialist ideals clearly influenced his whole life. A strong driving force, Hudson's socialist agenda proved too dominant for some; former colleagues comment that he hated the establishment and showed a degree of intolerance towards contrasting ideas, yet fundamentally, he believed in art for the masses. Beyond the content of Hudson's own papers, the state of society is a recurrent theme arising from interviews with Hudson's past colleagues and students. His son summarises the general opinion most clearly:





He was a pedagogue with everything and everybody. That was his life's vocation, to teach and also, through teaching, to try and change society. He had a utopian vision about what way society should be going, and it was entirely through art (Hudson, M. 2011).

Challenging nineteenth century notions, Hudson believed art should go deeper than representation. A former student at Leeds commented on Hudson's ethos, as he perceived it; 'to change society, not reflect it' (Hainsworth 2012). The term "art for the masses" has also been frequently attributed to Hudson's aims (Hainsworth 2012; Hudson, M 2011). Contrasting with the dominant opinion that art was for the privileged few who possessed the genius of artistic talent, Hudson insisted on 'the propagation of this aesthetic experience to everyone, to open it up to the masses' (Hainsworth 2012). In an undated document in the archives, Hudson himself writes:

...if there is a tacit understanding which does guide British art education as a whole, it is that it must seek out, by a process of gradual elimination of others, the "budding genius". Surely what we need is a philosophy which stands for the very reverse, a concept of arts education which is designed to stimulate and enrich the lives of the largest possible number in a lasting manner (Hudson n.d, 2. Art Education Where?).

During the 1980s, Hudson recognised that television was a tool that could communicate information to society en masse, and arranged to publicly broadcast the Emily Carr College of Art and Design distance learning courses, produced by the Knowledge Network in Canada. Dissemination of twentieth century modern art, not just to art students but to all, regardless of age, experience or location, is probably the most concise example of his ideals. A former student and art educator states 'he will have been regarding the television and whatever else he was doing as a sort of active force within society, rather than one-to-one teaching' (Hainsworth 2012). The programmes are said to have been watched by many in addition to those completing the distance-learning course; members of the public would also recognise Hudson in the street and praise his series'.

Hudson genuinely believed that his students could change the world (Upfold 2012). One could credit this strong desire for an improved society to his active service in the Far East. Hudson was one of very few to survive the Battle of Kohima, and returned as many others in his situation did, as an 'angry young man' determined to validate his survival. One of my most significant realisations, regarding Hudson's teaching practice, is his focus on pastoral care and belief that art education should not only function as a tool to produce artists, but that it should, and could, lead to a better society. His priority was always the students, their development and their future. Despite being something of a revolutionary himself, during the student unrest of the 1960s Hudson turned away rallying students from other institutions, explaining that those under his care would not make their point by ceasing their work, but that they would continue and make a deeper impact through their work (Baker 2012). A former colleague at Cardiff stated that when the students at Hornsey College of Art carried out their famous protest in 1968, Hudson invited them to Cardiff to 'show them what a real College of Art looked like', and indeed, some of them stayed (Upfold 2012).

Whilst setting out to develop the highest levels of confidence in his learners, as noted by former students themselves, Hudson also modelled social change and transition within his own educational communities. Laurie Burt began as a technician at Leeds College of Art, a lowly position in the early 1960s, and due to Hudson's influences successfully made the leap to lecturer of Art at the college. Hudson's background clearly influenced his morals and opinions in other ways. Determined not to taint the name of art, he ran a tight ship, with zero tolerance for drugs, or illegal behaviour, at a time when qualities such as these were very much against the stereotype of 1960s and 1970s liberal art schools.



## Social Learning

Another of Hudson's core beliefs was the need for increased social learning. Predominantly in papers published throughout the 1960s, he attempted to persuade his colleagues of the benefit of group work to the individual and society (Hudson 1966; 1967a; 1968b; 1969; 1971). While acknowledgement of individual preferences and learning styles was required, students should also be able to recognise their place within a wider social context. Hudson writes of the need for a collective social responsibility and that if a society in which people can work together more effectively is desired, 'we must educate for it' (Hudson 1969, 3):

Experimentation, analysis, and development are essential to advance. Methods of group activities must be developed, acknowledging the significance of collective experience as well as the benefits of inter-disciplinary relationships (Hudson 1968b, 11).

Hudson appears to have led a democratic education policy, stretching the boundaries between staff and students (Hainsworth 2012; Upfold 2012) and leading a 'dynamic' course (Hainsworth 2012; Chilton 2011; Baker 2011; Burt 1998). According to various staff and students, the teaching teams consisted of a plurality of people, all with differing interests and styles, but working with a shared ethos (Hainsworth 2012; Crowther 2011). In an undated lecture, Hudson speaks of the difficulties some had with his new collaborative approach to teaching: that at first it was the staff who were most inhibited (Hudson, Liverpool Tapes transcript). There was committed participation by the staff at all meetings and tutorials, with shared responsibility and input for assessment and feedback. Hudson ran frequent symposia, in which invited specialists presented alongside both staff and students for the rest of their college community and students from the local schools (Upfold 2012). Despite much praise, another educator at the time gives a different impression, suggesting that Hudson found it hard to work under the direction of others and was more comfortable implementing his own ideas, in control of the situation (letter to author 2011).

## Influences

Hudson was very much a part of the Modernist movement that pervaded the early twentieth-century with increasing strength and popularity, thus various sources influenced his ideas. News of the Bauhaus had spread by this time, and Clement Greenberg was also sharing his formalist view of art (Greenberg 1961). While Modernist concepts were varying on several fronts, there was such an abundance of theories and concepts that one could be selective. What all supporters shared, however, was a belief in individual experience, the notion of a formal visual language, and a certain attitude over technical mastery. Herbert Read, a significant supporter and author in the field, also believed that education should nurture students both as individuals and part of a social group, and that personal preferences and different types of learning should be recognised by the art teacher (Read 1958). His beliefs about Modern art and education were so strong that in 1932 he attempted to establish a Bauhaus in Edinburgh, and while this was never accomplished, his role in the founding of the Institute of Contemporary Art (ICA) in London, later served as a symbol of his work (Thistlewood 1984). In the 1950s and 60s Read's views deeply influenced Hudson's realisation of the individual that the twentieth-century had brought with it, and the need for both a personal and a collective reality. Both fundamentally believing in the principal of learning through discovery, Hudson goes beyond ideas into practical curriculum planning, something Read did not attempt. However, there are many comparisons to be drawn between the two men's rhetoric. Read also credits the lack of creative education for 'a civilization of hideous objects and misshapen human beings, of sick minds and unhappy households, of divided societies armed with weapons of mass destruction' (Read 1958, 168). He was also seen to be on a 'crusade' to rejuvenate the arts and promote wider participation by the masses (Thistlewood 1984, 116).



The founder of the Bauhaus, Walter Gropius, had likewise maintained a view that art education was sociological. He favoured words such as **collaboration, community, and integration** (Macdonald 1970, 317), and sought to break down discipline barriers in order to encourage experimentation across subject areas. The ethos of the Bauhaus is reflected in many aspects of Hudson's teaching philosophy, and he credits Itten and Klee as having influenced his ideas. Walter Gropius also wrote, in *Idee und Aufbau des Staatlichen Bauhaus Weimar* (1938), about his ideas on visual languages: 'we must know both vocabulary and grammar in order to speak a language; only then can we communicate our thoughts ... Its vocabulary consists of the elements of form and color and their structural laws' (Gropius in Harrison & Wood 2010, 312-3). This supported Hudson's belief that if greater visual literacy were available, society would be enhanced. Perhaps appealing to Hudson's working class background, a Socialist agenda also ran through the ethos of the Bauhaus, demonstrated in the *First Proclamation of the Weimar Bauhaus* in 1919, stating: 'Let us create a new guild of craftsmen, without the class distinctions which raise an arrogant barrier between craftsman and artist...' (Gropius 1919 cited in ICA 1959, 1). Despite many conceptual connections Hudson, however, was not shy of criticising the Bauhaus and its later emphasis on the product.

The concept of visual literacy as the solution to a divided, materialistic society was not a new idea; many before him had raised similar concerns, and can be seen as concurrent with a modern aesthetic philosophy. However, there were many others who objected to Hudson's methods despite their philosophical underpinnings, such as those who maintained support for the expressionist methods of Marion Richardson's Child Art.

### Relevance Today

The relationship of art to society as a tool for change, particularly within the gallery context, has taken increasing prominence in art education over the past few decades. Terms such as **Visual Culture** and **Visual Literacy** are becoming buzzwords within the field of art education, seen variously as integral, a replacement of, or addition to, art education. Indeed, most particularly in America, Visual Culture Art Education (VCAE) is challenging the traditional Discipline Based Art Education (DBAE) (see Duncum 2002 and Tavin 2005 for greater expansion). I conducted a brief survey of recent articles, which revealed a return to thinking as Herbert Read and his peers did in the early twentieth century. As recently as 2011, Jeff Adams cites Read to support his argument that 'the arts are synonymous with social cohesion, in that they are modes, **par excellence**, of social communication and expression' (Adams 2011, 156). The urgency of the situation felt in America is made clear by visual culture campaigners such as Elizabeth Delacruz who wrote in 2009 that 'art also positions as a form of civil engagement and a means for social reconstruction. The aims of art education are now connected to notions of civil society in a globalised world' (Delacruz 2009, 262). Prof. Antonio Damasio takes a more ominous stance in his research for UNESCO; 'this emphasis on the development of cognitive skills, to the detriment of the emotional sphere, is a factor in the decline in moral behaviour in modern society. Emotional processing is an integral part in the decision-making process' (UNESCO 2006, 5). Likewise, necessary development of a visual literacy, as advocated by Hudson, is still argued by many, including Stuart Oring (*A Call for Visual Literacy* 2000), as being the first step towards a more engaged and cohesive society.

However, there have been significant paradigmatic and epistemological shifts since Hudson's formative teaching years. We live today within a postmodern context, contrasting enormously with the modernist views of Hudson. It cannot be ignored that some of Hudson's ideas (and those of his peers) would be seen to have very out-dated concepts in the contemporary context. However, when one looks beyond this, one can start to extract ideas that hold importance today. Within the field of visual culture for example, there has been many changes in meaning, thought and approach. When Hudson used the term 'bombarded' to describe the power of popular culture has on society, he was



writing as a member of a generation who has seen the dramatic increase of such media. Writing today, as an almost-member of **Generation Y**, I have grown up amongst a dominance of visual messages, and those younger than me are even more comfortable in such an environment. Whether this leads to a greater ability to decode such complex messages or not is a different matter. The feeling of bombardment is relative. Jennifer Eisenhauer summarised the 'language of bombardment' as constructing

subjects, and particularly student subjects, as essentialized and homogenized victims and education as a colonial discourse in which one group is better able to define another's experience. However, a language **beyond** bombardment positions the subject neither as a victim or a universal "self," but rather as a discursively constituted multiplicity. (Eisenhauer 2006, 160).

### Summary

It is clear that Tom Hudson's motivations went deeper than improving the system of art education; they reached beyond into concerns for the wider society. He did not regard art education as simply a tool to educate artists; on the contrary, he felt it was a fundamental right for all to understand the visual world. He felt that this understanding was imperative within the contemporary context; in order to survive effectively in the world one needed the skills to read the varying and developing systems that surround us (Hudson 1984, no.6). He summarised his own feelings in a lecture:

My own philosophy really goes far beyond simply, as I've said, art teaching, it really is a kind of creative basis for every particular area of human activity and every discipline (Hudson, n.d. Liverpool Tapes).

From a postmodern perspective, it is easy to criticize the empirical, transmission model of education that basic design and modernist methods are most frequently associated with. However, there are tensions within Hudson's pedagogy that stand against this. He viewed his students as part of a community of contributors, all capable of constructing knowledge and sharing their experiences with one another. While he may have felt personally bombarded by visual messages, and shared a negative view of the complex visual messages being sent into society, he also recognized the positive power of these, where people able to critically evaluate them. It has been stated by many former students and colleagues that while Hudson may have projected very dominant views within the college community and beyond, he was also more than happy for these to be challenged. In fact, he demanded his students to do so. The key concepts Hudson believed in remain constant throughout his life and clearly respond to the times in which he wrote. Although his ideas are far reaching, they are no more so than those of other educators, past and present, and by no means entirely original. This being said, there is much we can take from Hudson's career:

- To consider the student and staff body as a collective society, working together to realise both common and personal goals.
- To enable our students to develop the skills and confidence to make an impact on society and share both a personal and societal language.
- To remember that, as a society, we shape our world, and that education is the key to the development of this.

It is clear that Hudson's ideas continue to raise important and relevant questions applicable to the increasingly electronic media-dominated world we now live in. The fact that socialist concepts of the early twentieth century are gaining social currency must be investigated further: how they are being reinterpreted within the changing environment of art education and society today.



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Burt, L. (2011) Tom Hudson.

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## Health through capacity building - mediation of arts in working communities

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### Abstract

In recent years, many art educators have moved the focus of their efforts towards acting in health promotion with health workers and other organisations in purpose to initiate, conduct and maintain health promotion in various communities. This article discusses how implementation of arts in order to maintain health and well-being at work can also enhance capacity building in working communities. I examine the relationship between different time spaces and conditions where the mediation of arts has been implemented to gain sustainability in working communities. I analyse experiences from the field work, interviews of the role of an art mediator at work places and characteristics of methods used in capacity building work. The study shows that arts at working communities represent a 'value added' dimension in sustaining the capacity building through deepening and prolonging the experiences of finding "something own". However, it is very demanding to work as art mediator in working communities because the organisations need clear and measurable results for the time and money they have given. This article concludes with proposals for enhancing positive outcomes and trust between art mediators and leaders of working communities.

### Key words

Mediation of arts, working communities, capacity building

### Introduction

Questioning makes things often more complicated. It would so much easier and more economical to work as a researcher in a linear path: to write a framework, to do field work, to gather materials, to analyse them and to write the results. However, I do not believe that research in arts follows very often these ready-made patterns. In this paper, I try to open the curvy path that I have made in my research of this topic. The way might not have the most economical one but it is proposing ways for art mediators at working communities to challenge the values, norms and attitudes, and to bring something new to capacity building. My acknowledgements are linked to notions of seeing things differently dependent on situated positioning and nature of perspectives (Picture 1).

The paper will start with hanging up some current political programs from Finland where the mediation of arts and artists to workplaces seems to be surprisingly active right now. There are several projects going on and even more seem to come in the future. Then I will throw a short glimpse to some aspects of current working life. Finally, I will open up closer the questions and practises of capacity building in the project where I work. I write about my first analysis of experiences from the field work, interviews of the role of an art mediator at work places and characteristics of methods used in capacity building work. How does capacity building in arts fit the every-day-life at workplaces? To understand what is happening here and now, I will need to examine the relationship between art and capacity building in different time spaces and conditions. New perspectives in aesthetics are needed when aiming to understand the institutional theories in which art is discussed in stiff structures that touch arts and culture (Varto, 2008).

Picture 1. William Hogarth 1754: "The importance of knowing perspective". (Source: Public domain via Wikimedia Commons. URL: <http://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/4/4c/Hogarth-satire-on-false-perspective-1753.jpg>)



### On policy programmes and strategies

The Finnish Ministry of Education has launched out the Strategy 2020 for Cultural Policy (2009). The strategy highlights the positive effects of art and culture on people's life skills and health as well as the well-being of communities.

In 2007 the Finnish Government issued a Government strategy document that was adopted to the Policy Programme for Health Promotion. These preparations were influencing on a cross disciplinary programme named Art and culture to health and well-being 2010–2014:

"The aim of the Art and culture for well-being programme is to promote well-being and health by means of art and culture and to enhance inclusion at the individual, community and societal levels. The three priority areas in it are: 1) culture in promoting social inclusion, capacity building, networking and participation in daily life and living environments, 2) art

and culture as part of social welfare and health promotion, and 3) art and culture in support of well-being and health at work.“

The topic art and well-being has become important in Finland because many art educators have moved the focus of their efforts towards acting in health promotion with health worker's and other organisations in purpose to initiate, conduct and maintain health promotion in various communities. One reason for this can be the poor situation in employment; not even in Finland, there aren't enough jobs for art teachers at schools, especially in the southern regions of the country. The other reason can be that the Finnish culture policy is actively supporting the measures which are aiming to enhance individual, communal, regional and economic welfare. In Finland, art is considered as a strategic resource and as a part of innovation policy in the similar way as science does.

The EU Strategy for Safety and Health at Work 2007-2012 (2007) will strive towards a situation, where work does not pose a risk to health but to promote the individual's health and well-being.

### Connections of art and capacity-building

Asking about the connections of art in promoting well-being has been interesting me already from year 2003 when I wrote a feasibility study of possibilities of visual art in enhancing work ability. During the end of 80's Joseph Beuys was influencing intensively on my studies of art in Germany. Beuys worked through multiplicity, with an array of materials (mostly trash) that had both political and personal meaning for him. For him, multiples meant the activist and actual capacity of art. (Picture2)

Picture 2. Joseph Beuys 1977: Honigpumpe am Arbeitsplatz. "Honey pump at workplace". (Source: Free International University Kassel, dokumenta 6. Photo. Schwerdtle, Edition Sander.)







His aim was to establish a living social sculpture, new form of art that has a potential to show the problems of the society. He claimed that all creativity included in art. The well known statement “every living being is an artist”, is a logical consequence of the social sculpture. What in this context is interesting, is Beuys’s notion that everyman is an artist in the sense that he can develop his own capacity. The future work he understood as if it would need to have a similar quality as art. (Huber, 1989)

With honey he meant something that had to do with thinking. A human capability does not show in forms of “giving out honey”, but mere in thinking, in giving out ideas. That is why the dead character of thinking needed to be made living again. Beuys understood honey as a living substance that could enliven thinking. Year 1977, his installation *Honigpumpe am Arbeitsplatz* (Honeypump at Workplace) was taken up at FIU (Free International University) in a hundred days long discussion seminar with questions dealing the future of humanity. (Gauss, 1995)

Beuys never talked about art in the connection of supporting well-being. Still, his “vehicle”, of working in multiples (rhetoric, action and theory) in order to change the society has left traces, especially in the current “arts – for – well - being-thinking”. The concept capacity building is often linked through terms psychology and learning. Also, in art educational discourse, capacities are often discussed with questions of transfer and learning processes Burton et al (2000). Skills and competencies included in current art educational discourse, capacity-building not so much.

The topic that I study presses me to transgress the borders of art educational discourse in order to understand how the others talk. It is interesting to note, that when entering in workplaces, the interest is targeted also on skills and competence development.

This thinking has spread widely in various countries and there are plenty of examples how art is used in organizations in promoting capacities. Arts Council of Fairfax County in Virginia, USA (2012) is dedicated

“to fostering dynamic and diverse local arts, ensuring that arts thrive by providing vision, leadership, capacity building services, advocacy, funding, education, and information”.

Capacity is not only about motivation and skills. In an individual level capacity-building enhances understanding of not only as own current competencies, but also as own hidden potentials. In community development the definition includes

“intentional actions and initiatives that support us to become the best we can be – as individuals and as communities”.

The word "capacity" speaks to our potential – as people, and as communities. So, when we talk about capacity, we are talking about that which we have the potential to become. Capacity building understood in this way nurtures an idea of valuing experiences, lifelong learning and possibilities for change.

### Capacity-building and art workshops

The continuous transition in the conditions of work has raised significant questions that deal with the know-how in the management of work. If the employee is not qualified to meet new tasks, motivation is deteriorating rapidly. One must believe in the future, so that he/she feels his/her work meaningful and thus is able to work.





At an individual level the concept of capacity building can promote a question: How to recognize own current capacities and own hidden potentials? At an organizational level one could ask: How are my own capacities connected to organizational capacities?

It seems that working life needs to have a craft-like character. Work needs to be fitted for a person, not the other way round. This is important when aiming to sustainable working life. However, prolonging work carriers and improving well-being at work is not easy in the constant economical change the new demands it causes.

### A closer look to the practice

The 3-years ESF-project (2010-2013) ArtGoesWork in southern part of Finland is carried out by the Novia University of Applied Sciences. Art and arts-based methods are implied to activate dialogue between employees and management by organizing art workshops guided by the artists. The aim is also to explore the role of art and the influence of artistic methods in initiating cooperation between artists and workplaces. Artistic practices in workplaces can open new possibilities to improve communication, cooperation and leadership. An artist in the workplace can stimulate out-of-box thinking and positive

changes by strengthening innovation processes and activating personnel's interest in skill development.

The project has three domains of art (including various forms of art: music, visual arts, dance, etc.):

1. Art at workplaces (e.g. artworks in the work environment)
2. Artist having a residence at workplace (e.g. art workshops in participatory or community art)
3. Artistic methods at workplace (e.g. art workshops where art is used as an instrument for a certain purpose)

### Data collection in the project

In a complex research context, where also this study finds place, it is not easy for an artist researcher to rely on own experience. I understand the workplaces that I visit as foreign countries. Their local cultures are not known for me.

Through autoethnographic writing some local knowing can be opened up (Valkeapää, 2011).

Autoethnographic writing has an aim to change the world and make it a better place (Denzin, 2000). The criteria to various kinds of documents as genres can be covered in aesthetic value (Richardson, 2000). According to Chang (2008) autoethnography offers methods to "gain a cultural understanding of self in relation to others, on which cross-cultural coalition can be built between self and others". The workshops and work of artists at workplaces have been documented during my observations in multiple ways in order to be able go back later to these places and time conditions as a data source (Chang, 2008). The documenting has been realized in following forms:

1. Visual notebooks in video (picture 3), audio and photograph.
2. Diary notebooks with fragmented written notes.
3. Documents in a form of participant's diary.
4. Documents in a form of artist's questionnaires.
5. Group and singular interviews of artists and personnel.

Picture 3. A modified still picture from a video taken in a workplace, where a dance workshop was implemented. (Source: author of this article)



The documenting has not been very easy for the reason that permissions need to be asked two times; first from the leader of the organization/particular workplace and secondly from the personnel. Both the workplace and personnel are handled anonymous in my documents. The artists have given allowance to be presented with their names. The aim has been to do the documentation in a way where it disturbs as little as possible.

### Some preliminary results

“The capacity to analyze and synthesize requires an ability to think in new ways. Managing new ideas involves a process of finding and analyzing information, identifying areas of omission, and designing options to follow up”. (Sullivan, 2005)

When writing this, the analyzing of workshops is still going on parallel with the other project processes. In analyzing the data for this article, the art workshops at workplaces have my main focus. In gathering my data, I see some deficiencies in the length of my written notes as well as in their coverage. Due to the hectic time schedules of the project, and the distant locations of some workshops, I could not visit them as much as I had planned. For this reason I see my documents as glimpses to these art workshops. In my analysis, I examine workplaces as laboratories for artists. These laboratories seem to have often a tight schedule because the interventions are to be fitted inside the daily working rhythm of the organizations.

According to Richardson writing may be understood as “a way of knowing, discovery and analysis” (Richardson, 1998)

Understanding the work in and through arts practices (art workshops) requires a multifaceted view. Aesthetics is viewing skill in a way that it entails understanding operational principles, ethics and



responsibility (Varto, 2008). The understanding the creative capacities of the employees can be understood as a skill. But often there is lack of this kind of skill in the organizations. They are interested to co-operate with artist but they lack the knowledge how to do it and what to expect. The artists as well are from their side interested to work with the organizations.

The work for both an artist and a member of a project group is very hectic. An artist needs to prepare the art workshops and that requires a lot of communication. The every-day-life in planning the workshops and communicating both with the organizations and the project group is often very demanding. It is a type of work that the artists are mostly not so keen to do although this work is often the core activity in their working processes. The artists are also not so keen to reflect their own work. Those artists with a background in art education have mostly had more interest to reflect their work.

The project members who are communicating at workplaces need to listen and consider to special wishes from (at least) four directions; the leadership vision, the strategy of a company, the employees themselves and the artist. The priority of focus can vary so that the artist comes first with his/her needs and the needs and wishes of the participating organization and employees come last.

The study shows that arts at working communities represent a “value added dimension” in sustaining the capacity building through deepening and prolonging the experiences of finding “something own”. Artistic practices at workplaces can support and activate communication in social situations. Arts and artistic processes in different communities can work as tools or catalysts. They can open up new questions in surprising ways in producing and opening meanings in their given context.

For me, the work as a researcher means a lot of travelling. There can be several workplaces to visit during the same day and the distances can be long. The daily rhythm of the workplaces does not allow long interviews or other ways of documentation. Also the simultaneous processes in the project work have been and are still very challenging.

### A thought for the future

For me it has been very touching to hear and to see the conditions of people at work. The experiences of meeting and communicating with these fellow people have changed my thoughts of the current working life. Work is harder than I have expected. My work is to activate discussion about these conditions at work and what arts can bring to working life.

There already exist many possibilities in implementing arts to work places. Reason for doing this is not only that I believe that art really can enhance well-being. I also consider this approach as a polemic question: what role arts should have at workplaces. I believe that art is mainly a catalyst in this context. It changes the attitudes and opens up questions of hidden human capacities. This change may not be happening in a same way, as Beuys was talking about half a decade ago, but rather in a more contemporary way.

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## Use of Arts Education Theory in Analyses of the Cultural Heritage Process

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### Abstract

This paper is written on the basis of a poster presentation at the InSEA European Regional Conference in Lemesos, Cyprus, in June 2012. It presents a preliminary theoretical approach to arts education's use in the cultural heritage process analyses. The art education approach is used to study dimensions of cultural heritage and the questions of democracy in the cultural heritage process. The paper is written on the basis of doctoral research on the protection, rescue, evacuation, and aftercare of immovable and movable objects as well as documentary heritage collections in accident and disaster situations. In conclusion, the paper presents the preliminary vision that an art education approach produces both valuable new viewpoints on the concept of cultural heritage and serves as a future development tool that may be used to develop cultural heritage education so that acts of vandalism and sabotage that may damage or destroy cultural heritage could be prevented.

### Key words

cultural heritage, arts education, cultural heritage education, museology, disaster prevention

### Introduction

The need to explore cultural heritage dimensions from the perspective of art education theory arose from the author's doctoral research topic. The central topic discussed in this study is the protection, rescue, evacuation, and aftercare of immovable and movable objects as well as documentary heritage collections in accident and disaster situations. The study has a strong arts educational and cultural heritage educational orientation that is utilized to develop means that could be used to prevent accidents and disasters that may damage or destroy cultural heritage. Further information about the doctoral research can be found at <http://www.preservingculturalheritage.wordpress.com>.

Culture is formed through the interaction of humans and places (Turnpenny 2004) Culture and cultural heritage are not static constructions. They are constantly changing, mutating, and rebuilding. Culture is present everywhere in people's and societies' lives. Cultural processes have interactional features, and they are, in general, open and actively creative (Förnäs 1998). Culture, society's lifestyle, can be seen in the community's life. Cultures have been formed through human society's differentiation process. Every person and generation re-evaluates and reinterprets society's culture (Blacking 1990).

Collective memory and the past have a relatively short history in human societies. Many actions that promoted the preservation of history started at the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century when expanding parts of society's habitats and traditional landscapes were environmentally modified and endangered. At the same time arose the need to keep some parts of the environments unchanged (Betts 2004). Cultural heritage has its basis in the romantic era (Kallioniemi and Lyhykäinen 2008).

The concept of cultural heritage is a result of definition- and evaluation-based process (Kostet 2007). International cultural heritage conventions and legislation play a significant role in establishing the framework through which society's cultural elements and features are evaluated at the national level. This criterion is used by organized societies' cultural heritage professionals and institutions in





determining the valued elements in the nation's culture and past (Turnpenny 2004). Items that have become cultural heritage have two functions. The first objective relates to the quest of imposing order on the real world. The second sets the item into the abstract and autonomous world. Cultural heritage items reflect the world as a mirror of the past (Baudrillard 1997). The preservation of cultural heritage is seen as a moral responsibility in societies because it maintains and strengthens society's identity and self-understanding of its past (Cloonan 2007a). The cultural values that influence the cultural heritage process in societies are actively transmitted from generation to generation in the process of cultural transmission.

According to John Dewey (1929), special meanings in society obtain places and items that relate to exceptional victory or tragedy. Behind this can be seen two cultural categories: secret and good luck-generating and worldly and misfortune-producing cultural elements. Secret places and items have traditionally been seen as premonitory, and they have specific expenditures. Worldly items and places have considered to be negligible in content. Humans' innermost objective is to gain certainty. If a person has information about an item's value-content, it is considered to be real. Valuable places and items gain meaning only when the viewer is familiar with the context information (Dewey 1929).

Institutions such as museums, libraries, and archives were established to preserve societies' "collective memory" and cultural heritage (Cloonan 2007b). According to Tomislav ola (2005), cultural heritage institutions are important instruments in the cultural heritage process because the process is strongly influenced by the nature of the cultural heritage institutions and their proceedings, missions, and position in society (ola 2005). The definition process results in the fact that cultural heritage plays a significant role in the construction of national identities and commonly appreciated cultural habits in nation-states (Turnpenny 2004). Cultural heritage is used in societies to construct and reconstruct identities and multiple cultural and social values (Smith 2006).

Cultural heritage reflects society's defined collective memory. But does this "accepted" definition represent a democratic and culturally diverse vision of the society's past? Does it also cover stories of minorities and those who did not win their war or those to whom history did injustice? John Blacking (1990) underlines the meaning of recognizing every culture's value because cultural differences may lead to acts of racism.

Karen J. Waren (1999) presents three alternatives to the question of society's collective memory and ownership of the past. First, the past may be owned by everyone because it is the common heritage of all. It is a question of humanity's past. Second, some specific groups own the past since they speak for or represent the important values that are at stake in the cultural property discussion. Third, the past cannot be owned by anyone because the past just exists and cannot be owned by anybody (Waren 1999). Memory can be described as a whole range of processes for retrieving and storing information to a facility to retain knowledge. Memory also has short- and long-term durations. Short-term memories are dependent to some degree on priorities and experiences. It is transient and interrupted. Long-term memory is carried throughout a lifetime. Memories are both context- and audience-dependent (Kavanagh 2000).

Oral testimony from the past may aim at social unity through the ordering and legitimization of the holding of power. The transfer of oral testimony is dependent not only on the individuals but also on how individuals recall past events and learn society's traditions. All societies have common structures for history-making and specialists who produce the collective memory from the separate elements of oral testimony. Nineteenth-century historians became more concerned with documentary than with verbal evidence. Eyewitness accounts and verbal testimonies were brought increasingly into the public discussion. The mechanisms through which people could be "heard" were established through folklore and folk life studies. Issues of nationalism were also present in the documentation work in many counties (Kavanagh 2000).



## Collections as cultural heritage's representatives

Collecting is one form of protecting heritage. Collecting can represent a symbol of the continuation of life (Vujic 2004). The history of collecting has a tendency of privilege. The earliest collections represented people who formed large collections, were wealthy and from the social and political elite, and gave their collections to institutions. Early forms of collecting were driven by research (Knell 2004b). Museums have produced history in the act of collecting. At first, collecting concentrated on privileged people's history, and ordinary people were mostly undocumented. Later, understanding of individual, social, and cultural contexts became wider, which has caused that the categories of the genuine historical record to change. In collecting, there are two principal trends. The first is to collect for its own sake. This approach of collecting involves values about ownership and order. The second collecting trend sees items as parts of a documentary process where the genuine past can be revealed. In this trend, objects are evidence from the past rather than objects in the context of life (Kavanagh 2004).

Collected objects no longer have that central meaning in society's knowledge creation as they did in previous centuries. When an object was evidence, it represented absolute truth. Currently, cultural heritage items play a role in communication as an interpretation of reality to the viewer. Professionalization and social change in society has caused that museums' started to develop their collections (Knell 2004a). Since the 2000s, the vision has been that collection policies should be replaced by strategies that adopt a more long-term, holistic, inclusive, integrated, cooperative, sustainable, rational, and thoughtful view to the purpose of institutional collecting (Knell 2004a).

Simon Knell states that collections protect the concept of cultural heritage rather than reveal the true nature of cultural heritage or the processes that created collections as collective memory. The problem of collecting led to decision-making problems: what should be collected? This raises the difficult question of eternity. When something is collected, will it exist forever? Redefinition of the concept of collecting led into a vision of collection where items can flow in and flow out. Memory institutions preserve a small amount of material culture. This means that almost everything from the past and the contemporary time is lost (Knell 2004a). It is not possible to decide what is important or significant in contemporary society because the vision of the present time is often scattered. If cultural heritage institutions decide beforehand what should be remembered from the present time, the risk of failure is great (Steen 2004).

The problem of collecting relates to recognizing what is important. Collecting is always done in the contemporary time. If individuals construct their own sets of values, there is no such thing as a correct decision about what should be collected. According to Simon Knell, collections should be contextualized, and they should lead to understanding rather than reflect ready-made thinking (Knell 2004a). A collection's meaning can be revealed through its outer importance and inner significance (Pearce 2004). Collecting is a major social phenomenon because objects have great emotional and locomotive power. Collections have the ability to move the viewer between the visible and the invisible realities – the present and the past (Duclos 2004).

There is a problem if museums and their collections do not have any significance in the community's life. Sooner or later, this means that the collection's items have lost their meaning and the items' linkage to their original context of use may be lost forever (McLeod 2004). Museums' collecting relates to the meaning that the institution collects for itself. Although the items in the collections have not changed, the change in thinking has caused modification in collections importance. It is not possible to ensure that items now judged to be important will have the same importance in the future as the correct or most representative cultural heritage items from the past (Dunn 2004).

There are two approaches in collecting: object-focused and people-focused. The first approach takes cultural heritage as the centre of the production, while the second perspective concentrates on the user



(Brusell 2004). The challenge of collecting relates to difficult subject matter. When museums try to represent any culture or community, it raises several problems. Groups of people and communities do not exist as a homogenous mass. The nature of museums is to create stereotypical representations of their subjects (Clayton 2004). Museum collections often represent the spirit of the few rather than a set of collective values. Sometimes museums have been living witnesses to dying cultures and societies as the infrastructure collapses and degenerates (ola 2004).

### Values and evaluations behind cultural heritage

Every individual and generation re-evaluates and reinterprets society's culture (Blacking 1990). According to Kirsti Melanko and Pekka Elo (2000), cultural heritage that has traditionally been appreciated has had the values of beauty and goodness and features that relate to tendencies toward features that are beautiful and good. This cultural heritage appreciation has similarities with theories of art and the aesthetics of beauty (Melanko and Elo 2000). The context information of cultural heritage plays a significant part in the construction of cultural meanings (Lehtonen 2000). The ability to respect cultural heritage often requires the ability to see and identify the hidden values and meanings of cultural heritage. When cultural heritage is evaluated through an aesthetic perspective, it means that the object is defined, interpreted, and valued (Melanko and Elo 2000). Therefore, questions of aesthetic experience and values are also relevant in the cultural heritage context.

Malcolm Ross (1982) introduces the idea that developed aesthetic experiences are cognitive in nature. Mature aesthetic discernment is always learned through human interactions (Ross 1982). The cognitive nature of feelings is the key factor behind aesthetic understanding (Reid 1982). Also, Pauline von Bonsdorff (1998) underlines the importance of context information when the aesthetic experience is formed. Values bind to the cultural contexts, and they change with time and place (Lehtonen 2000). John Dewey saw values mainly as set of appreciations and ways of operating. Appreciation is always based on previous experience and education (Väkevä 2004). Values, philosophy, and meanings receive their concrete expression in institutions, social relations, and belief systems and in the material world's and object's methods (Lehtonen 2000). Values and appreciation influence how cultural heritage is interpreted (Melanko and Elo 2000). Individual people grow to be members of society by learning the cultural meanings of the society. John Dewey (1916) indicates that meanings and social interaction influence each other strongly. An individual's inner personality is built on meanings that are organized by communities (Lehtonen 2000). Although the surrounding social groups and their values play an important role in the development and organization of an individual person belief system, variations in values are caused by personality differences (Ilmonen 1992). Everything that relates to society's actions is influenced by the law of association, connection, and combination. Because every action is bound to the surrounding society's actions, all actions are related to other actors (Dewey 2006). Education means the continuity of society's life (Dewey 1916).

Pauline von Bonsdorff (2002) accents the meaning of tradition behind aesthetic observation. Understanding of aesthetic processes seems to increase in the observed aesthetic features in the surrounding world. For von Bonsdorff, aesthetic understanding does not represent unchanging truth but a vision that modifies actuality through involvement and experience. Aesthetic involvement means experience that causes bodily sensation (von Bonsdorff 2002). Aesthetic experience represents a construction where the environment's aesthetic interpretation is formed in the observer's knowledge, skills, and values. The aesthetic experience actuates both subject-object linkages and the subject's cognitive inference, which is activated when an object is observed (von Bonsdorff 1998).

According to Pauline von Bonsdorff (1996), an object activates observer's aesthetic judgment through previous memories and thinking. Therefore, aesthetic experience can be seen as interaction between the subject and object (von Bonsdorff 1996). The object activates the subject's experiential



competence in the transmission of aesthetic experience. Experimental competence seems to build on the subject's personal history and society's values. Through experimental competence, the subject becomes implicated as part of both the perceived phenomenon and the aesthetic experience. Contemporary aesthetics has widely accepted the viewpoint that the subject of an aesthetic experience may also be other than artwork. Environment and culture exist as independent concepts that relate to each other in the interaction relation process (von Bonsdorff 1998).

The central concept in John Dewey's (1934) art theory is aesthetic experience, which was figurative in nature and represented the manifestation of humanity. The most important feature in artwork was not the artist's self expression but the experience that the work of art generated in the viewer. Art itself results in the experience. John Dewey rejects the idea that art was separate from the other sciences, and he tried to bring art closer to the other sciences. Dewey also tried to bring the concepts of art and everyday life closer (Dewey 1934).

Aesthetic understanding is cognitive in nature. This means that mature aesthetic values are learned culturally (Ross 1982). John Dewey saw art and art education as key factors in the democracy process of human life. Art education's most important objective was to guarantee all people's opportunity to make art and experience the aesthetic. (Väkevä 2004). According to John Dewey (1934), questions of ownership have caused art to be separated from people's everyday lives, and artworks' proper repository has traditionally been museums.

Aesthetic evaluations relate to existing values. Four factors are behind the aesthetic experience. First, there is an egocentric close relationship between the subject and the object. Second, the aesthetic experience has a connection to certain norms that cause pleasure in the subject. Third, aesthetic experience is learned in a wide space where the artist's intentions cause reactions that may also represent reversed norms. Fourth, the mature aesthetic experience is evaluated through features based on the object's visible and intentional features. Aesthetic understanding is constructed in the cognitive-effective experience where a mature understanding of the object is based on the facts and context information (Ross 1982). This may be the case also in the mature understanding of cultural heritage.

### Arts education approach to cultural phenomenon

Herbert Read (1943) states that, in modern society, education concentrates on both individualization and social integration, which means interaction between social communities and individuals. Education avoids the development of egoistic and antisocial features in individuals. Herbert Read (1943) states that education in democratic societies should foster individuals' self-motivated growth. Education's most important objective relates to the progression of aesthetic sensibility. Also, John Blacking (1990) underlines the meaning of school education in individuals' socialization process. In education, the question is not how children from different ethnic backgrounds are integrated into the majority culture but how all children are educated into multicultural understanding (Blacking 1990). Society's multicultural understanding should be another objective of cultural heritage education.

Peter Abbs (2003) introduces the idea that art education's goal is to make people visible and free in their own existence. The process of art education is a result of an individual's internal learning because aesthetic experience cannot be conveyed to another individual. Abbs sees teachers' role as that of mediating students' learning process into existence. Meaning is not giving the learner set stories but challenging the student to understand different dimensions of reality that have not been previously explored or have been ignored in the past. This model of learning is known as postmodern education (Abbs 2003). Also, Robert Stake (1975) states that there are many ways to grow into aesthetic understanding and that the learning process is dependent only on the learner. The most significant parameter in the learning process is the student's own objectives and visions (Stake 1975).



### From cohesive cultural heritage to diversity of memories

Cultural changes have been fast and radical globally since the 1980s. Therefore, cultural models and categories that have been inherited from the past do not fit the younger generation's concepts of reality (Hawkes 1984). For Johan Fornäs, modernity represents ongoing dynamism that relates to the growing need to histories the concepts of societies, cultures, and subjects. It seems that this history or past can be adjusted or constructed by humans (Fornäs 1998). Could this be a relevant question regarding the definition of cultural heritage definition? Modernity has expanded around the world, and it has an influence globally. Globalization has not meant that cultures have become globally congruent. Differences between geographical areas, cultures, and subcultures are as large as in previous decades (Fornäs 1998).

Cultural diversity has been recognized in education for a very long time. Multicultural education arose in 1981 as a central topic in Finnish pedagogical discussion (Craft 1984). Cultural diversity requires an enlightened environment in society so that individuals may act and grow in free interaction with each other (Blacking 1990). Democracy is not an established state in societies; it is an ongoing process of action for a multi-voiced and pluralistic society.

A democratic community, society, and lifestyle can be identified from its ability to raise continuously into discussion problems that concern themselves. A democratic society also permits different kinds of people to participate in the society's life and become a part of the larger democratic society. Dialogue conveys to the individuals that they are part of the society and that they have a part in this dialogue (Kanelius 2006).

John Dewey states that a conscious state of mind enables the revelation of predetermined values and norms that guide our actions. When values and evaluations are not based on set opinions, it is possible to reveal new approaches to contemporary society (Dewey 1929). The development of cultural habits enables individuals to remove reality-distorting traditions from the society's culture. Therefore, modern and progressive research questions the collective past and history (Abbs 1990). This idea also reveals interesting and critical questions about the concept of cultural heritage as a nation-state's collective memory.

### Conclusion

Art education theory brings to analyses of the cultural heritage process a revealing and candid approach. It also enables the analysis of dimensions of cultural heritage through new revealing perspectives that are difficult to reach using museology's theoretical approach. Art education approaches cultural phenomena in an equal, democratic, and questioning manner. The cultural heritage process evaluates, selects, and raises cultural features as society's collective memory. There are significant human rights issues related to the cultural heritage process that should be opened more thoroughly. Cultural heritage may easily become a vision of the institution that has nominated them into existence. Art education theory does not classify and categorize cultural phenomena by evaluating their significance or value. Individual people's and communities' cultural rights to experience aesthetics and beauty are the central interests of art education.

Art education theory sets interesting and critical questions for the cultural heritage process. What can be said about the cultural diversity in the cultural heritage context? What purpose does the collective past serve for a society? Collective memory unites society's majorities and excludes its minorities. Could there be a more pluralistic collective memory, one that would not exclude any visions of reality? Is there or should there be dialogue in the cultural heritage process? How would this dialogue influence our vision of cultural heritage?





In the cultural transition process, the collective memory and past are created in the concept of cultural heritage. Collections and the question of collecting play a significant part in this process. How does the cultural heritage process support the democracy process of nation-states or equal human rights in nations? The cultural heritage process may become dangerous if it does not operate in a democratic and equal way toward all people and if cultural heritage represents only the majority's vision of the nation's collective past. The danger in the cultural heritage process relates to its interaction with the concepts of modernity, cultural diversity, and democracy.

Many questions regarding the cultural heritage process are still open and lack clear answers. One of these questions is what causes people to deliberately vandalize or sabotage cultural heritage objects and sites. This is one of the questions to which that my doctoral research tries to reveal answers.

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## **PART 4**

### **Arts and Audiences**





## Interaction of art and music: the contribution of music in constructing the meaning of paintings

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### Abstract

There is a growing need for art education to embrace contemporary changes and respond to current challenges for promoting multiliteracy and multimodality. The interaction of multiple arts for promoting multiliteracy and multimodality has been studied in different areas. This paper focuses on the interaction of art and music in constructing the meaning of artworks. Bearing in mind that focus, concentration, imagination, cognitive and emotionally responses are considered to be significant in constructing the meaning of an artwork, it is investigated whether listening to particular pieces of music while viewing artworks can enhance the viewers' ability to understand them and to move to a more elaborate stage of responding to artworks.

The target group of this study is pre-service primary school teachers. The reason for focusing to this target group is to explore ways of enhancing their abilities to understand artworks as in many countries primary school teachers and not art specialists are frequently required to teach art in primary schools. The participants were divided into two groups: the experimental and the control group. Content analysis of the participants' written responses indicated that both groups were naïve viewers with limited experience on art viewing. However, when artviewing was accompanied by musical stimulus (experimental group), viewers/listeners were able to focus and concentrate more on the viewing activity. Further, the experimental group was able to move to a more elaborate stage of responding to the artworks, especially when these were abstracts artworks.

### Key words

Responding to artworks, interaction of art and music, multi-modality, interdisciplinary approach

### Introduction

Contemporary society and contemporary forms of communication are driven by technological, social, economic and political changes and thus function in a multimodal environment. There is a growing need for education to embrace current changes and respond to new challenges for promoting multiliteracy and multimodality. This is also true for the arts education as artforms are usually viewed as forms of communication (Duncum, 2004, Pascoe, 2007).

An important aspect of visual arts education is concerned with artviewing activities; understanding functions of art and the aesthetic qualities of artworks. In a world that is increasingly more visual, there is a greater need to educate children to understand and respond to the visual images around them. Thus many art curricula in different countries stress the central role of artviewing activities along with artmaking activities. At the same time, a 'gap' is reported between the visual arts curriculum (policy) and teaching practice, which identifies that art lessons primarily focus on 'doing'



art rather on understanding art (Epstein & Trimis, 2002). This is because the implementation of the curriculum lies on teachers and it is largely framed by their knowledge and attitudes towards the role of visual arts in the school curriculum (Bain et al, 2010; Oreck, 2004). In countries where generalist teachers teach art (and not art specialists), several concerns have been raised in relation to teachers' lack of confidence on their own art knowledge (Garvis & Pendergast, 2011), including their abilities to understand art and teach art with artworks. Having in mind these concerns, this paper concentrates on teacher training courses and in particular on enhancing pre-service teachers' understanding of artworks using an interdisciplinary approach. An interdisciplinary approach is chosen because in the country that the study took place (Cyprus) the new educational reform of the school curriculum that is currently implemented focuses greatly on interdisciplinarity.

In particular, the main aim of the study presented is to investigate whether artviewing accompanied by music can encourage the development of art appreciation skills and thus promote art understanding. That is, the study aims primarily to test another way to develop the participants' art appreciation skills (which relates to a multimodal mode of understanding messages) and secondarily to provide guidelines for the development of educational material for children. Two hypothesis are tested: a) the music will enable the viewers/listeners to anchor the meaning of the painting, and b) the music enables the viewers/listeners to focus on the painting for a longer period of time and thus to offer more thoughtful interpretations.

Next, two issues related to the theoretical framework of the study are presented: aesthetic responses to artworks and musical responses. Then a detail description of the methodology of the study is given. Next the paper moves to the presentation of the findings and it is concluded with a discussion of the main findings.

### Artworks and aesthetic responses

Aesthetic responses are aesthetic judgments about art works arrived at by people on the basis of a number of factors. Important factors that influence aesthetic responses relate to viewers' experiences with artworks, including specialized knowledge about art. Pre-service teachers are not art majors and it is acknowledged that they frequently come to primary teacher training courses with little to no art background and might resist to contemporary art ideas (Buffington & Kushins, 2007; Stewart & Walker, 2005). Thus, they are frequently considered as inexperienced art viewers.

Parson (1987) has described five levels of aesthetic development from naïve viewers (with limited to no experiences with artworks) to sophisticated viewers (with extensive knowledge in art through their studies) named as: a) favourism, b) beauty and realism, c) expression, d) style and form and c) autonomy. Parson's theory has been frequently characterised as a developmental theory and to overcome its limitations researchers have adapted it (Erickson & Clover, 2003; Erickson & Villeneuve 2009; Ishizaki & Wang, 2010) to reflect viewpoints/repertoires of art understanding that are not evolving from one stage to the other but are additional viewpoints/repertoires to the earlier ones, which also includes variations of each one. For example, Ishizaki and Wang (2010) base their work on Parson's (1987) descriptions of the topics that catch viewers' attention when responding to an artwork and on the interplay of these topics. In particular, Parson (1987) describes four topics: a) subject matter, b) expression, c) medium-form-style and d) judgment, that, as Ishizaki and Wang (2010) point out, reflect two aspects of viewers' responses: features of artworks (subject matter, expression, and medium-form-style) and response behaviours of the viewers (judgment). These two aspects interact with each other and exhibit a number of different appreciation skills. Ishizaki and Wang (2010) propose to record the interaction of these two aspects when analysing viewers' responses to artworks in an effort to better understand viewers' acquisition of art appreciation skills. Following their recommendations, in this study these two aspects are adopted and thus two primary



factors are used to identify viewers’ aesthetic responses to artworks (see table 1 for the depiction of their interaction):

- a) The features of artworks that viewers may pay attention to and in particular subject matter, expressiveness, elements of art, and style, and
- b) The response behaviours of the viewers, which include observation, association / impression, analysis, interpretation, and judgment. Here more behaviour responses are identified (not just judgment responses), which are based on the works of Feldman (1994) and Housen (1983). Further, the interpretation response is divided into two sub-categories due to the particularities of this study: a) interpretation of feelings/emotions, and b) interpretation of ideas/meanings. As it is elaborated in the following section, music stimulus may frequently be associated with the arousal of feelings/emotions. Thus it was deemed important to separately record any interpretations that took place related to feelings.

Table 1: Taxonomies of aesthetic responses to artworks

Elements of artwork		Response behaviours				
		Observation Impression	Association/ Analysis	Interpretation a) Ideas	Interpretation b) Feelings	Judgment
Subject matter		SOSA/ISA		SIaSIbSJ		
Expressiveness		EOEA/IEA		EIaEIbEJ		
eLements of art		LOLA/ILA		LIaLIbLJ		
sTyle		TOTA/ITA		TIaTIbTJ		

### Music and musical / aesthetic responses

This special kind of experience called the ‘aesthetic’ involves all the arts, including music, which may be pushed together into one category / aesthetic community (Swanwick, 1999). One of the characteristics of this aesthetic community, which is distinguished from other areas of human activities, is that the arts require ‘not a critical response but an aesthetic response – a response through feeling, the senses and imagination’ (Abbs, 1994, p. 92).

Literature shows that music feeds and steers imagination, as music is an auditory image (Russel, 1998) and can be considered as mood-inducing (Weinberger, 1996; Kreutz et al, 2008; Sloboda, 2005). It is significant to notice that individuals may conceive same music differently. Identical musical stimuli may induce widely diverging emotions, such as happiness, sadness, peace, anger or even neutral (Kreutz et al, 2008). Therefore, individuals may give different interpretations to music and respond to it in a unique way, just like when responding to artworks.

The different reactions of individuals are due to the differences among individual preferences and expectations, and also to the extent of each person’s familiarity with a particular style of music as well as with individual pieces of music (Kreutz et al, 2008). In other words, responses to music depend on individuals’ personal taste of music. During the last few decades it has become customary to regard music education as a form of aesthetic education, and it has been argued (Elliot, 1995) that in order to listen to music aesthetically one needs to focus on music’s elements and structural properties. This may suggest that one should be specially trained in order to be able to respond to music aesthetically. However, as Regelski (2005) argues, music is not only for the experts but it is also for the ‘down-to-earth people’ and everyday life. For the purposes of this paper, and as this research involves students who are not ‘experts’ in music, aesthetic responses to music are considered to be responses through feelings and emotions.



On the other hand, it has been shown that the emotions evoked in the listeners when they listened to simple happy or sad songs were the same as those expressed by the music itself. Therefore, the emotional reactions to the music are somehow evoked by the emotional expression of the music (Lundqvist et al, 2009). This may suggest that music of a particular mood arouses similar feelings in listeners, and thus particular pieces of music may help the viewers / listeners to anchor and embody the meaning and feelings of a painting more easily, if the intentions of the composer match the intentions of the painter.

## Methodology

### Sample

The sample of the study comprised 59 first year undergraduate students studying to become primary school teachers in Cyprus, 18 men and 41 women, aged 18 to 21 years old. 30 student-teachers were in the experimental group and 29 in the control group.

### Instrument

Two methods were used to gather the data of the study: written unprompted art responses and semi-structure group interviews. This presentation focuses only on the participants' written art response. Information about the interview schedule, procedure and data are provided in a forthcoming paper. The participants were asked to look carefully at the reproductions of four artworks and write down their personal responses to these. There were no specific instructions about each artwork, but general instructions for all artworks: the participants were asked to try to describe the artworks and interpret them, or to express their views and judgments or simply write whatever they wanted, whatever came to their mind when looking at them. The experimental group responded to the artworks while listening to four different music pieces; one for each artwork, while the control group were shown the artworks without any music.

### Procedure

The first step of the study was to select the artworks. Four modern paintings were chosen based on their theme and style as it was considered that the participants of the study were naïve viewers with little or no experience to contemporary art ideas. The two paintings had a narrative representation with realistic elements and the other two paintings were more abstract. Then four music pieces were chosen, one for each painting. The music selection was done according to the mood and meaning that each visual artist intended to express through his painting, and the general mood and feelings intended to be expressed by the composer as well as the musical elements of each music piece (orchestration, melodic line, intensity, form). Particularly, the paintings and the music pieces that were chosen were:

- 'The two Fridas' by Frida Kahlo, accompanied by 'The pain theme' from the soundtrack of Naruto Shippuden (animation series).
- 'The kiss' by Gustav Klimt, accompanied by the 'Song without words, Op. 109' by Mendelssohn.
- 'Cuadro II' by Piet Mondrian, accompanied by the 'Big noise from Winnetka' by Bob Haggart.
- 'Yellow, Red, Blue' by Kandinsky, accompanied by 'La campanella' by Liszt.



### Data analysis

Data analysis included content analysis of the participants’ written responses to the artworks, that is, classification of the written responses to the framework of the range of aesthetic responses to artworks, (table 1).

### Findings

In this section, the participants’ responses to each painting are presented separately using the taxonomies presented in table 1. The participants’ responses to the two artworks that have realistic representations proceed (tables 2 and 3), followed by their responses to the two abstract artworks (tables 4 and 5). Each table contains both groups’ responses to the artworks (c= control group, e= experimental). Instead of frequencies, percentages (within groups) are given to allow for comparisons to be made. Moreover, the last row of each table contains the total percentage of the participants who made a comment based on the different behavioural responses that were exhibited.

In general, as shown in tables 2 and 3, the participants’ comments for the two artworks that have realistic representations focused on the subject matter of the artwork. All the participants commented on the subject matter either by simply observing what was there or by making other comments, such as interpretive or judgemental (see SO, SA/I, SA, SIa, SIb, and SJ taxonomies). Many participants also commented on the expressiveness of the artwork (see EIa, EIb, and EJ taxonomies) and/or on the elements of art of the artwork (see LO, LA, LIa, LIb and LJ taxonomies). Further, 90% of the participants of the experimental group made interpretive comments for both paintings, which related to feelings and emotions (see SIb, EIb, LIb).

None of the participants commented on the style of the Kahlo’s painting, an expected result given the limited experience of the participants with artviewing activities; style is associated with knowledge and experience. Important differences for the control and experimental group are noted to the frequencies of their comments. The experimental group (table 2) was able to make substantially more observational comments on the subject matter of the artwork (SO taxonomy; 40%) than the control group (17.2%). Only one participant of the experimental group made a judgmental comment, while ¼ of the participants of the control group made judgmental comments, which were mostly non-reflective (that is, the participant who made evaluative comments did not offer any other comments; they did not try to rationalize their judgment).

Table 2: Aesthetic responses to Frida Kahlo’s painting ‘The two Fridas’

	Observation		Association/ Impression		Analysis		Interpretation: Interpretation			Judgement		
	c1 %3	e2 %	Ce %%	C %	e %	cece %%%	a) Ideas	b) Feelings	c %	e %		
Subject Matter	17.2	40.0	31.0	30.0	27.6	10.0	27.6	20.0	24.1	70.0	6.9	—
Expressiveness	—	—	—	—	—	—	6.9	3.3	13.8	23.3	10.3	—
eLements of art	3.4	—	—	—	6.9	3.3	—	—	3.1	36.6	6.9	3.3
sTyle	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Total % of participants	20.6	40.0	31.0	30.0	34.5	13.3	31.0	26.6	34.5	90.0	24.1	3.3

1= c is for the control group, 2= e is for the experimental group, 3= all percentages are within groups



Furthermore, for the Klimnt’s painting (table 3), only 10.0% of the participants made comments about the style, which was an expected finding. Also, substantial differences were noted between the control and the experimental group regarding their interpretive comments related to feelings (c= 48.2% and e= 90.0%). Moreover, participants from the experimental group who offered judgemental comments also offered comments that were categorised in other taxonomies (i.e. SO, SA/I, Sib, Elb, LA, Lib) and this was regarded as evidence for reflection; they tried to validate their evaluation.

Table 3: Aesthetic responses to Gustav Klimnt’s painting ‘The kiss’

	Observation		Association/ Impression		Analysis		Interpretation: Interpretation a) Ideas b) Feelings				Judgement		
	c1 %3	e2 %	ce %%	3	c %	e %	cece %%%	3	3	3	3	c %	e %
Subject Matter	44.8	43.3	27.6	23.3	17.2	—	13.8	3.3	7.9	60.0	—	—	3.3
Expressiveness	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	10.3	3.3
Elements of art	17.2	3.3	—	—	13.8	16.6	—	—	—	—	—	10.3	6.6
Style	—	10.0	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Total % of participants	48.2	53.3	27.6	23.3	24.0	16.6	13.8	6.6	48.2	90.0	20.6	13.2	—

1= c is for the control group, 2= e is for the experimental group, 3= all percentages are within groups

As far as the two abstract paintings are concerned (tables 4 and 5) there were more observational comments than for the two narrative paintings (tables 2 and 3). In general, for the paintings of Mondrian and Kandinsky (tables 4 and 5, respectively) the participants’ comments focused on the elements of art. All the participants commented on the elements of art either by simply observing what was there or by making other comments related to all other taxonomies (LA/I, LA, Lla, Lib, LJ). Also it is noted that the control group offered more comments related to association / impression category than the experimental group, while the experimental group offered many more interpretive comments than the control group, especially in terms of feelings and emotions. Moreover, the control group made more judgemental comments than the experimental group. However, most of control group’s judgmental comments were non-reflective, while judgemental comments made by the experimental group were reflective. Additionally, important differences are noted between the comments of the two paintings about the subject matter; many participants commented on subject matter (see SA/I, SLa, Sib, and SJ taxonomies) for the Mondrian’s painting (table 3), while none of them offered any comments related to subject matter for the painting of Kandinsky (table 4). This difference is mainly due to the way in which the comments were categorised. Since Mondrian’s painting was much simpler than the Kandinsky’s one, many participants made comments regarding the painting as a whole. For example, ‘This painting looks like bathroom tiles’ (SA/I taxonomy), ‘It looks like a dance floor where people used to dance in the old days’ (SA/I, SLa taxonomies). In such cases, the comments have been regarded as comments related to subject matter. On the other hand, the Kandinsky’s painting had more details. Hence, the participants described its content in terms of colours, lines and shapes. Even when they tried to give meaning to the painting they always referred to those elements. For example, ‘In this painting there is a variation of shapes and colours, which give me the impression of objects found in our environment’ (LA/I taxonomy). Therefore, such comments were put under the ‘Elements of art’ category.



Table 4: Aesthetic responses to Piet Mondrian's painting 'Cuadro II'

	Observation		Association/ Impression		Analysis		Interpretation: Interpretation			Judgement		
	c1 % <sub>3</sub>	e2 %	ce %%	c %	e %	cece %%%	a) Ideas	b) Feelings	c %	e %		
Subject Matter	—	—	31.020.0	—	—	13.8 10.06.920.0	—	—	3.4	6.6		
Expressiveness	—	—	—	—	—	—3.310.316.6	—	—	17.2	—		
Elements of art	55.2	60.0	6.93.3	17.2	20.0	3.43.313.836.6	—	—	10.3	10.0		
Style	6.9	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—		
Total % of participants	65.5	60.0	37.9	23.3	17.2	20.0	17.2	13.3	31.0	73.2	30.9	16.6

1= c is for the control group, 2= e is for the experimental group, 3= all percentages are within groups



Table 5: Aesthetic responses to Wassily Kandinsky’s painting ‘Yellow, Red, Blue’

	Observation		Association/ Impression		Analysis		Interpretation: Interpretation a) Ideas b) Feelings			Judgement	
	c1 %3	e2 %	ce %%	c %	e %	cece %%%				c %	e %
Subject Matter	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Expressiveness	—	—	—	—	—	—	10.3	16.6	—	26.6	6.9
Elements of art	51.7	40.0	31.0	26.6	24.1	6.6	17.2	16.6	10.3	36.6	34.5
Style	27.6	33.3	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Total % of participants	65.5	40.0	31.0	26.6	24.1	6.6	27.5	33.3	10.3	63.2	41.4
											13.3

1= c is for the control group, 2= e is for the experimental group, 3= all percentages are within groups

Finally, it should be noticed that most of the participants of the experimental group referred to the music listened while responding to each of the four paintings, in their written responses (i.e. ‘high intensity in music’, ‘music is happy and lively’, ‘the sound is unusual and strange’), while all of them have linked music with feelings and meanings of the paintings. For example:

- ‘Music has a happy rhythm and it looks like a game of little children’ (Cuadro II).
- ‘This painting demonstrates a dance. It is a dance floor where people dance with quite old music’ (Cuadro II).
- ‘This music is calm and ‘covers’ a sweet moment between a couple. But music becomes more tensed. Probably something happened’ (The kiss).
- ‘The sounds of the piano and the violin demonstrate a woman’s feelings when she in the arms of her beloved’ (The kiss).
- ‘Music is so dramatic. It makes me think of death. This painting provokes me so much pain and sadness’ (The two Fridas).
- ‘The music recalls something dark and when combined with various elements of the painting it makes you scared’ (The two Fridas).
- ‘Music makes the painting to look even happier and more mysterious at the same time’ (Yellow, Red, Blue).
- ‘Music is confusing and strange just like the painting itself’ (Yellow, Red, Blue).

### Discussion

The participants of this study had limited encounters with artworks and were inexperienced viewers. As expected they were not able to make elaborate comments on the style and form of the artworks, and to recognize that artworks were socially constructed and contextual, nor they were able to make informed judgments about the concepts and values with which a tradition constructs the meaning of artworks (Parson, 1987). However, they were able to exhibit variety art appreciations skills that were captured by the taxonomies adopted in this study. Further, the process adopted for classifying their written responses highlighted the ability of the experimental group to derive meaning out of the artworks and to offer interpretive comments, something that was the most important aspect of the artviewing process. As Barrett (2000, p.7) wrote ‘a work of art is an expressive object made by a person, and therefore unlike a tree, a rock, or other mere things, it is always about something; thus, unlike trees or rocks, artworks call for interpretations’.



The experimental group's interpretations focused largely on the feelings/emotions evoked by the artworks, something that was attributed to the music pieces that accompanied the artworks. Thus, there were pieces of evidence that confirmed the hypothesis of the study. The music enabled the participants to focus on the paintings for a longer period of time, to embody the artworks and to offer meaningful interpretations. The experimental group did not pay attention to the critique / judgment process as did the control group (for example, a rather frequent response for the abstract artworks was related to the dislike of them, e.g. "I don't like this painting"). This is a positive result as the process of understanding art should not be focused on judging an artwork but on deriving meaning out of it (Barrett, 2000). Moreover, in cases where the experimental group offered judgmental comments these were reflective, unlike the control group. The experimental group's interpretations also appeared to be reflective (well thought off) as there was evidence of several art appreciation skills/capacities; participants who offered interpretive comments also offered other comments, such as observational and analytic (response behaviour categories). This finding suggest that the music appeared to enable the accumulation of participants' art appreciation skills; their response behaviour appeared to accumulate from observational response to analytic ones to interpretive ones whereas this was not the case for the control group (e.g. they offered non-reflective judgment).

The artviewing framework adopted for the experimental group indicated that this framework can promote inexperienced viewers' art appreciation skills and enhance their art understanding: from non-reflective viewers to more experienced viewers with expressed interest on artworks as a form of communication, of expression of ideas, messages and feelings. This is important for pre-service primary school teachers, especially in countries where generalist teachers and not art specialist teach visual arts. The abilities to focus, observe closely, imagine and offer cognitive and emotional responses are important in constructing the meaning of artworks. At the same time, this framework can help them develop their pedagogical content knowledge in teaching art with artworks as it is a framework that they can adopt with their future students and enable them to develop their art appreciation skills. The construction of supportive educational material within this framework (including suggestion of artworks and suggestions of appropriate music pieces for the artworks and not simply a list of artworks) will also support generalist teachers' efforts to implement the dual aspect (viewing and making art) of the visual arts curriculum and children's ability to communicate and understand ideas in a multimodal environment.

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## The importance of translation: Cypriot Literature and the contribution by the state

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### Abstract

The importance of translation in education mainly as a bridge between civilizations and its effect in bringing different cultures together is highlighted in this paper. The serious thought given to the role of translation within the framework of the EU is also focused on. Access to the European Literatures of Languages 'not widely used' is additionally studied. The term 'not widely used' is preferred rather than the definition 'small languages'.

The use of language not only as a tool of communication, but mainly as a vehicle of culture is of utmost importance. Its code, apart from what it illustrates, is something more. The paper is subsequently examining the contribution of the state in Cyprus to the translation of works of literature written by Cypriots. Until very recently, very few publications of translated Cypriot poetry by local or foreign publishers had been sponsored by the Cultural Services of the Ministry of Education and Culture in Cyprus, the State's Department that deals with cultural affairs. The proposal of writers themselves for their works to be translated into other languages coincided with findings in 2002 that approximately 400 poets' works had never been translated and with the fact that there was no government budget to be spent on assisting translation projects. Also, the state lacked a policy for the encouragement of writers to participate in EU translation projects instead of such encouragement being a primary goal.

Today the landscape has changed significantly. The Cultural Services of the Ministry of Education and Culture in Cyprus have introduced a budget that can be allocated specifically for translation projects. This budget has contributed enormously to the mobility of writers and their works and thus to the promotion and dissemination of the literature of Cyprus abroad, furthering the development of intellectual works as an aim.

### Key words

Translation, literature, mobility

### Introduction

The term 'artists' includes people who are engaged in the creation of art in all its forms; composers, singers, instrument players, choreographers, dancers, film and theatre directors, actors, painters, sculptors and all kinds of visual arts producers, video art creators, folk art producers. The term "writers", refers to writers of prose, poetry, folk poetry, drama, literary-essays and children's literature. In general all persons who create art are enlisted under the broad term 'artists' and all writers are enlisted under the terms 'writers' either professionals or amateurs. However writers of literature are "artists", as they have to master the use of the language from an artistic perspective in order to convey meanings that provoke feelings not just of ephemeral nature but feelings can be always experienced through reading, as literature refers to the past, the present and the future and in the majority of cases literature is a lonely artistic procedure as it does not require a number of individuals to be produced. This artistic procedure has to be arrested, examined and elaborated in



order to contribute to knowledge and if it is arrested, examined and elaborated by a group of people living in a country who happen to read literature, surely this is not enough as it does not contribute to universal knowledge but only to local knowledge. This further enhances the need for funding the works of translation of literature and dissemination of works.

If the improvement of literature and the further 'unlocking' of creativity is considered an aim to states in Europe and elsewhere, then 'material' and 'moral' support to writers is a must .

### Writers' opinions on the promotion of literature by the state in Cyprus

Writers' opinions on the level of promotion of culture by the state in Cyprus and on the support they receive, in ethical or financial terms, depends on the issue of how often they apply to the Cultural Services of the Ministry of Education and Culture, the State's service responsible for the support of cultural affairs, for financial support. This in its turn depends on two facts: a) the quality of information they get from the state about available schemes of support by official announcements and b) the clarity of guidelines that artists and writers receive from Cultural Officers on how and when to apply for available assistance.

### The 'Culture 2000' program

The degree to which writers have been informed by state officials (Cultural Officers) about the 'Culture 2000' program, now extended to "EU Culture program 2007-2013", offered by the European Union and especially about each 'Call for Proposals' since its establishment in February 2000, also contributes to the writers' support. The writers' interest in participating in this program is also important, together with their eagerness to foster an intercultural dialogue and a mutual exchange of cultural products between European countries.

### "Conditions for Creative artists in Europe" Seminar

During a seminar held by the Swedish Ministry of Culture in Visby in 2001, entitled: "Conditions for Creative artists in Europe", the Greek writer Demetris Nollas emphasized the importance of everybody having access to the European Literature of languages 'not widely-used'. He remembered the words of nobel prize winner poet George Seferis, who referred to the same subject in the early 1960's (in 1963). 'Translation into another language never repeats the original, but starting from this an equal poem to the original is created. Such are the difficulties of poetical exchanges. These exchanges are necessary for the benefit of communication and solidarity between people, whatever their language may be.' Nollas preferred the term 'not widely used' rather than the definition 'small languages'. As Nollas says, 'language is not only a tool of communication, but it is a vehicle of culture. Its code, apart from what it illustrates, is something more'. The author's creation searches for a reader and if the reader doesn't speak the same language as the author translation is needed, otherwise the text is useless. Most often we focus on books or texts written in "big languages" ignoring the wealth of languages "not widely used" or "small languages", such as the Greek language for example. The potential to meet with the culture of a country means the potential to comprehend the way of thinking of its people, to come across issues deeply inherent in that country, to come across particularities in social settings and cultural values or to discover common values among different countries. The book and literary texts on the internet, as cultural products promoting free thought, the dialogue, knowledge and exchange of ideas may surpass conditions of language isolation and separation rendering our acquaintance with other words possible.



Helena Vaz Da Silva, president of 'Centro Nacional de Culture', Portugal, in her speech under the title 'Society Needs its Artists, Artists Need Society' during the aforementioned seminar in Visby, shared a critical approach on the effectiveness of the European Commission's "Culture 2000 program". She stated that the EU had to 'raise the budget and convert the program into a simple one, which it wasn't'. Artists who wished to enter the program were 'monsters', she believed, since they played the game of the market as 'half artists, half businessmen'. She went on to argue that cultural actors took more frustration than satisfaction out of the 'Culture 2000' program in form at the time and that many chose to ignore it.

There are five things that we should expect from the E.U. (i) to harmonise legislation regarding education, fiscal and social legislation and legislation regarding authors' rights, (ii) to produce comparative statistics, studies and information, (iii) to stress culture in structural funds and include heritage there, (iv) to raise the budget in Culture 2000 and convert it into a simple program and (v) to give direct support only to areas where European Contribution to Culture can be an added value, i.e. Mobility/Exchange programs. (These programs include the circulation of individuals; the circulation of books; diffusion abroad; translations; cultural festivals and other big European events).

Da Silva proposed an ideal 'Culture 2000' program. According to her, it should cover

- 1) Mobility
- 2) European Events
- 3) Details about what subjects, what and how many partners, how many countries, what methodology would be left to the cultural actors
- 4) The Jury should be asked to judge exclusively on the quality of the projects
- 5) There should be more transparency and better results.

In the 'Report Workshop Literature' presented in the same seminar, Maureen Duffy, the chairperson, pointed out that literature was unique in that it did not use a universal language like music and the visual arts. 'It is part of the problem and the glory of our European heritage that we have a diversity of languages and therefore a diversity of literary cultures', she said, and agreed with Nollas in that language is a 'vehicle of culture'. The EU has a responsibility to preserve and develop different languages and literary cultures.

Members of the workshop from many countries including candidate countries testified to the unsatisfactory situation of self-employed writers outside social security benefits and pensions. An extremely large number of writers are really poor. In most countries the tax system is not suited to the income conditions of professional writers. The workshop called for a full professional study to be made about these conditions throughout the EU as a first step towards their improvement.

The Market deals with best sellers in countries with large populations. In smaller countries the market cannot do this. Even in countries with large populations and a majority language, markets alone cannot support specialized publications of poetry, short stories, play, literary fiction etc.

### EU funding on Books, Reading and Translation

According to the Commission's policy for the funding of translation projects in the first years of the establishment of the "Culture 2000" program it was planned to be given to approximately fifty projects for the translation of fiction (literary works) written after 1950 by European authors and priority was given to works written in the less widely-used European languages or translated into these languages (including regional languages and candidate countries' languages).



Regarding annual cooperation projects, funding was planned to be given to approximately seven one year specific, innovation and/or experimental projects focusing on the promotion of reading throughout Europe and three projects promoting collaboration, at a European Level, aiming at improving the skills of professionals in the field of translations of literary works.

Also, funding for multi-annual cooperation agreement projects was planned to be given to one or two projects in the field of books, reading and translation.

### EU funding on the translation of Cypriot literature until 2004

Literary translation plays an important role in enhancing intercultural understanding. One of the objectives of the 'Culture 2000' program of the European Commission is the transnational dissemination of culture and the movement of artists and their work. Apart from the main sector of cultural activity highlighted each year, funding is offered for translation projects with priority given to works written in the less widely-used European languages or translated into these languages. EU funding for translations regards annual cooperation projects and multi-annual cooperation agreement projects. Cyprus entered the 'Culture 2000' program in 2002 after the participation fee of €200.000 was paid to the EU following an approval of a proposal made by the Cultural Services to the Council of Ministers of the Republic of Cyprus. Before that, Cyprus was invited to participate in the program but as it had not been able to activate the governmental mechanisms to work towards the achievement of its participation and pay the fee, it lost the opportunity to participate.

The Cultural Services of the Ministry of Education and Culture held a half-day seminar on 20<sup>th</sup> September 2003 regarding the 2004 call for proposals. The attendance at the seminar was satisfactory. The representative from the department of Culture and the General Directorate of Education and Culture of the EU Theodosios Mastrominas assisted the presentation of the program by the Cultural Services.

In 2002, the call for proposals for 2003 was presented extremely late, only three weeks before the deadline for submission of applications resulting into very poor response to it by artists, writers and cultural institutions in Cyprus who were not given enough time to follow the procedures of participating. Only three annual funding programs were eventually approved by the Commission, all in the area of theatrical performance, namely a) the funding of a 'leader' (i.e. organizer) from Italy and to the International Theatrical Institute of Cyprus as one of its coorganisers, b) the funding of the Theatrical Organization of Cyprus, again as a coorganiser and c) the funding of the Municipality of Limassol for theatrical performances as a coorganiser. No funding was approved for translation projects since demand for it was minimal despite the E.U.'s particular attention paid in translation projects as 'they bring different cultures together'.

As regards the Call for Proposals for 2004, funding for projects from Cyprus was proposed mainly in the fields of Cultural Heritage.

### Funding from the state

At the Cultural Services, there was until 2007 no budget that could be allocated specifically for translation projects. Very few publications of translated Cypriot poetry by local or foreign publishers had been sponsored in the past years through the service of 'Sponsorship of publications that regard Cyprus' by which different kinds of books could be sponsored and the annual amount of money for it in 2004 was £150.000. Less than 5% of this money was spent on translations of Greek poetry in 2004 with a similar image regarding 2003 and 2002. During the 2<sup>nd</sup> Symposium of Translation of Cypriot Literature organized by the Cultural Services which took place in November 2001, it was stressed by

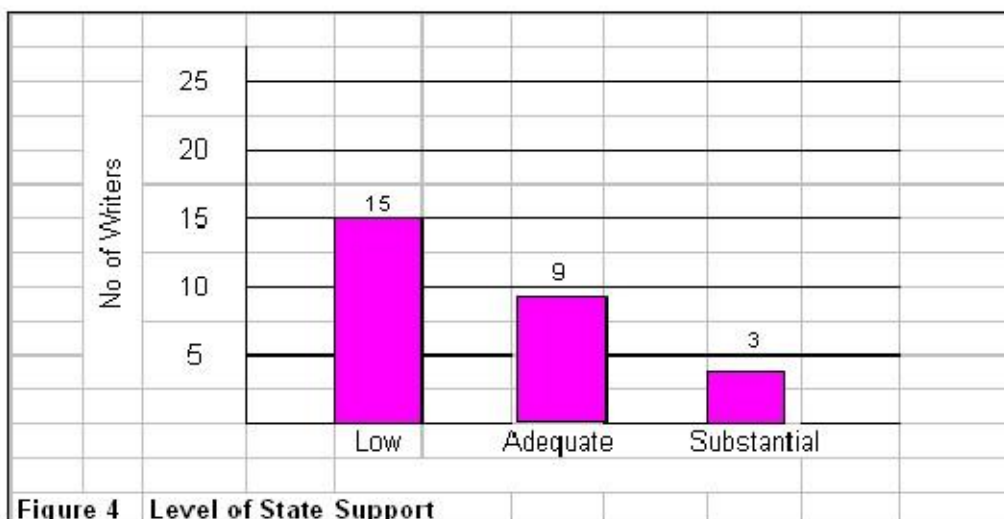
the majority of speakers that there is a need for more works to be translated in other languages so that Cypriot literature will travel to other countries and be made known internationally. ‘In many countries publishers do not dare to take risks in publishing translations of Greek or Cypriot poetry but would rather publish translations in English, Italian, French and German poetry as demand for literature from those countries is higher’, as José Antonio Moreno Jurado said during his speech at the symposium, agreeing with the idea that “big languages” are usually preferred instead of “small languages”. Thus the state’s responsibility to make the literature of Cyprus known abroad is huge and surely the formulation of policy to promote translations internationally must be urgently promoted.

## Research

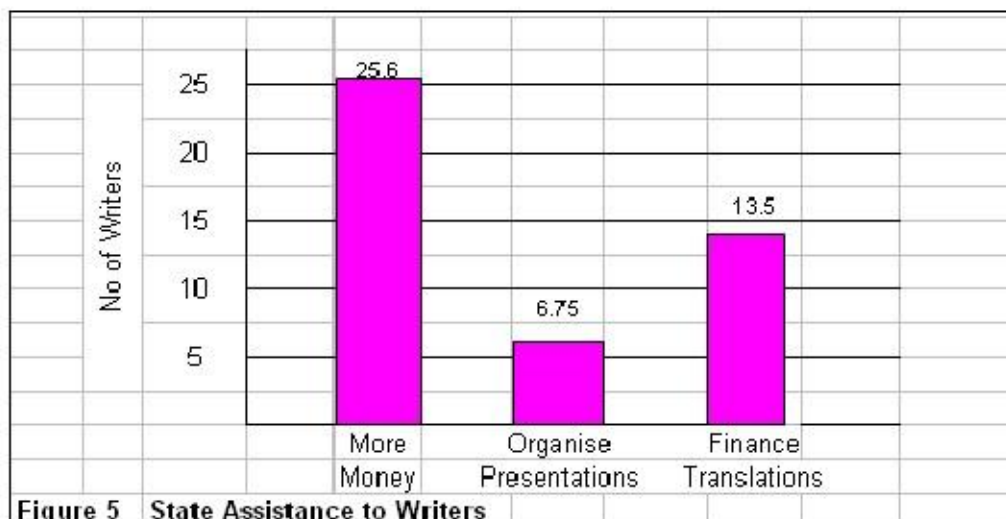
Andis Panayiotou (2001) conducted a very useful piece of research entitled ‘The English Translations of Cypriot Poetry, Historical Account-Statistics’

According to his findings, while there were 188 translations of works of Cypriot poets who wrote in the Greek language, only 13 folk poets or poets who wrote in the Cypriot dialect saw their works translated. This is perhaps due to the difficulty in translating dialects. Also, there are poets the works of whom have never been translated, 177 who wrote in the Greek language and 222 who wrote in the Cypriot dialect. As a result, he concludes, ‘the public and private sector have to think seriously and act accordingly so that the whole wealth of Cypriot poetry (and literature in general) will be presented internationally’.

In another research undertaken by the speaker in 2004, entitled: “An evaluation of the administrative processes and an enhancement strategy for policy formation at the Cultural Services of the Ministry of Education and Culture in Cyprus”, most of the writers (total number of writers asked: 27), when asked regarding the level of state support, the question: ‘Do you consider the support offered by the state through its department of culture adequate?’ 55.5% admitted that it was low. (see figure 4) To the question ‘What else could be done by the state to assist writers?’ a substantial proportion of them (nearly 50%) proposed the state’s support in the translation of their works . Additionally, 94.8% of the writers in Cyprus when asked about the state’s assistance to them said that they needed higher sponsorships and 50% proposed the financing of events to present their work to the public (see figure 5).







The proposal of writers themselves for their works to be translated into other languages coincided with A. Panayiotou's findings that 399 (177 in the standard modern Greek language attitude and 222 in the Cypriot dialect) poets' works have never been translated and with the fact that there is no government budget to be spent on assisting translation projects. Also, the state's encouragement of writers to participate in EU translation projects should be a primary goal.

### Translation of Cypriot literature today

Today the landscape has changed significantly. The Cultural Services of the Ministry of Education and Culture in Cyprus have introduced a budget that is allocated specifically for translation projects. This budget has contributed enormously to the mobility of writers and their works and thus to the promotion and dissemination of the literature of Cyprus abroad, furthering the development of intellectual works as an aim.

The EU Culture program 2007-2013 has also been extended, following the "Culture 2000" program offering funding opportunities for the translation of European fiction, (see Strand 1.2.2). The minimum available grant is €2000 and the maximum available grant is €60000, for the translation of up to 10 books. The purpose is to stimulate the widest circulation of European literature among European citizens, by supporting the translation of high-quality European literature into the different languages of the countries participating in the Culture program. Eligible applicants are not individuals but publishers who wish to translate works written in a European language to another European language provided that those works have circulated in books. The EU Culture program 2007-2013 Contact Point is now under the responsibility of the TALWS Development Organization a Private Law Legal Entity founded in 2000, a Private Law Legal Entity founded in 2000. The Foundation is fully harmonized with European Union directives. Within this framework, it provides a solution towards decentralization as well as the potential to unburden the Cultural Services of the Ministry of Education and Culture, acting in parallel within a civil society. Interested parties can apply for EU budgets through the TALWS Development Organization which helps applicants significantly making application procedures appear simpler. What I have been informed by the Director of TALWS Foundation is that for the past years there have been no applications for support to the EU Culture 2007-2013 program by Cypriot publishers for the translation of Literature and this is something that



has to be taken seriously as available EU budgets remain unused resulting in less works travelling to other countries, less of our literature being known to other Europeans, more of our literature staying within the closed boundaries of our small island. Summing up, literature is not just telling stories or entertaining people, it is another form of recorded history, of society's ways of life, customs and social norms at the time that it was written and very often it can act as an instrument of social change. In the western world social change has often been the result of outstanding works of literature and there are many muslim scholars who believe they are now doing the same in Islam. This is why translation of literature is so important, it is not just a bridge transporting stories across the seas but an avenue to express unique ideas. One needs only to look at the translated religious texts that have moved from east to west and the other way round, to see the deep impact translated literature can have. And on the importance of any impact let me share with you an experience at a teleconference with the famous American psychotherapist Dr Irvin Yalom which took place on 25<sup>th</sup> February at the European University in Nicosia. For Dr Yalom the “meaning of life” is an individual’s ripple (i.e. his/her own wave of influence) and its effect on others and how many others it has affected and to what extent it has affected others, adopting the Epicurian stand that this is the only thing that remains after death as children, grandchildren and great grandchildren will die one day and nobody will remember the individual. Well, the ripple of literature is indeed profound and extended, we all have experienced the effects on us of a good literature text; this interaction with the writer by reading his book, his experiences, his emotions, all of which cannot be separated from the influence of culture can help adding to who we are, what we feel, what we do; let us take advantage of the wonderful tool of translation and add to this ripple.

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## Discussions on Biennial Art Exhibition and Audience's Response: A Case Study of Taipei Biennial

Shuhua Lin

### Abstract

In the age of globalization, the form of Biennial exhibition of contemporary art attracts vast amounts of audiences from various areas of the world in a short period of time when the exhibition is held. Biennial exhibition not only creates dialogues between local and world-wide cultural enterprises but also raises issues about power, races, gender, identities, etc. These issues and questions are most often thought by the author or the curator to be the core argument that the audiences are supposed to be aware of after a process of 'reading' the art work. Therefore, a good design of display and a clear guidance of an exhibition are very important, because they help to create good communications between art work and its audience.

Although, historically and geographically, Taipei Biennial has not been as well known as the major Biennials and the other form like the Documenta, it is still one of the best exhibitions to observe the development of contemporary art. However, according to a survey index, seventy percent of the citizens of Taipei are not aware of the existence and purpose of the Taipei Biennial, not to mention the meaning of each work displayed. Given the goal of publicizing contemporary art, the Taipei Biennial apparently has room for improvement.

This paper examines functions of communication of the Taipei Biennial, by comparing the case of Taipei itself with that of Gwangju Biennale, Korea and the Documenta, Kassell in Germany in the following aspects, such as the exhibition topic, the theoretical approaches, the purposes, the contents and forms of the exhibition, and the audiences among the exhibitions. This comparative study may bring fresh ideas to a future plan for Taipei.

Based on the research work undertaken, this essay finds out: a) the effect of Taipei Biennial does not meet the criterion of public's expectation on the exhibition, b) the curator should address to the audiences with a clear idea of art creation and the process of the curatorial practice. Types of different media and meaning of every single art work should be discussed, c) the curator should try to create an interactive situation between the audience and the art work; the relationship between the content and the form of a specific art work should be properly illuminated, and d) contemporary art as a subject in the field of art education should be taken seriously as a primary art curriculum in school education. For large majority of the audiences, finding ways of combination between art and live experience should be encouraged.

### Keywords

Contemporary art, Taipei Biennial, Audience's Response

### Introduction

In 1895, the art exhibition La Biennale di Venezia was held in Venice, Italy. It gave birth to the form and the operation system of twentieth-century biennial art exhibitions. In most cases, each biennial art exhibition was hosted by government of the major cities of a country. It was also named under the major city's name such as the Istanbul Biennial, Singapore Biennial, Shanghai Biennial, Gwangju Biennial, Busan Biennial, Johannesburg Biennial, and Taipei Biennial. Government of the city that

hosts a Biennial exhibition usually made lot of efforts to promote its culture identity through media communication.

Looking back to the 1990s, the host cities of biennial exhibitions boosted their cultural identities in many ways. Plans were implemented by skillful designs according to their geographical and historical backgrounds. They used any available resource to create connections between art and city amenities for the exhibitions. If a biennial exhibition failed to reflect a connections between art and its social context, the value of the exhibition will be depreciated in the end. I want to argue that the popularity growth of a biennial exhibition and cultural industry of the host city are tightly bound together. Nowadays, artist's creative activity is often seen to have intervened in public space and peoples' daily lives. This kind of creativity becomes a prototype of culture dynamics that testify the cult of 'glocalization - global localization', an approach that demonstrates the city's cultural accumulation.

One may hardly find any other kind of exhibition that can attract huge audiences' attention like Biennial art exhibitions do. It is certain, any city or any country can create a special kind of biennial exhibition as long as the government is determined enough. Of course, a sufficient financial support is vitally important.

During the past two decades, a great number of Biennial exhibitions had been established. Taipei Biennial was founded in 1998, curated by Japanese curator Fumio Nanjo. From year 2000 till present time, Taipei Biennial invited two curators each year to work together as a collaborative team. One of the curators is an international curator dwelling outside Taiwan. Usually, he or she is a foreigner. The partner curator is Taiwanese. They work together as a team in the whole process of the exhibition. One may expect this twin-curator model would work out well. They are expected to help each other, and the domestic curator gain experience in organizing a Biennial exhibition in the end. However, there might be some problems with this model. The international curator has been criticized for not having had enough time to understand the culture and society of Taiwan. Furthermore, to some extent, the unique situations of the art world of Taiwan were often ignored by the curator. Therefore, the operation and administration works of Taipei Biennial has often been criticized.



In addition, there are some more problems found in Taipei Biennial. First of all, restrictions found imposed by the bureaucratic system has been severely criticized. Second, unopened decision-making in choosing the candidates of the curators have been complained all the time. Third, the theme of the exhibition and the list of the invited artists might have not been convincing. Fourth, the lack of dialogue among the entities involved in the exhibition has been criticized as well.





These problems in turn restrained artists' zeal for the Biennial exhibition and makes them feel indifferent towards the event.

In many cases a Biennial exhibition can be seen as an indication that tells how high the degree of interaction between art and society is. It is also a suggestion of the fact that shows how global art impacts local art and culture.

The theme of the Taipei Biennial was to rethink the issue of cultural production, especially in terms of reevaluating politics in the Biennial exhibition itself. The political stance of Taipei Biennial 2010 examines not only the question how art production was managed but also the model of art production distributed and categorized.

Therefore, this essay observes the content, forms and themes of the Taipei Biennial. It also analyzes the Biennial exhibitions of Taipei, Gwangju, and another form of exhibition, the Documenta. This essay explores themes, purposes, contents, forms, budgets, and audience responses in order to create a reference structure in which a comparison of each item can help to illuminate the current situation of Taipei Biennial.

### The theoretical discussion and the goal of exhibition

In 1998, Taipei Biennial stepped out from regional contemporary art competition to stride into the Asian art world. It emphasized on Asian vision and inheritance of traditional Chinese Culture. The chief curator invited thirty-six artists from four areas in the Far East. In 2000, Taipei Biennial emphasized its global connections, focusing on the issue of global arts and cultural diversity. Once again, the Museum selected a Taiwanese curator to work with the international curator. The approach and the contents of the selected artworks were supposed to have illuminated the idea of exhibition in reflecting issues in the art world of globalization.

Based on the above idea of globalization, a few foreign artists were invited to 'create on site'. The policy was an alternative strategy applied to satisfy the need of 'locality'. Artists who take on the policy of 'create on site' might be seen to have engaged in a temporary 'immigration' to Taiwan,



experiencing life in the city that hosts the Biennial. He / She also created artwork for the city in terms of setting forth from the cultural identity of otherness.

In the 2010 Taipei Biennial, the curator claimed that the purpose of hosting a biennial exhibition is to 're-examine the institution of the Biennial itself, ... aims to review the history itself in horizon and vertical aspects, and as well as the locality concerns. It is, therefore, the key tone of the 2010 Taipei Biennial was designed to 'reconsider the biennial' in order to 'fabricate an uncertainty of a temporary situation' to explore 'politics of art' and the dilemma of the contemporary art world. (Kuo, Hsiu-Ling, 2011)

Based on observations on of the 2010 Taipei Biennial, there are two main discoveries. First, there is an institutional criticism, rethinking art in various aspects. Second, it stresses on nature of 'dialogue' between artworks themselves and on comparisons between artworks today and their classical counterparts in art history.

The 2010 Taipei Biennial had therefore exhibited the history, institution, and formation of the biennial itself as a whole in the process of its institutional reconstruction. This reconstruction also redefines the meaning of art and reshapes the boundary of art. Owing to the reconstruction of the institution of art, it needs an examination on intrinsic and extrinsic elements of the art world when a Biennial exhibition is about to be organized, the policy and achievement of this reconstruction act would help to reexamine the relationship between art and life.

However, it is despairing and unacceptable to learn that the curators excluded history and cultural context of Taiwan in their curatorial work. One may doubt whether Taipei Biennial is indifferent to the history of art in Taiwan (Kuo, Hsiu-Ling, 2011) and whether the Taipei Biennial only belongs to a regional and limited art fair. One may also doubt if Taipei Biennial fails to step on the arena of art world.

The titles of the major Biennials are often named under the cities' names. Biennial exhibitions, in turn, are expected to benefit tourism and to promote images of the city's cultural identity.

In Taipei Biennial, one may feel it difficult to find a unique character of the exhibition itself. It also lacks of incisive description of the cultural phenomena of Taiwan in response to her global inspiration. A painstaking renovation of the institution of the art world and a penetration into issues of socio-cultural studies may help to improve Taipei Biennial.

Let's think over the purposes of a biennial exhibition again and do something. Would promote image of Taipei being the purpose of founding the Taipei Biennial? If the answer is yes, what would be the differences of the purposes between the Biennial and Taipei Flower festival of 2011? What would be the differences of the purposes between the 2010 World Expo Shanghai China, and the Taipei Biennial?

Obviously, Taipei Biennial must provide unique amenities and attractions in order to draw audiences' attentions. Without any doubt, the international curator in the twin-curator system helps to introduce global vision into Taiwan. However, the entity of Taipei Biennial remains high necessity in searching for a vision in great depth to understand the world. This endeavor may help Taipei Biennial to attract overseas audiences.

Based on the above observations, I want to argue that Taipei Biennial need not overstress its experience in encountering globalization. Neither does it need to show willingness to merge into the global culture. Instead, Taipei Biennial or even Taiwan as a whole may demonstrate her role of vital importance in every aspect of cultural and politics in Asia. Sharing with 13 billion of Chinese-speaking populations, Taiwan derives convenience in communication. Further, Taiwan shares a Confucius philosophy with most Asian countries. Taipei Biennial or even Taiwan as a whole may

demonstrate her role of vital importance in every aspect of culture and politics in Asia. This could be more practical and approachable in rethinking about organizing future Biennial exhibitions.

### Hail the public: a pursuit of spirit of contemporary art

An alternative exhibition space is a location for exhibiting artworks or performance which is a place other than a professional venue such as a so-called “white cube” gallery space. In Taiwan, alternative exhibition spaces are mostly run by private administration groups or individual people, but in some cases they also receive financial support from the government. The rise of using alternative space’s for Documenta in Germany is an example of combining art practice and space converted for different purposes. Alternative spaces offer better accessibility to the public. They can be found in corners of the city and close to people of various levels.



Gabriel Lester's 'Transition 2012,' one of the Kassel, documenta 7, 1982, pickaxe by Claes artworks in the Documenta show in Kassel, Oldenburg Germany.

Alternative exhibition spaces also enrich interactions between art and audiences. They also benefit economic growth to some extent. Taking Gwangju Biennial as an example, local people of Gwangju participated in the exhibition events and helped the audiences to find their target artworks. They made people feel easy to gain access to the exhibition, and, of course, helped out economic growth.



Bokdukbang project. Gwangju biennale, Gwangju, south Korea  
September 5 - November 9, 2008.

In 2008 the Taipei Biennial applied alternative exhibition spaces to attract potential audiences. Outside the alternative exhibition space, however, there were only a handful of audiences in normal exhibition rooms. The numbers of audiences at present were far below the targeted numbers. It may be hard to tell that who bears responsibility for the ill performance of the exhibition. One may argue that what the curator puts in his first priority is critics' response on the exhibition. Would the administration board be responsible for the event promotion? Things tend to be complicated: would that be paradoxical if the curator is indifferent to audience but only care about critics opinions of the exhibition.



Nevin Aladag. "Lowrider Bellydance".  
In Taipei Biennial 2008.  
Location: Taipei Arena



Wong Hoy-cheong. "Maid in Malaysia"  
In Taipei Biennial 2008.  
Location: Zhongxiao Xinsheng Station

Different from that of modern art in the 1960s, in which fondness of art could be something that represents hobbies of specific social levels, contemporary art breaks the boundary of various classes. Contemporary art combines daily life with art. The division of art and daily life becomes increasingly vague (Chang, Kai-Hui, 2011). Further, an event or an activity, such as a parade or gathering, party,





etc, held during the exhibition are welcomed by the audiences, because the effect of interaction surpasses any static activity.

### Works of Art and Audiences' Responses

In Biennial exhibitions of contemporary art, one may expect to discern a sense of academic strength and theoretical quality in great depth. More often, one may expect to learn that works of art are a reflection of social and cultural phenomenon. These attributes of being contemporary and socio-cultural oriented may attract broad responses in society. To a curator, works of art may be seen as vehicle that incarnate idea of art the curator perceives. Theoretic quality may be acquired by conferencing and discussions during the exhibition in process.

Taipei Biennial offers audiences good opportunity to observe the movement of contemporary art. However, according to a survey, more than seventy percent of people who live in Taipei are not aware of Taipei Biennial. (Shih, Miao-Hsun, 2010)

Failure to create a good communication between artwork and the audiences of the Biennial exhibition has been criticized for years by critics and journalists. The artworks of Taipei Biennial are not easy pieces that can be appreciated and read intuitively.

What causes the inconsistency between the effort made by the authorities and the result of the survey? One may doubt if it is because the way of understanding contemporary art has frustrated or even frightened audiences who experience art in a modest way. Consequently, these questions urge one to think about questions in broad aspects: First, how will contemporary art exhibitions interact with audiences? Second, why do people prefer interactive displays to static ones? Third, will the proverbial topic of 'globalization' spoil audiences' tastes of contemporary art?

Taipei Biennial is one of the most popular and profitable exhibitions. A well-designed study proposal made to enquire about specific questions of art into depth would help to improve audiences' abilities of understanding art. Make people feel happy to think about the artist's intention in creation would encourage them to perceive art from a place far beyond aesthetic awareness.

The fact that people are indifferent to Taipei Biennial can be found in a figure of the result of a survey. More than seventy percent of the audience who visited the exhibition are students, professional people of art and cultural industries. (Chang, Ya-ting, 2010) Apparently, there is a gap between the authority's expectation and reality.

Perhaps we can get inspiration from conceptual artist Hans Haacke in discussing about how to improve rate of participation. Haacke points out that an artist in creation must be in command of the way he/ she gives the message to the audience. Once the way of communication and the language of art creation are settled, one can enjoy art without understanding complicated terminology and theories of art.

### Conclusion

Findings and suggestions:

1. The exhibition effectiveness of Taipei Biennale are not as satisfactory as expected : From the analysis of past seven Taipei Biennales, it is found that the visitors to TFAM are not actually increasing; on the contrary, visitor numbers have dropped steadily over the years. This means the current established mechanism of organizing this special exhibition does not bring more visitors to museum, perhaps because it does not respond to the diversity of audience segments, nor does leverage





the museum's research function well and does not apply any official performance measurements and feedback systems linking to exhibitions.

2. The curator may give hint of the message to his audiences about his idea of the exhibition and explain the politics of the curatorial process to the audiences. It will help the museum to grasp general audiences' opinions.

3. Contemporary art needs to initiate a sense of criticism and raise issues of art criticism by creating opportunities of dialogue between art and audiences.

4. Taking lessons from marketing skills to promote art, the authorities of Taipei Biennial can pay more attention to languages of art that might be accepted by the general public. However, it can be hard to find a quick way to seek a balance between vast popularity and quality in great depth. If it is necessary to find a priority between these two approaches, I would like to argue that new stimulations of art may help to secure basic museum goes from various levels. Museum of contemporary art needs to review their policies in the sector of museum education.

5. Contemporary art as a subject in the field of art education should be taken seriously as a primary art curriculum in school education. For the large majority of audiences, finding ways to combine art and life experiences should be encouraged. The mission of museums in the 21<sup>st</sup> century is to help broaden the horizon of citizens, in the way people will construct their own meanings and views through museum visits and subtle learning. This aims to help the museum audience find their own balance from the conflicting values when facing overwhelmingly diverse viewpoints in the modern world.

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## Let's set up Together the e-mates Art Exhibition!

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### Abstract

AMPASTASIA Workshop

In this workshop AMPASTASIA set up a painting exhibition along with the audience.

The subject of the exhibition relates to distance communication. Nowadays it frequently happens that beloved persons live and work far from one another. However, internet communication helps to keep in touch no matter how long the distance between them is.

Before the workshop takes place, AMPASTASIA got in touch with InSEA 2012 Congress participants and asked them to send an image of their "e-Mate", a person with whom they communicate or collaborate in distance. AMPASTASIA painted portraits out of the images the contributors sent and discussed the progress of painting.

During the workshop the participants were invited to paint portraits and set up the "e-mates" Art Exhibition along with AMPASTASIA. A wide range of media were used in the submitted artworks: painting media (oil colours, acrylics) and new media (digital prints, visual computer-generated art). The aim of "e-mates" AMPASTASIA workshop is to encourage:

- dialogue, through questions, suggestions, ideas, criticism;
- participation, invite audience to paint and curate the exhibition with AMPASTASIA;
- interaction

After the exhibition set up, a discussion between AMPASTASIA and the audience was fostered. Both AMPASTASIA and the audience stressed the importance of communication through art and the need to build a worldwide "e-mates" community.

The main objective of AMPASTASIA is to blur the boundaries between the artists and the audience. In "e-mates" workshop AMPASTASIA (re) examined the artist's social position within the contemporary global condition.

### Key words

Art & audience, painting, new technologies, online social networks, participation

### e-mates workshop preparation

For the preparation of e-mates workshop AMPASTASIA announced an open call for contributions. They published this open call in all their web pages (<http://ampastasia.wordpress.com/2012/03/16/e-mates/>, <http://www.facebook.com/pages/Ampastasia/358152234196268>) and collaborated with InSEA 2012 Congress in spreading the open call to all congress participants.

Below we are presenting the call for contributions, in order to show what AMPASTASIA asked from the participants and how the dialogue between the two parts initiated.



Figures 1, 2: AMPASTASIA skype snapshots, 2012

### Call for Contributions

We invite people to send an image of a person with whom they communicate or collaborate in distance, an image of their “e-Mate”.

The image can be taken from skype, facebook, flickr, msn, twitter, personal webpage or any other online source, depending on the means of communication they use.

It can be sent at [ampastasia@gmail.com](mailto:ampastasia@gmail.com) no later than 31st May 2012.

Please send your e-mate’s image along with the following information:

- Name of contributor
- Image of contributor (if you want to appear along with your e-mate in paintings)
- Name of “e-mate”
- Image source and means of communication (eg. skype, facebook etc)
- Relationship with the “e-mate”

AMPASTASIA will publish image contributions in their website and paint them out. We will be in touch through emails with contributors to discuss the progress of painting. The paintings will be presented in InSEA Congress in Limassol (Cyprus), 25-27 June 2012, [www.insea2012.org](http://www.insea2012.org) . Participants will paint along with AMPASTASIA and set up the e-Mates Art Exhibition.

### FAQ

¶ In which language should the information be?



The information sent by contributors can be in any language. It would be better, though, to be in their language or the language of the place they or their e-mate live and work.

Is it possible for contributors to be anonymous or send nicknames?

Yes. The anonymous contributions will be listed as “anonymous” in the publication.

Many participants responded and sent images from themselves and their e-mates. AMPASTASIA painted portraits out of these images and uploaded them on their website [ampastasia.wordpress.com](http://ampastasia.wordpress.com). Each participant was, then, informed about his/her portrait via email. An email dialogue was fostered between AMPASTASIA and the participants on the resultant portraits.



Figure 3 (left): Contribution by , skype snapshot of e-mates



Figure 4 (right): e-mates portrait by AMPASTASIA, digital collage, 2012



Figure 5 (left): Contribution by Teresa, photo of e-mate



Figure 6 (right): e-mate portrait by AMPASTASIA, oil pastels on cardboard, 2012





Figure 7 (left): Contribution by Dr Anthony U. Okonofua, photo of e-mate

Figure 8 (right): e-mate portrait by AMPASTASIA, mixed media, 2012



Figure 9 (left) : Contribution by Dr Anthony U. Okonofua, photo of contributor

Figure 10 (right): contributor portrait by AMPASTASIA, acrylic on canvas, 2012



Figure 11 (left): Contribution by T.T., digital photo of contributor

Figure 12 (right): contributor portrait by AMPASTASIA, acrylic on canvas, 2012



Figure 13 (left) : Contribution by Anastasia Zoi Souliotou, Google Street View snapshot of e-mate

Figure 14 (right): e-mate portrait by AMPASTASIA, oil on canvas, 2012



Figure 15 (left): Contribution by T.T., digital photo of e-mate

Figure 16 (right): e-mate portrait by AMPASTASIA, oil pastels on cardboard, 2012



Figure 17 (left): Contribution by Anastasia Zoi Souliotou, skype snapshot of e-mate

Figure 18 (right): e-mate portrait by AMPASTASIA, acrylic on canvas, 2012



Figure 19 (left) : Contribution by Amparo Latorre Romero, skype photo of e-mate





Figure 20 (right): e-mate portrait by AMPASTASIA, oil on canvas, 2012

AMPASTASIA founders Amparo Latorre Romero and Anastasia Zoi Souliotou had to communicate in distance most of the time, in order to organize e-mates project. For this reason, both in the Open Call and in the portraits of theirs in Figures 1,2 they use skype snapshots.

In the above images we present the picture received by contributors and the portrait we painted out of it. In this way we generate a dichotomy between the person and the image of the person, which in turn gives birth to a new double. The concept of e-mates project brings about a change in the interpretation of the viewers, in the semiotics of each image and portrait. Furthermore, they are developing a new a translinguistic work 'the walk to the word into the picture'. (Kristeva, 1968)

After painting the portraits, AMPASTASIA sent an email to all contributors asking for comments or feedback in the following form:

Dear .....,

Thank you for your contribution.

Please, find AMPASTASIA portraits on the following page:

<http://ampastasia.wordpress.com/exhibitions/e-mates/>

Your portrait is the "CAPITAL LETTER - Technique" , dimensions..., and you can find it here: [Link1](#)

Your e-mate's portrait is the " CAPITAL LETTER - Technique", dimensions....., and is here: [Link2](#)

We have named the portraits with letters of latin alphabet. Would you prefer we put your and your e-mate's name as a caption of Portraits..... in the webpage or keep it anonymous?

Please send us feedback on the portraits with regards to the technique, materials used, how you feel about them, if you prefer another technique, medium or style. Furthermore, you could tell us how you want them to appear in "e-mates" exhibition, how you would like to see them in space.

AMPASTASIA will give you a second response before Let's set up Together the "e-mates" Art Exhibition, W4 workshop, which takes place in SALAMINIA 1 Lounge, on Tuesday 26 June 2012 at 14:25-14:45.

We are looking forward to seeing you at Let's set up Together the "e-mates" Art Exhibition Workshop by AMPASTASIA - InSEA 2012 congress.

Kind Regards,

AMPASTASIA

[ampastasia.wordpress.com](http://ampastasia.wordpress.com)

We attach hereby a few answers:

"Hello,

This AMPASTASIA Exhibition is as exciting as it is UNIQUE and interactive! Yes, put my e-mate's name and mine as captions. Looking forward to participation, especially as a sculptor! "

"Comments regarding the picture in relation to the technique: it is correct Materials used: very good How do I feel about it? well, I really like. It reflects very well the hectic time that I lived through the encounter occurred while skype How do I want it to appear in "e-fellow" exposure? hipertrópico group"

### The e-mates workshop

The **e-mates** workshop intended to involve audience in the set up of the self-titled painting exhibition. Initially, AMPASTASIA contemporary art female duo placed on easels the portraits they had painted before the workshop. The original photos of the contributors and their e-mates were printed on A4 sheets and could be found on the front table.



Figure 21: General view of **e-mates** workshop, Salamina Lounge, Grand Resort Hotel, Limassol, Cyprus, InSEA 2012 congress

At the beginning of the **e-mates** workshop participants were asked to have a look at the original photos and match them with the portraits on easels. The participants immediately recognised the photos 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 13, 14, 17, 18, but had difficulty with photos 11, 12, 15, 16, 19, 20. There were also participants who had sent a photo during the **e-mates** workshop preparation stage and had received AMPASTASIA's portrait-response to their contribution. These participants recognised the portrait immediately.

Then, participants were asked to paint a portrait; either of a person they met in the workshop or one of the e-mates found on the A4 sheets.

The participants were people with different backgrounds, age and nationality. Not only were there professional artists and art educators, but also amateurs.

The easels were arranged in circle and the paintings in different heights. The original photos of the contributors and e-mates were placed on the table. In the workshop space there were also tables where participants painted. The process of painting was a fascinating experience for both AMPASTASIA and the participants, as they were experimenting with different materials and were discussing with one another how good their painting is, how they feel etc.



When they finished painting, they started thinking where they can place their painting, in order to include it in the exhibition on easels along with AMPASTASIA portraits. After a few hours, all the portraits were exhibited, as shown in image 33.

The *e-mates* project provokes a subversion with regards to the position of new technologies in the contemporary art field. Instead of ‘moving’ traditional art practices to virtual space, they use virtual space in order to come up with art exhibitions in physical spaces. The virtual gallery comes first and the *e-mates* exhibition in Grand Resort Hotel in Limassol follows. The international e-mail communication between AMPASTASIA and participants is used as a discussion forum with regards to the stage and status of the painting(s). It also serves as an invitation to participate in *e-mates* workshop, since it enables contributors/participants to get involved a priori in AMPASTASIA workshop. (Cahen, 2001)



Figure 22 (left): Participant A, this participant took a picture of Anastasia Zoi Souliotou and painted her portrait from his camera

Figure 23 (right): Portrait of Anastasia from Participant A, media: watercolours and charcoal on cardboard



Figure 24 (left): Participator B, this participator painted a portrait from a contributor, as seen a a printed image

Figure 25 (centre): Portrait of contributor from Participator B, media: watercolours on cardboard

Figure 26 (right): Image of contributor

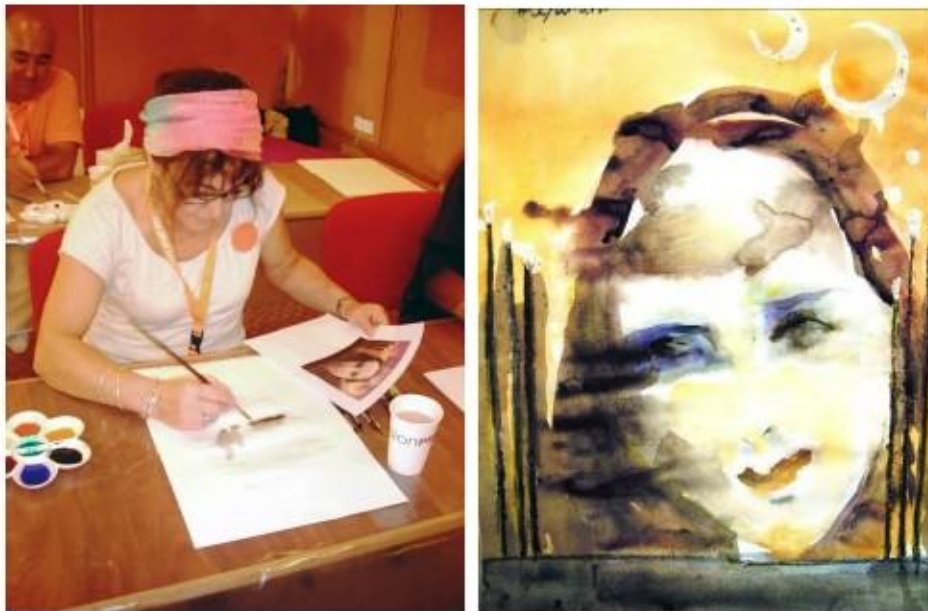


Figure 27 (left): Participator C, this participator painted a portrait of a contributor from a printed digital image, media: watercolours on cardboard

Figure 28 (right): Portrait of contributor from Participator C



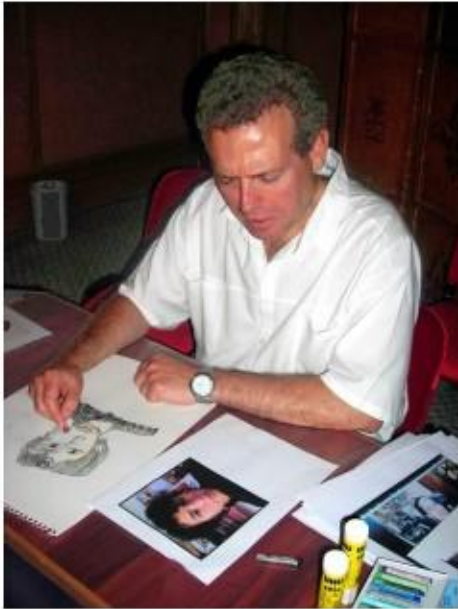


Figure 29 (left): Participant D, this participant painted a portrait of a contributor from a printed digital image

Figure 30 (right): Portrait of contributor from Participant D, media: oil pastels on cardboard



Figure 31 (left): Participant E, this participant painted a portrait of a contributor from a printed digital image

Figure 32 (right): Portrait of contributor from Participant E, media: acrylics on canvas



#### WORKSHOP ANNOUNCEMENT (distributed the day of the workshop)

This workshop addresses the issue of distance communication and aims at (re)creating a network of 'e-mates' through art. Before the workshop, we invited people to send images of theirs and their 'e-mates' to [ampastasia@gmail.com](mailto:ampastasia@gmail.com). We made portraits out of the pictures in various styles and techniques. During the workshop we exhibited the portraits in Salaminia A Lounge and we invited participants to set up the exhibition along with us. Participants contributed in setting up the exhibition by painting a portrait of a person they met in the workshop or of another contributor who had sent an image beforehand. Then, AMPASTASIA and the participants set up all together the e-mates art exhibition.

#### e-mates & today's society

The main parameter in e-mates project is, undoubtedly, the matter of communication. If the second part of the twentieth century is overwhelmed with mass media communication, what is the case for today's communication?

AMPASTASIA used post-mass media applications, in order to produce and spread the open call for e-mates workshop worldwide. Then, they fostered dialogue between them and the participants promoting, thus, 'bidirectional communication, conversation and interaction'. (Lemos, 2010) This process transfers the center of attention from artists to the pure communication between AMPASTASIA and the participants, enabling both parts to come together, to become (e-) mates. Hence, they engage with the cultural view of communication which depends on the point of view of all people involved. This kind of communication implies that 'reality, meaning and subjective experience are entwined' (Ruddock, 2001), which is the case in e-mates project.

Today's communication takes place regardless of spatial (or even spatiotemporal) conditions. It is multi-modal, in the sense that it makes use of a lot of devices and media. This is exactly the case for communication in e-mates project. There is, of course, a hidden cartography behind all this communication, which unfolds to many countries across five continents. e-mates project uses 'neocartography' practices (Cartwright, 2012) by constructing and mapping a world community.

Since communication has changed massively, as mentioned above, AMPASTASIA request a change at the art praxis through: dialogue, questions, suggestions, ideas, criticism. We would like to change the way of understanding the art in this new society of post-mass media. But what does this mean? The first breakthrough came when we started producing projects physically separately from each other. We realised that our art was really close intellectually. Thus, we gave painting performances to show the communication between each other, as well as the interaction between us and the public. The previous performances are: 'NO IDEA, then AMPASTASIA, then...IDEA' performance in ShopVille, Zurich (2010); performance as part of To be Painted AMPASTASIA exhibition in East London (2011); AMPASTASIA performance in Contemporary Greek Art Institute, Athens, Greece



(2012).Details on these events can be found at the following

<http://ampastasia.wordpress.com/exhibitions/> , <http://ampastasia.wordpress.com/projects/>.

links:

**e-mates** project is a shift within the timeline of AMPASTASIA performances, as it involves participants from all over the world and questions the role of the artist. As artists AMPASTASIA need to work on the limits , we are creating a transgression, we change the role of the artist, as we propose to share the role of the creator and get in touch with the audience. In this case, the artist should be able to control, deal and accept the ideas or criticism from the intellectual community. In order to develop the project, the artists use the techniques and the ideas of the audience .The direction and outcome of the project is up to all the people involved.

One does not have to be an expert in any particular art field to succeed at participating with the artists actively in **e-mates** project. Furthermore, the view that spectators should contribute to the art work is gaining popularity as more intellectual people opt to use the computers to research, not only for developing themselves, but also for being in touch with academic community.

The audience in **e-mates** project is both web audience and physical audience. Since AMPASTASIA uses extensively 'active methods' (Bermejo, 2007) to involve audience in the project, the boundaries between artists and audience blur. 'Active methods' used by AMPASTASIA was the email discussions with participants on the content of their website publication and **e-mates** workshop.

Humans have fears that concern personal relations: body horrors, psychological insecurities. Since we nowadays have the new technologies as might be expected this is inevitably changing because the transmitter have a new space of security, the cyberspace, we can communicate with people feeling that there is some space of protection. (Barney)

The emphasis placed on communication and new technologies meets the contemporary condition. Within **e-mates** project there is a plethora of values, both 'historical' or 'social' and 'classic' or even 'eternal'. (Motherwell, 1944) Communication, new technologies, multi-nationality, as well as the context of an international congress are 'historical' or 'social' parameters. The painting of portraits reflects the power of painting as a classic artistic medium. Unlike modern art, which is associated with the remoteness from society and the development of individual artistic styles related to form (Motherwell, 1944), contemporary art is close to society.

AMPASTASIA is a contemporary female artistic couple and their ultimate aim is to build a worldwide community of **e-mates**. They aim at blurring the boundaries between art and society, professional artists and amateurs, eliminate the hierarchies between traditional and contemporary, close and distant mates/friends/collaborators. **e-mates** project participants would never find their portraits within a congress-workshop-exhibit context along with other people from all over the world. Nor would they appear in a website-common window to the world-all together. Thanks to this project, both things happened, as shown in the following address: <http://ampastasia.wordpress.com/exhibitions/e-mates/>.

Thus, AMPASTASIA deal with authorship in a way that removes **e-mates** project from the safety of the author-function constant. **e-mates** project is led by AMPASTASIA. However, the author of the project is not just AMPASTASIA, since other people were also involved in painting of **e-mates** portraits, which were, afterwards, exhibited in Salaminia Lounge. The put-togetherness of 'original' AMPASTASIA portraits and other participants' portraits in a common exhibition undermines the authoritarian and safe way of full authorship. **e-mates** exhibition thrives between authorship and anonymity, flirting, thus, with the scenario of a 'culture in which fiction would not be limited by the figure of the author' (Foucault, 1979)





Figure 33: e-mates exhibition in Salaminia Lounge, Limassol, Cyprus, InSEA 2012 congress

### Contemporary Art Issues & e-mates project

e-mates project actively addresses contemporary art issues with regards to the boundaries between artist

and audience, as well as the way new technologies affect art.

As far as the artist(s)-audience scheme is concerned, AMPASTASIA put into practice the idea of an inclusive art world, which is based on the notion that Art should be for ‘everyone’. This tendency has largely developed since mid-1990s, during the National Lottery’s arrival and the Arts 4 Everyone. AMPASTASIA also promote ‘cultural diversity’ by realizing the e-mates project in the multi-national and multi-cultural context of InSEA 2012 congress. (Hylton, 2007) In this project we also ‘accept our failures, oral mistakes, symptomatic acts and casual language.’ (Freud, 1966)

Although e-mates project appeared to be simply a workshop, an event in the frame of InSEA 2012 congress, it actually expands to many other spatiotemporal contexts, which are ‘mediated, plural and entropic’. Its coordinates are much more complex and not easy to define or situate. (Zerbib, 2007) e-mates workshop carries the attributes of a performance by tying together the doing and the event. However, it is not a standalone event, but, instead, a part of e-mates project which epitomises the dialogue between AMPASTASIA and the participants. All the more, if a performance is a ‘producing rather than a production’ (Zerbib, 2007), e-mates workshop is both a producing and a production. It is, thus, both a performance and an art exhibition.



AMPASTASIA involved audience in a painting exhibition using all the range of traditional materials and new technologies. Nowadays, a painting workshop and exhibition is more than hanging paintings on a wall. It, instead, expands to internet communication, virtual show and multi-cultural discourse.

## Conclusion

In *e-mates* project art ties up physical with virtual, mechanical with human, the 'aura' of things is rediscovered. Walter Benjamin's fear that art in the age of mechanical reproduction will lose its magic is being surpassed. (Benjamin, 1936) The immediacy of the images received by contributors, as well as the creation of portraits and the whole interaction among *e-mates* convinced us that uniqueness of a person or of a work of art is not lost. All the more, there is a new kind of human touch behind the computer screen. Figures/persons in skype images seem relaxed and-at the same time-melancholic. Figures from other photos seem more typical.

As Lamarck points out there are in all the human beings two powerful forces very different and always in opposition which in turn destroy what they have succeeded in producing. So, if we have a new source -medium- we can re-conduct the situation in another type of art.(Lamarck, 1789)

In *e-mates* project latest communication media foster face to face interaction and vice versa. This means that today's communication is reflected upon *e-mates* project in its whole.

What is more important, though, is that this project can blaze the trail for building international communities and participate in worldwide artistic, academic and educational activities through internet communication bound up (when possible) with physical interaction. It is often assumed that art education should be state-funded, especially in the early years, but is it, also, possible to create a web-based art community?

Art and technology in *e-mates* project build up a global platform for creativity and communication and this can be the case for many future prospects and projects.

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Arts Education in the Crossroad of Cultures

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## **PART 5**

### **Learning in and through arts in the 21<sup>st</sup> century**



## Dance-theatre and Bioenergetics: an interdisciplinary reporting developed by the discipline of "methodology of Dance" in the Freire Platform – Brazil

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### Abstract

This study reports the methodological procedures employed by the discipline of "methodology of Dance" in teaching and learning contents of exercise physiology along the initial teacher training program "Freire Platform". This program belongs to Universidade Estadual da Bahia (UNEB-Brazil) and has as its objective the training of teachers for elementary (6-9 years old) and high school (10-17 years old). Considering the importance of understanding the contents of exercise Physiology (metabolic routes: alatic, lactic and system aerobic) as providers of health and quality of life of students, however, considering also the breadth of concepts intrinsic to this process and therefore the difficulty to understand this topic, this study aimed to apply dance and theatre – in an aesthetic sense (Aesthesis) – as supportive agents to seize funds of knowledge. In this sense, the basic principles of Bioenergetics were used – with the "future physical educators" – by means of aesthetic education movement (sense-perception-consciousness-expression). The hypothesis was that with the help of Dance Theater it would intensify considerably the understanding of the contents of Bioenergetics, which had already been introduced in a conventional way in the classroom, but not yet fixed in its entirety. Students (n =22; 28-55 years old) had a total of 60 hours lessons over 03 months, each month with 20 classroom hours. The interdisciplinary study (Bioenergy & Dance) was the theme of the last module, in that way, students subdivided into three groups and under the guidance of the teachers created masks, clothing, ending in a choreographic rehearsal. The methodology used to question referentially was established from a technique of creative movement, that has respected the own abilities and motion skills the students, which had no prior experience in any modern dance technique, and thus directed the study to the problem (Bioenergetics) into four phases: planning, improvisation, composition, interpretation. The procedures were justified by five theoretical principles: (1)-principle of delimitation of the problem, (2)-principle of combination of different tasks, (3)-Principle of the use of different starting points, (4)-principle of guidance to the process, and (5)-principle of guidance for the product. The final consolidated three separate choreographies, followed by two reviews: a) practice (presentation of choreography to the public in the theatre of the University; with a production of three videos), and b) self-assessment of competence (in an open front of the large group). Through the analysis of the reports of experiments concluded through Dance and Theater, there was emphasis of learning contents of "Bioenergetics". In this sense, it is visible that Art Education is conducive to the development of interdisciplinary themes, among others, to academic training.





**Keywords** Dance, Interdisciplinary learning, Aesthetic education

## Introduction

This study reports the methodological procedures employed by the discipline of "Methodological and Theoretical foundations of the Dance" in teaching and learning contents of Exercise Physiology along the initial teacher training program "Freire Platform" (PARFOR). This program belongs to Universidade Estadual da Bahia (UNEB-Brazil) and has as its objective the training of teachers for elementary (6-9 years old) and high school (10-17 years old).

The program seeks to ensure that teachers in public primary education in exercise obtain the training required by the Brazilian law of guidelines-LDB, through the deployment of special classes, unique to teachers. In Brazil, even today, there is a great lack of professionals in different disciplines, schools distant from major population centers. Thus, there are cases in which certain disciplines such as visual arts, physical education are taught, for example, by teachers of Portuguese language or mathematics (common disciplines in schools).

The national plan for the training of Teachers of basic education consists of an initiative between the Ministry of Education (MEC) and the Education Departments of the States and municipalities, under the EDP-milestone Plan Commitment Education for All, and is directed to public institutions of higher education (IPES). This plan has established in Brazil a new procedure for cooperation between the Union and the States and municipalities, while respecting the autonomy of the States of the Federation. In this sense, the programmer is intended for teachers in exercise in public schools and municipal without proper training and offering superior courses and free public education in superior quality. The PARFOR courses are at the Undergraduate level of initial formation, and cover the following areas: visual arts, music, physical education, geography, sciences, English, pedagogy and physics.

The types of courses offered in the PLAFO are: a) First degree – for teachers-in-Office on the public network of basic education not having higher education; b) second degree – for teachers-in-Office on the public network of basic education, There are at least three years in their initial training area distinct; and c) pedagogical Training – for unlicensed graduates teachers who are in exercise on the public network of basic education.

In December 2012 the UNEB (Universidade Estadual da Bahia), more precisely, in the city of Juazeiro, Brazil's northeast, was the third module (20 hours), out of a total of 60 hours, of the discipline Methodology of Dance. On this occasion, too, was starting the second module of Exercise Physiology (20 hours of a total of 60 hours). It is important to note that during the first two modules of dance the students had already received an explanation of the relationship "body-movement-rhythm-expression" in order: historical, social, cultural, anthropological, philosophical, ethical and pedagogical. Thus, the third and last module would be reserved for: a) the construction of lesson plans in accordance with the school age range and also; b) the development of a choreographic project.



## The Project

During the planning of the PLAFO week, the teachers of both disciplines (Physiology and Dance) have discussed the fulfillment of its objectives and contents for the week. In this sense, both teachers in their professional views were affinities: what to teach, and how to teach, to whom? To identify the student's difficulties in previous modules, as well as their abilities; the teachers decided to leave for a challenge: integrate the theoretical contents of Bioenergetics through the methodology of dance. Within that perspective sought to subject's awareness through sensitization. This meant, use the relation body-movement-expression to the gain of knowledge (aesthetic education movement). This means, consider, i.e. enhance the body in actions of teaching and learning. Thus, it was established a space for the creation and,

And what is Bioenergetics? Humans get energy feeding of plants or animals that feed on plants. The nutrients from ingested food are provided in the form of: a) carbohydrates, b) fats and proteins). These three basic fuels or energy substrates can finally be fractionated for the release of stored energy in the human body and, finally, used for the movement of the body itself (ASTRAND; STRROMME; RODAHL, 2006). The cells, in particular, contain chemical pathways that convert these energy substrates, which in turn can be used by the cell and other cells of the body itself: this process is called as bioenergetics. On the other hand, all chemical reactions present in the human body are called by metabolism. The energy present in the cells is also needed for the active transport of distinct and important substances such as sodium, potassium and calcium ions through cell membranes. Therefore, this active transport is fundamental to the survival of cells (MCARDLE; KATCH, 2000; KATCH, 1998).

Considering the importance of understanding the contents of Exercise Physiology (metabolic routes: alatic, lactic and system aerobic) as providers of health and quality of life of students. However, considering also the breadth of concepts intrinsic to this process and therefore the difficulty to understand this topic, this study aimed to apply dance and theatre – in an aesthetic sense, “Aesthesis” (KIRCHNER; FERRARI, 2006) – as supportive agents to seize funds of knowledge. In this sense, the basic principles of Bioenergetics were used – with the “future physical educators” – by means of aesthetic education movement (sense-perception-consciousness-expression).

## Objectives

- a) Promote knowledge about the mechanisms of physiological regulation of physical exercise, on the other hand, also focus on the integrated functions of the physiological systems in situations of physical exertion and fatigue, as well as knowledge about the main variables to the appropriate control and exercise prescription.
- b) Give the student fundamental knowledge of dance pedagogy and its methodological and theoretical principles.
- c) Promote a study of interdisciplinary of knowledge content and transdisciplinary areas.

## Specific objectives

### In Dance:

-Promote the relationship between the knowledge of basic theoretical fundamentals of dance with the acquisition of motor skill abilities;



- Understand the importance of the study of the fundamentals of dance classes for school pedagogy;
- Relate the theoretical with practical situation;
- List the contents of the curricular areas related with the discipline;
- Acquire knowledge about human being's movements are controlled and improved from-body relations-rhythm, expression.

#### In Physiology:

- Understand the importance of the study of exercise physiology for physical education;
- Assimilate the content of the discipline of exercise physiology theoretical and practical way;
- Acquire practical knowledge about the theoretical integrated operation of the physiological systems related to the context of human movement.

#### Methodology

The hypothesis tested by this study was that with the help of Dance Theater it would intensify considerably the understanding of the contents of Bioenergetics, which had already been introduced in a conventional way in the classroom, but not yet fixed in its entirety. Students (n =22; 28-55 years old) had a total of 60 hours lessons over 03 months, each month with 20 classroom hours. The interdisciplinary study (Bioenergy & Dance) was the theme of the last module, in that way: The students were divided into three groups and under the guidance of their teachers from theoretical Physiology created masks and dress themselves (Figure 01). This was associated with the body-teamwork programmer, which ended in a presentation at the theater of the University.

The methodology used to question referentially was established from a technique of creative movement, that has respected the own abilities and motion skills the students, which had no prior experience in any modern dance technique, and thus directed the study to the problem (Bioenergetics) into four phases: planning, improvisation, composition, interpretation. The procedures followed five theoretical principles of creative movement from NEUBER (2000), proposed for the education of the movement in dance and theater with emphasis on physical education: (1)-principle of delimitation of the problem, (2)-principle of combination of different tasks, (3)-principle of the use of different starting points, (4)-principle of guidance to the process, and (5)-principle of guidance for the product.

At the end were consolidated three different choreographies, presented by their respective groups. Already the reviews consisted of: a) practice (a choreographic presentation in the Theatre of the University), and b) self-assessment of skills developed in this time (open to the group). From this material has been made a video of the dance presentation. This was subsequently presented to the group as a form of assessment of own capacities both in the technical sense (evaluation), as, also, corpora for development of professional competencies (knowledge). Accordingly, the assessment of the dossier of the aesthetic movement sought to emphasize the student's consciousness in the wealth of aesthetic experience. Second PEEZ (2005) is through experience that the subject creates space for the experience of discontinuity of experiences that so if constituted as responsible for truths.

The planning of activities teachers and later the dance construction of students followed a methodology choreographic research own developed for this project based on NEUBER (2000). The following diagram 01 shows the paths that have configured this project.

Soon the choreographic planning arose from the reflection of the contents of the exercise physiology by groups in the sense of an idea, which turned into a dance theme. From this, the group established a problem to be solved. In dance, it means that the body now becomes element for the achievement of intentions. Thus, it is the first principle: the process of improvisation and delimitation of the problem. Soon after this first phase the groups began the so-called process of improvisation. This process, which seeks through the second principle (combination of different tasks) goes to establish a body elements that translates the contents of physiology delimited as a problem to be solved during a composition and consolidated by means of interpretation in the future.

### Methodological Principles for the Design of Lesson Plan in Dance and Bioenergetics

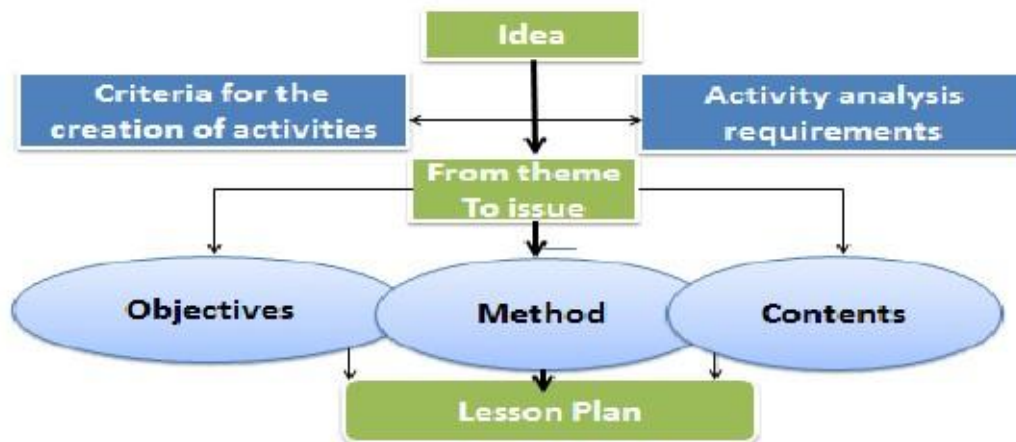


Diagram 01: Methodological Design of Dance and Bioenergetics

### Methodological principle of Improvisation and Composition in Dance and Bioenergetics

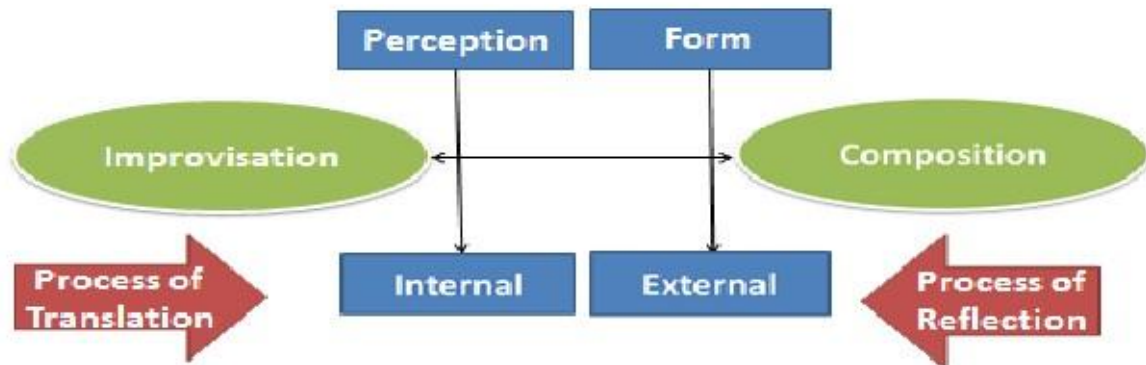


Diagram 02: The process of Improvisation and Composition in Dance and Bioenergetics

All these principles follow a logical order, however, does not happen thus somewhat abstracted prepares the process for the other, as likewise complements it. In this sense, the third principle weaves a path to organizational and methodological creative process. Thus, he assists the process so that the ideas of bioenergetics, even more, are addressed in its complexity (use of different starting points). The fourth creative principle refers to the guidance for the process, i.e. so that the experience is validated as intrinsic and real intention of educational process, the relationship body-movement must and toward the proposal objectives. This fact confirms and complements the fifth principle: guidance for the product. At the same time to all stages there are also included the following: a) the activity creation criteria and, b) requirements analysis activities. Both are of the utmost importance, since they work as filters of quality stage, contributing to what ideas will follow as far as possible in the right direction to consolidate an initial idea.





Figure 01: Scenic productions and makeup

The evaluation of the project and students left the narrations of the members themselves during the end of each section of the project and reflections after the choreographic presentation. This was attended by an audience of approximately 100 people. Thus, the qualitative analysis of data was determined by an analysis of factors formulated from the narrations of the students themselves. For this specific criteria were established that allowed the formulation of 06 categories: **pleasure, identity, interaction, perception, reflection and knowledge**. Through these categories it was possible to establish the degree of influence of body work with a focus on bioenergetics. The most significant results relate to knowledge, pleasure and perception. In this sense, using the relationship body-movement was emphasized and – at the same time – developed new knowledge mainly by the playful action (diagram 02). Soon, the metabolic processes-routes - from AMP-ADP to a generation of ATP, are no longer a problem to understanding. Now they are turned into an activity of joy and relaxed pleasure. The perception category also appeared significant. Therefore, the body through its organs of sense (smell, taste, touch, hearing and vision) is the primary mechanism for understanding and contact of self with the world that surrounds us. The evaluation of the project and the students in the dance module and bioenergetics was established through the narrations of the students themselves. In this way, it is understood that the student should participate in the evaluation process. Therefore, teaching and contents are directed to the person. The teachers have the function of organizing actions and provide a full and



differentiated teaching. This means that the teacher is, and continues to be a facilitator for the process.

## Conclusion

The fulfillment of this project enabled students in addition to the incorporation of new identities – a sensitive subject - also, the development of social skills and psychomotor functions. This project showed that between the Dance/Expression and Physiology; and contrary to what many people believe, there are no distances between these disciplines. Dance is the body in motion in the search for the expression of a particular intention, idea. Thus, this body needs energy to get to the expression. Soon, this body is organic, it represents a spatial limitations between the inner self and others and things. So in a phenomenological sense, the body assists in directing, sharing, protecting and balancing our existence. An example of this is the skin. The skin comprises the boundary between two worlds. Therefore, in addition to regulate sensations, she is responsible for knowledge gain of aspects such as: pressure, heat, cold, pain, fear and pleasure. And it is a physiological principle of the human body; necessary to life.

Information of this art is materialized from motor skill experiences both on the surface of the body (skin/sense), as internally (muscles, joints, organs). These become, over time, the content of the "self" image-building and, also, the differentiation of "me" from the "other". On the other hand, is also in the body that we experience the cultural codes. This means, information required the construction of knowledge, among them: the set of intrinsic capabilities necessary for the professional development of the person. The aesthetic experience of the movement consolidates itself as an important factor in the development of each and every human being, regardless of their age. Already in the last century the American philosopher and educator John Dewey claimed that aesthetic experience if leaves occur in sense productively and receptive in everyday; perception is fundamental to the fulfillment procedure. In this way, the attention to the fact that targets becomes conscious, assuming the category of phenomenon: fact appreciated. This means: information interpreted and therefore smartening up quite; high degree of knowledge.

The conclusions expressed here represent the result of narrations of the students themselves, at the end of each section of the project and its reflections after presenting choreographic creation. This was attended by an audience of approximately 100 people. Thus, the qualitative analysis of data was determined by an analysis of factors formulated from the narrations of the students themselves. For this specific criteria were established that allowed the formulation of 06 categories: pleasure, identity, interaction, perception, reflection and knowledge.

These categories make the final evaluation of the project. Soon, it was established that teaching the dance (the relation of body-movement-expression), in the different dynamics of improvisation, allowed the students to internalization of contents purpose by bioenergetics (the translation on an own body language). Thus, it was possible that students could materialize their intentions (ideas, things) through body movements. This means, that in a process of teaching and learning the subject need to publish their intentions, so that they give a return of their capabilities (self-image, identity). In the end, all such predicates might be intensified through the presentation of three choreographies in the Theatre: the fact that terminated the proceeding knowledge gain in aesthetic sense, with full enjoyment of group.



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## The role of the Virtual Campus in the undergraduate course “Arts-Based Research”: A site for student experimentation and authorization\*

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### Abstract

This paper reflects on the role of the Virtual Campus during the course “Arts-Based Research”, co-taught by Professor Fernando Hernández-Hernández and Graduate Teaching Assistant Rachel Fendler, within the undergraduate degree program at the College of Fine Arts of the University of Barcelona. By narrating a specific classroom dynamic that emerged over the course of the semester, this paper will relate how the Virtual Campus became a site for experimentation, investigation and, ultimately, authorization among the students enrolled in the course.

### Key words

Arts-based research methodologies, educational technologies, collaborative research, art education

### Full text

This paper provides a close-up view of a classroom experience where undergraduate art students (and their professors) learned about arts-based research, by researching. This article specifically addresses the role of the Virtual Campus (a generic, Moodle-based online platform) in the development of the collaborative research that was undertaken, and describes how the digital platform played an important role in developing students' experimentation with the course material, and eventual authorization as researchers. We will also discuss the impact theory on a/r/tography had in allowing students to identify their experience and contributions throughout the semester not as “classwork”, per say, but as a valid contribution to the greater research community.

### The mise-en-scène

This research experience is contextualized in relation to the changes in European degree programs as they are modified to adapt to the implementation of the European Space for Higher Education. In the academic year 2011-2012, a new class was introduced into undergraduate program in the Faculty of Fine Arts at the University of Barcelona. This

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\* This research is part of the ongoing national study Living and learning with new literacies in and outside school: contributions for reducing school drop-out, exclusion and abandonment among youth. Spanish Ministry of Science and Innovation. EDU2011-24122.



methodology-focused course, Arts-Based Research, marks a shift in the definition of research practice in the field of Fine Arts, reflecting changes both at a local and international level.

If we look at art practice outside of academic institutions, the word “research” is scarce. Instead, terms like collaborative art, community-based art, or activism are concepts that delineate an expanded notion of art, raising key questions regarding who creates art, under what conditions, and to what end. Two notable critics who have written about this trend include Nicolas Bourriaud (2002), who argues in *Relational Aesthetics* that art practice goes beyond an individual process of production to invoke the participation of the viewer, the community, other collaborators, and so on. Or, Reinaldo Laddaga (2006), who describes a turn towards a practical (rather than aesthetic) application of art, and documents a renewed notion of artists as professionals with specific technical capacities. While each argument is not without their criticisms, they are indicative of the discourse around how contemporary art is blurring the boundaries between art production and social intervention, questioning the way in which art contributes to the social and political arena.

From within the academy, the discussion surrounding the role and nature of artistic research has developed both within the arts as well as in the social sciences or the field of education. From the arts, the sharp increase in doctoral programs in design and art-related areas provides a concrete perspective on the debate surrounding the contribution of art practice to the wider research community. In her analysis of recent design doctoral theses – which she notes have doubled in the last two decades – Joyce Yee (2010) stresses the methodological innovation enacted by theses that are defined as practice-based. Yee finds that design projects conceived as research confound the practice-theory dichotomy. Using diverse methods (Yee cites Kincheloe's description of bricolage methodology), the theses analyzed introduce both design and theory in order to work towards resolving the research questions on hand.

It is this concern with methodology that is the focus of literature on what is termed, broadly, arts-based research. The presence of art practice in academic research, both as “hybrid forms” and “art for scholarship's sake” (Cahnmann-Taylor, 2008: 8), has been growing, specifically within educational research, since at least the 1990s. With the publication in recent years of a number of comprehensive volumes that categorize and document arts-based research, there is an increasing amount of theoretical and practical resources that bring together and define this body of work (See: Leavy, 2008; Cahnmann-Taylor & Siegesmund, 2008; Springgay, Irwin, et al, 2008; Sullivan, 2009; Barone & Eisner, 2012). The majority of these titles unite the work of educators, social scientists and artists who introduce artistic methods into their research, drawing on the affective, aesthetic, fictive and creative qualities of art in order to better capture and communicate elements of a research process and its conclusions.

This synopsis is not meant to portray art practice as somehow having an inevitable evolution towards research methods. Rather, it references, on one hand, the shift in qualitative paradigms from within academia that has subsequently carved out space for the inclusion of artistic methodologies and, on the other hand, tendencies in the art world that, due to changing socioeconomic conditions, have led to an increased interest in assigning a social value to art production.

#### Encountering arts-based research in an undergraduate class

While it is beyond the scope of this paper to provide an in-depth sate of the art on arts-based research, we would like to share here a few key resources we used in our course. Offered for the first time in the academic year 2011-12, our goal was to introduce students to the theoretical underpinnings of arts-based research. For a comprehensive introduction, we red





Fernando Hernández-Hernández's (2008) article that traces the evolution of arts research by charting the impact of the narrative turn on qualitative inquiry. To complement this vision, we reviewed the work of Eliot Eisner and Tom Barone (see: Barone, 2008; Barone & Eisner, 2008), who have advocated strongly in favor of arts based methodologies, in particular in the field of education, since the early nineties. Finally, Part II: Methodologies in Knowles and Cole's (2008) Handbook of the Arts in Qualitative Research, provided an overview of different tendencies in arts-based research practices, which portrays the diversity of the epistemological perspectives and methodological approaches currently grouped under this umbrella term. In addition to working from texts, the course reviewed and studied a number of practical examples, drawing on current projects carried out by artists and investigators, who in most cases worked locally. By bringing in the authors themselves to discuss their own research, students were able to discuss and analyze the research process, in addition to its results.

For the students, this course content marked a radical departure from their understanding of what it means to do research as an artist. During the semester they began to reflect on knowledge production and qualitative inquiry, and were challenged to learn about and develop artistic methodologies in a context different from what they had been accustomed to. We found that, as students grappled with new terminology, the reoccurring question that tended to surface was: Can this (art) project be classified as research, why or why not?

This question is symptomatic of the fact that the pupils were from a Fine Arts background. An important challenge for the group was determining when art was, or was not, research. Notably, this is not always an issue that is addressed in literature more oriented towards the social sciences. The basic criteria we provided students was: whether or not a project can be evaluated by peers. We asked them to determine if a project has clear objectives and a transparent enough process to determine if it achieved what it set out to do. Our goal was to help students distinguish between creative research (where art is produced as part of a personal experience, and the result 'speaks for itself'); artistic research (where art is the result of a process, and is contextualized within a set of relationships that includes the viewer); and art-based research (which contributes to narrating a lived experience, reveals something that would otherwise remain unseen, demonstrates critical or reflexive capacities, and uses artistic methodologies for social intervention).<sup>1</sup>

Out of the debates that emerged over the course of the semester, it was clear that students were new to the demands of thinking through their art practice in relation to specific research goals. In response to this experience of newness, and in keeping with the epistemological perspective and methodological approach of the course content, Fernando invited students to learn to do arts-based research, by researching.

This invitation initiated a semester-long investigation into the meaning of silence in the university classroom, specifically in relation to our particular course. This project, in which both the pupils and the professors participated, allowed for the experimentation and implementation of some of the arts-based research strategies introduced in class. Elsewhere, we have written in-depth about the experience of this investigation and the results it produced (Onsès, Fendler & Hernández-Hernández, in press; Pujol, Rios, et al, 2012). However, for the

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<sup>1</sup>These three categories, developed by Fernando, respond to different notions of how art can be considered research. In certain Fine Arts contexts (not excluding our own, at the University of Barcelona), some would argue that any type of art production should legitimately be understood as research. By offering this classification system, without imposing a hierarchy between each category, we tried to provide students with a reference for thinking about the different processes behind art production, and which ones are in play when we talk about “arts-based research”.

purposes of this article, I will briefly summarize a few main methodologies and outcomes of this research, to contextualize the process.

The research process used strategies from narrative inquiry and image-based research (Hernández-Hernández, 2013) to explore, on an individual and group level, the meaning and experience of silence. By writing and sharing images, the evidence consisted of personal stories or representations that captured each individual's relationship to silence in the classroom.

Here are few extracts from the writing produced when we decided to narrate our relationship with silence in the classroom, and the meaning we assigned to it:<sup>2</sup>

ERNEST: We have come to believe that in the spaces between dialogue in the educational context there is no room for the hidden, the unexpected, the silence...

ESTELA: I feel like I should respond right now, but I get nervous and embarrassed at the thought of making a mistake and all the answers disappear, my head gets empty and my lips become sealed from within.

FERNANDO: Silence is not an absence of words, but the emptiness in which we can find our own self.

MAGDALENA: While silence itself is incompatible with debate... it is capable of creating a dialogue, of being a cause.

The writing was shared with the whole group, allowing the class to gain a more complex understanding of the quiet pauses that had taken on such a prominent role in the classroom.

In addition to the writing, images, visual compilations and even a musical score were also produced and shared (Figures 1 and 2).



Figure 1: Representation of silence, by Rafa Cañete. The lines of the score, from top to bottom, are: the professor's voice; the professor's thoughts; the students' voice; the students' thoughts; the radiators in the building.

To give shape and meaning to the evidence produced, the class eventually divided into three groups, each one choosing to represent and interpret the data differently. The outcomes consisted of an article, a video and an exhibition/installation. The article (Pujol, Rios, et al,

<sup>2</sup> Translations from the original by the authors.

2012) wove together the different narratives shared by the class, and drew on the theoretical references used through the semester, to produce a reflective and polyphonic account of the research experience. The video (Figure 3), Arts-based research about silence in the university classroom (Onsès, Garau, et al, 2012) used footage from class sessions, photographs, and material from the Virtual Campus (texts and images) to capture the research process and present, through the audiovisual medium, the outcomes of the research. Finally, the exhibition/installation produced a rhizomatic map (Figures 4 and 5) that documented not only the research but the class experience as a whole, bringing together text and images from the course content, the research, and the lived/social experience of the course.



Figure 2: The classroom as a place of silence, by Ignasi Prat.



Figure 3: Screenshot from the video Arts-based research about silence in the university classroom.



Figure 4: (Left) Partial view of the final installation of the map of the course.



Figure 5: (Right) Viewing the map of relations that emerged from a class on arts-based research.

### In and outside the classroom: research from the Virtual Campus

It is important to note that the research that developed over the course of the semester did not begin as such, but was initially an exercise to experiment with narrative inquiry (which was introduced at the beginning of the semester as an introduction to arts-based research). Over time the process evolved, gained complexity, and began to be considered “an investigation”. We (both teachers and students) observed that the Virtual Campus was a key element in allowing the class to engage in a collaborative project with such creativity, dedication and sophistication. In effect, the Virtual Campus was the place where the collaborative research was born, and it became a space where the students developed and narrated their own relationship with the course.



11/12

### Investigació Basada en les Arts

**Fòrum: Sobre la recerca basada en les arts**

10 missatges des de la darrera entrada

**Fòrum: El silenci: el projecte del vídeo**

42 missatges des de la darrera entrada

**Fòrum: El silenci: el projecte escrit**

7 missatges des de la darrera entrada

**Fòrum: Treball final: xarxa del curs**

20 missatges des de la darrera entrada

**Fòrum: L'avaluació del curs**

1 missatge des de la darrera entrada

Figure 6: Screenshot of the 80 new messages Rachel encountered when she logged in to the Virtual Campus over Christmas break.

The initial phase of the research was carried out within the Virtual Campus (Figure 6). The research problem emerged in a forum opened for the purpose of brainstorming a topic that was of general interest to the group; a student brought up the issue of silence, and others chimed in in agreement. Over the following weeks, the writings, images and conversations related to the investigation were shared in forums where everyone could read and respond to each other's work.

Using this digital platform, students overcame the hesitation they often experienced in class. As we have discussed elsewhere (See: Hernández-Hernández & Fendler, 2012) this experience confirms current pedagogical theories on the potential of ICT use in the classroom. Doug Thomas and John Seely Brown (2012) have argued that one of the biggest changes that ICT-use introduces to learning culture is the way it allows for new methods of participation. They define a shift from a teaching-based approach (where students adapt to a pre-established setting) to a learning-based approach, where students take part in designing the actions and expectations of the educational environment.

The way students used the Virtual Campus to carry out the research clearly illustrates a learning-based approach to the course. While, as professors, we were able to contribute our experience to help guide students at different moments in the development of the investigation, at no time was it an "assignment" in the traditional sense. In other words, the research was not planned, it did not appear in the original design for the course, but instead developed out of the students' high level of engagement with the course material. We believe that this engagement would not have been possible without the Virtual Campus. In contrast to the physical classroom, the digital environment facilitated a leveling of roles between students and professors; the nature of the forums meant that dialogue was unlimited by time constraints and it was not directional (as when, for example, a student asks a professor a question), creating an incentive for students to take the initiative to collaborate with each other and their own answers. The digital dialogue also facilitated the sharing of hyperlinks, images, video clips, and so on, which allowed for a type of creative interaction with the course material that could not have been replicated through classroom discussions alone.

The importance of the Virtual Campus to the research process was openly recognized by both students and the professors. In particular, the students valued the collaborative nature of the





project. In an academic environment that emphasizes individual progress and achievement, for many students this type of cooperation was a new experience. Definitively, by coming together in the Virtual Campus, our work became more than a sum of individual parts.

#### What's in a name? Becoming a/r/tographers

While, in retrospect, all the participants in the process viewed the investigation as a success, it was not an easy, fluid task, and it did not progress in a linear fashion. As we noted earlier, students were new to the research process, and were discovering and using arts-based methodologies as they went along. In addition, there reached a point when the sheer amount of material in the Virtual Campus was daunting. The experience of learning to research by researching was a challenge that often left the group feeling unsure of the next step they should take.

A key moment in the course, one that allowed the students to assess their progress and articulate their process within a methodological approach, came near the end of the semester when we introduced the class to a/r/tography (see: Springgay, Irwin, et al, 2008). The term a/r/tography was created by a group of colleagues from the University of British Columbia, initially as a way to describe the research being produced by the postgraduate students in the field of Art Education. It refers to a type of research process (or, in a/r/tographic terms, a living inquiry) that allows a researcher, or group of researchers, to occupy hybrid identities, as artists / researchers / teachers.

In the introduction to the volume *Being with A/r/tography*, Rita Irwin and Stephanie Springgay (2008) discuss the theoretical foundations of a/r/tography and suggest six possible “renderings”, or conceptual practices (rather than methods) put to use in their research processes.<sup>3</sup> In a workshop session, as a class we translated these renderings from English to Catalan, and then transposed them onto our ongoing investigation. This exercise led us to draw connections between a/r/tographic ways of researching and our own inquiry into the experience of silence in the university classroom. For example, the rendering excess was associated with the material in the Virtual Campus. This rendering, defined as “that which is created when control and regulation disappear and we grapple with what lies outside the acceptable. Excess may deal with the monstrous, the wasteful, the leftover, and the unseen, as well as the magnificent and the sublime...” (Irwin & Springgay, 2008: xxx), was associated with the production in the Virtual Campus not only because of the excessive number of posts we had generated, but because this rendering describes a strategy of working with material that could be considered insignificant, just as the contributions in the Virtual Campus could have been understood as secondary in relation to the course content, or the class discussions.

By conceptualizing the research as an a/r/tographic undertaking, the project gained validity in the eyes of the students. In addition to the renderings, which reflected strategies our research practice had already invoked, in Irwin and Springgay's description of a/r/tography several other concepts resonated with the class. First, a/r/tography embodies a concept of “living inquiry”, which affirms the evolving, embodied nature of a research experience. Their description of an organic, participatory research process captured the way our research came into being, over the course of the semester. Second, the argument in support for relational,

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<sup>3</sup> The six renderings they list are: contiguity, living inquiry, metaphor and mimesis, openings, reverberations, excess. These concepts are not a checklist in terms of what makes a project a/r/tographical, rather they are meant to serve as guides that can aid a/r/tographers when thinking about how to structure the research process. (Irwin & Springgay, 2008: xxvii-xxx)



practice-based (and arts-based) investigations provided a strong theoretical defense for a process that had felt, to the students, a bit haphazard and accidental at the start. Finally, the emphasis on the three identities of artist / researcher / teacher embraced the different spheres – artistic, investigatory and educational – the Fine Arts students were negotiating in and between as we were researching. A/r/tography provided a mirror in which the students recognized their own work and experience; by seeing themselves there reflected, they came to see their work as an investigation, and came to identify as researchers (a/r/tographers).

### Conclusions

This experience narrates a learning-by-doing approach to art-based educational research, and describes how the Virtual Campus was crucial for providing a space for student experimentation and authorization. The structural flexibility of this virtual environment made it possible for students to engage with the course material differently than would have been possible inside the classroom, allowing for a high-level of participation that gave rise to a student-led, learning-based dynamic. The course format was designed to bring art practice into contact with a wider scientific field, blurring the boundaries between art production and research. We feel that this was accomplished; the results our collaborative, arts-based research have gone beyond the walls of the Fine Arts college, to be presented at conferences and disseminated in articles.

Our experience taught us that by choosing to engage the material through collaborative research, both the students and us (the professors) began to re-situate ourselves in relation to each other and to the course content. We were able to modify our roles as students, teachers or artists and come to inhabit newly-formed, a/r/tographic identities. We have observed that from a pedagogical perspective this change is not superficial, but rather implies a significant shift in young people's identification as learning subjects and actors in the scientific community.

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## Pre-service teachers in the post-literate age: a regional Australian pre-service teacher visual education study

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### Abstract

Within our growing knowledge economy, classroom students are increasingly encountering visual media images as knowledge representations. In order to examine how education now intersects with new media technologies and visual popular culture, the paper delves into pre-service teachers' preference to engage with visual media rather than written text and thus implications for their future classroom pedagogies. The paper is contextualised in the research on pre-service teachers increasingly engaging with multiple image forms in their daily lives. Emerging from this examination is the identification that pre-service teacher educator awareness of the semiotic complexity of contemporary education is limited. In particular, an understanding of the role images in meaning making in the 21<sup>st</sup> century classroom. It highlights the fact that limited research has examined how pre-service students use images in digital learning environments and how images as interpretative and expressive insights, or how meanings are being made from, and through, engagement with the visual as part of the current learning landscape. In conclusion, the paper provides recommendations for the implications for pre-service training to maximise opportunities in engagement with visual education in integrated learning contexts.

### Key Words

Pre-service teaching, visual education, visual media, visual literacy

### Introduction

In Australia a recent national report on visual education 'First We See' identifies and discusses the challenges and expectations of teachers and their capacities to meet the classroom students' inherent needs in working within an ever increasingly visual world (Davis, 2008). This report is foregrounded in the wider conversation of edusemiotics (Danesi, 2010) that recognises that the field of semiotics is greater than the science of linguistics and encompasses body communication, aesthetic products, visual communication, media, advertising, narratives and all cultural products and the primacy of the visual. There exists limited research on how classroom students and pre-service teachers use images as interpretative and expressive insights across this semiotic landscape, or how meanings are being made from, and through, engagement with the visual image in digital technologies. This initial pilot study (n=100) with pre-service teachers focuses on pre-service teachers' interests and perceptions about using visual images in learning across subject areas; communicating and reading images and developing creativity skills. It further reflects on Lea & Jones (2011)



and Grushka & Donnelly (2010) claims that higher education is wanting in its preparation to develop sufficiently visually literate teachers for digitally mediated learning environments.

#### The Australian Visual Education Research Context

The 'First We See' report on Visual Education in Australia by Davis (2008) raises concerns about pre-service teachers' background, knowledge, skills and expertise in accessing the potential of visual education to inform and communicate 21st century knowledge.

Ubiquitous images are percolating all representations of knowledge via new media and expertise in using images can no longer be considered an area of interest but rather an essential skill (Stafford, 1996, 2007). While there is recognition of the role of new information platforms in 21st century learning and strong expectations of educational institutions that the pedagogies of teachers integrate web tools and other digital platforms within all classrooms (Koehler, & Mishra, 2005), there is no explicit intent to address the work visual images can do in this new media learning environment (Freedman, 2000; Tavin, 2003), nor whether pre-service teachers are equipped with these skills (Grushka & Donnelly, 2010). Consequently, the purpose of this pilot study was to find out pre-service teachers' background knowledge, experiences and perceptions about their preparation for the integration of visual images in multimodal learning. The findings of the survey reported in this paper may activate further research and inform policy directions in pre-service teacher education.

#### 21<sup>st</sup> Century Competencies and Challenges of the New Digital Era

All educators are confronted with "how to prepare youngsters so that they can survive and thrive in a world different from one ever known or even imagined before" (Gardner, 2006, p.17). Sandell (2009) asserts that the 21st century has challenged educators to explore our increasingly visual world critically and with fresh eyes, '... from preschool to post-graduate level, all learners increasingly need 21st century skills that rely on multiple forms of literacy' (p.288). The 'Framework for 21st Century Learning' (<http://www.p21.org/overview>) identifies creativity, critical thinking, communication and collaboration' as essential for all students in the 21st century. The 21st century learning model identifies that effective citizens and workers need a range of functional and critical thinking skills in communicative environments, for example Information literacy, Media Literacy, and Information Communication Technology (ICT). The challenge in pre-service teacher education is that the skills described in the model command the capacity for students to communicate in both the 'real' and 'virtual' worlds. In evaluation of the model, the centrality of images in the construction of knowledge and its application to working life are reaffirmed. Images inhabit all spaces connected to Life and Career Skills; Learning and Innovation Skills and specifically the ability to critically think, communicate and collaborate with creativity; and they are central to Information, Media and Technology skills.

Currently the literary practice of many students outside of school hours is identified as being more relevant to their everyday and future lives rather than those provided by the education system (Green & Hannon, 2007; Lankshear & Knobel, 2006). While Prensky (2001) has identified these practices as belonging to digital natives and digital immigrants, in reality the stereotype is far more complex and may hide the reality of many students and pre-service teachers lives (Green & Hannon, 2007; Oblinger & Oblinger, 2005). Davis (2008) extends this discussion and points out that while twenty-first century students are 'infoage' savvy, they need more than the capacity to click around screens. Thus, education is one of the most important skill providers of new literacy practices for students in preparation of their future





working lives and for those who have little access to new technologies, outside of school hours.

Grushka & Coughlan (2007) describe this world as one where workers, creators and consumers now and into the future must command a capacity to encode images as concepts. This capacity is also needed, in addition with, the ability to decode the meaning of society's images, ideas, and critical engagement with the ways images of the past are recycled and recoded within our increasingly complex visual world. The significance of images, film and media in literacy theory and classroom literacy practices has been acknowledged. However, the focus has been on the development of decoding images and new media in terms of using visual art structural language derived from the traditional elements of design and then to overlay a range of interpretive lenses when making meaning with images. For example, composition, comprehension and interpretative framing inform the complexity of multiple interpretive understandings of the visual image. The ability to use a broad array of literacy's and skills at the student or pre-service teacher's disposal is important for communicating their messages. This includes both the knowledge of encoding and decoding meaning in images and the practical command of visual aesthetic practices to be able to realise a creative vision effectively. Understanding the nature of literacy in the 21st century consists of challenging notions of the visual in emerging media and utilising diverse ways of teaching literacy through the array of traditional and contemporary communication and production devices that are available.

### Visual and Media Literacies

Proficiency in reading and writing paper text is no longer viewed as adequate for future citizens. In the age of images and multiple representations of knowledge via new media, students require a more wide-ranging set of skills and understandings (Kress & Van Leeuwen, 2006; Anstey & Bull, 2006; Lankshear & Knobel, 2006; Kalantzis & Cope, 2005). Grushka & Donnelly (2010 p.84) identify that 'learning and communicating in a world of rapid change will inevitably require the ability to produce meaning using a combination of digital technology, knowledge and skills'. Thus the need to address what it is to be literate has become a challenged and active concept in the 21st century. Burmark (2002) suggests that in the 'age of images' the primary literacy of the 21st century will be visual. Students and pre-service teachers must learn to process both words and pictures, read fluently between text and images and be able to move seamlessly between literal and figurative worlds of multiple representations (metaphoric, abstract, or symbolic). The contribution of multiple representations of images for teaching and learning in the 21st century classroom requires the skill of seeing and making meaning with images defined through the terms 'visuality' or 'visual literacy' (Grushka & Donnelly, 2010). The terms have been in existence since the work of Debes (1969) and have given rise to both many variants and a vigorous debates. They are skills that take the image producer beyond the illustrative to explore diverse new media applications, toward critical and creative meaning making strategies. Visual proficiency emerges from a classroom enculturated with visual pedagogies.

In relation to the Australian education system, primacy appears to remain located in the traditional skills acquisition of literacy and numeracy, with reference to the impact of Information Communication Technologies (ICT). In the broader context of educational change the power of the image has never been more potent. In a world where the real and the virtual have become less distinct, the visual image has gained new value and meaning through multiple ways of knowing. The literature on 'multi-literacies' and the 'new communication order' (Cope and Kalantzis, 1999; Gee, Hull and Lankshear, 1996; Kress, 2003; The New



London Group, 1996) argue that contexts of communication practice in the modern world are now so diverse, and media communication so multimodal, that it is not useful to think of literacy education solely in terms of developing generic competences that can be transferred from context to context. Media communication and the argument for change in educational practices should enable students to acquire skills that are appropriate to the complex demands of their everyday lives, while allowing them to utilize the multi-literacy skills they may already possess. Pre-service teachers will need to shift the use of electronic media to facilitate critical selection, design, communication and production of the visual image for all students. More significantly they will need to understand that construction and interpretation of images carries different cognitive loads, ranging from factual, illustrative to a more disruptive or critical lens. Given this overwhelming girth of evidence for the importance of images in communicating and living in the 21st century, are pre-service teachers being adequately prepared for the new classroom in Australia?

#### Visuality and Pre-service Teacher Education

Rose (2007, p. 2) defines visuality as ‘the way in which vision is constructed’ and there is little evidence to suggest that pre-service teachers are proficient in the skills associated with production and reading of images across and between viewing and communicating contexts. Teacher preparedness to develop their own and their student’s visuality and apply it across core subjects has been under researched. Klopper & Power (2010), Alter et al (2009) and Davis (2008) identify the significant gap in the expectations of curriculum frameworks and initial teacher education in visual education for both primary and secondary teaching. This is compounded by evidence of inadequate pre-service training to prepare both primary generalist and secondary specialist teachers for teaching visuality across disciplines and to understand the complexity of contemporary semiotic systems through engagement with making or encoding and the decoding of images. Wiggins & Wiggins (cited in Klopper & Power, 2010) make the point that teachers entering pre-service teacher education in Australia and the United States, have had comprehensive and sequential instruction in most subjects other than the Arts and in particular the visual arts.

Klopper & Power (2010) make the claim that teacher education institutions need to account for lack of content knowledge and the crowded curriculum to endow prospective teachers with skills and knowledge to empower the capacity to teach visual education effectively in schools.

Visuality is trans-disciplinary, and has a digital presence in education and critical for all classroom teachers. Even after completion of an undergraduate teaching degree, Hudson and Hudson (2007) identify that pre-service teachers preparedness for visual education was low, and correlates with their teaching confidence, attitude, self-efficacy and prior experiences in the visual arts.

#### Aims of the research

There is a continued sense of the need to justify the place and space for visual literacy as a core skill in the 21st century. It is generally seen as separate from the main concerns of formal schooling where emphasis is on academic ability and in particular literacy and numeracy (Robinson, 2001). With the inherent complex interactions of encoding and decoding between and across different curriculum is pre-service teacher education preparing these educators for



functional and critical 21st century skills in this complex new moving visual learning environment?

This pilot study aims to address the need for research in the area of visual education by commencing with a study on the visual digital media practices of pre-service teachers in relation to their use of images and their understanding of image potential in pedagogical content.

### Research Questions

The study addressed the following research question:

- What is the background and current practice of pre-service teachers' knowledge, skills and expertise in using visual pedagogies in their teaching?

It is followed by the sub questions:

- What do we know about pre-service teachers' visual education background?
- What is their understanding of images in pedagogies?
- How visually literate are commencing pre-service teachers'?
- What do we know about their own visual image usage at university and in leisure: how, when and why?
- Do pre-service teachers' believe visual images are significant in the 21st century learning environment

### Methodology

A pilot survey was used to address the research questions. The survey instrument distributed to pre-service teachers (N=100) produced data for analysis in order to describe the current practice and perceptions being negotiated in teacher education courses at a large regional Australian university with a significant teacher education program (approx. 5000 students).

The survey items consisted of general information and a range of short response and extended response questions. These were used to reflect the demographic information of students at a regional Australian university and their feelings about the value of using, working and teaching with digital technologies and digital visual media.

Survey Monkey ([www.surveymonkey.com](http://www.surveymonkey.com)) was used to administer the questionnaire online, in line with ICT orientation of pre-service teachers 21st century learning environment. Data was downloaded and transferred into statistical analysis. The ethics approved open-ended items were coded to identify key patterns and themes emergent from the responses. Where appropriate, verbatim quotations from participants' written comments were reported in order to complement and support the quantitative findings by providing contextual-based and more-detailed information. The administrator Survey monkey tabulated results in order of mean scores from highest to lowest, which identified the salient issues.

Participants were recruited in December 2011 using a notice in the university student portal offering entry to a draw to win one of 25 iTunes gift cards. On completion of the survey



participants were given the opportunity to elect and participate in a follow-up and extended response interview.

## Results

This paper reports results for the 100 undergraduate education students who completed the survey questionnaire and gave research consent for their responses. The survey data and interview data were both collected in the period immediately following the summer semester break in December 2011. It indicates that the responses over-represented students who were personally concerned about the contemporary visual digital learning environment enough initially to participate and respond during their holiday break.

The demographic data indicates commonalities in teacher preparation programs across Australia. Responses were distributed from across all years of the four-year teacher preparation program and indicate that the majority of respondents were in secondary education (56%) and (33%) were primary education. A vast majority of respondents were female (71%). The findings indicate that less than half (36%) of the respondents reported being aged 28 years or older, in teacher preparation at this urban university. One can assume that this group of respondents are 'digital immigrants'. The majority (64%) aged 27 years and younger can be confirmed as the 'digital natives generation' (Prensky, 2001).

## Research Question and Sub-questions

The following results and discussion have been organised into sub-sections to reflect the key issues identified in the literature. This has been done within bounds of addressing each research sub-question:

Sub-question 1: What do we know about pre-service teachers' visual education background?

The percentage findings reveal that 58% of respondents [primary and secondary education] have not accessed visual arts studies since the mandatory requirement, kindergarten to year 8 (K-8). This reflects trends reported in *First We See: The National Review of Visual Education* (Davis, 2008), which infers that teachers' lack of discipline knowledge in the classroom may be the result of the trivialisation of visual education.

Sub-question 2: What are the pre-service teachers' understandings of visual images in pedagogy and do they feel responsible and prepared to work with images as a meaning-making tool?

A low portion (N= 48) of survey participants responded to the survey item question, which determined the amount of time pre-service teachers spent using image technologies in the classroom. Using a 5-point Likert scale, the majority (65%) reported that 'never' or 'rarely' image technologies were used. This limited use of image technologies is across both primary and secondary education pre-service teacher respondents. The statistical analysis indicates a large majority (70%) of respondents skipped this survey item, which may also indicate that very few, either did not use image technologies, or never, and or rarely.



The questionnaire invited respondents to provide extended response examples of image technologies used in the classroom. It indicates that the commonly perceived use of image encoding and decoding applications consists of (31%) Adobe Photoshop & Elements programs, (26%) Microsoft Paint and (12%) Picture Editor. However, significantly (14%) of the respondents reported they perceive “no image technologies” to have been used in the classroom.

Respondents were asked to rate various applications and categories when using images in the classroom. Table 1 (below), reports the data as cross-tabulated percentage of responses for each category, rating the ‘most’ and ‘least’ important application in the classroom. Findings indicate that the category ‘learning as a process tool’ (1%) has less value in negative rating, combined with recording tool (33%). Respondents significantly indicate that ‘making and representation’ with images were less important than using images for motivation.

An example of pre-service teachers extended response describing their understanding of image usage in future teaching and learning:

“[For] student motivation and understanding... student expression, not all students will be able to articulate their opinion, so a visual representation may assist them”.

Table 1: Percentage findings of pre-service teachers perception of interest in using images in future classroom lessons (N= 80)

Categories	Percentage (%)
Most important in the classroom when using images:	
Making and representation- ‘recording tool’, and ‘learning process tool’	36
Cognitive- ‘concept mapping’, and ‘support learning’	34
Motivation	16
Illustration- ‘presentation of info/data’, and ‘image as a research data source’	28
Least important in the classroom when using images:	
Making and representation- ‘recording’, and ‘learning process tool’	34
Cognitive- ‘concept mapping’, and ‘support learning’	18
Motivation	17
Illustration- ‘presentation of info/data’, and ‘image as a research data source’	31

These findings and the extended response represent the tentativeness indicated by pre-service teachers towards embedding images in their learning experiences. The limited visual education background of pre-service teacher and in particular the role of images in learning show limited evidence of using images beyond simple motivation or illustration. The images were used predominantly for the processes of recording, concept mapping and motivation. This also substantiates the findings by Grushka & Coughlan (2007), pre-service teachers





generally perceive the use of images in the classroom as a tool to present information and images are most useful at the commencement of a lesson for motivation.

Overall, pre-service teachers are generally aware of the significance of teaching and working with images but appear not to see how the creation of images, carry the development of new understandings or critical insights in the classroom and in future teaching and learning. As indicated by the pre-service teachers extended response, images are most useful as illustration or motivation pedagogies and best support other forms of communication.

Sub-question 3: How visually literate are commencing pre-service teachers' and what do we know about their own image usage at university and in leisure: how, when and why?

One purpose of the study was to find out what are pre-service teachers visual image experiences. Textual analysis in Table 2 (below) indicates that survey respondents (93%) use images to record information or document events, outside of university.

Table 2. Pre-service teacher usage of images to record or document events, outside of university.

Books	Communication	Events	Facebook	Family
Gatherings	Family	portraits	frend	Holiday
Photos	Landscape	Maker	Movies	Video
			Powerpoint	
Recording	Reminders	Scrapbooking	Weddings	

Note. \*Phrases and words are reported as text relational occurrence size

The themes evident in Table 2 findings reveal that participants (81%) use images in ICT environments outside of university for documentation of illustrative and decoration practices, and as a capturing tool in recording life events. Table 3 (below) indicates the types of image communication processes used by pre-service teachers outside of university, and the themed categories range from communicating, sending and the uploading of image forms.

Table 3. Pre-service teachers' image use in ICT environments, outside of university.



[Blogging](#) [Classroom](#) [Course Material](#) [Students Email](#)

[Facebook Images](#) [Photos](#) [Photos on Facebook](#)

[Resources](#) [Signage](#) [Skyping](#) [SMS](#) [Social Networks](#)

[Texting](#)

Note. \*Phrases and words are reported as text relational occurrence size

Two extended response examples of pre-service teachers feelings about using visual images to communicate outside of university:

“I use emoticons at the end of text messages, emails and on social networks to reinforce my feelings about what I am communicating about”.

“Mostly social networking sites such as instagram (a phone app much like facebook or twitter, but the updates are captioned photos), images are often inserted into my blog in order to convey a point or for humorous reason. I also text images to friends on a daily basis”.

The majority of respondents indicated that they ‘Agree’ or ‘Strongly Agree’ to the statement (95%) “I feel confident communicating in ICT environments” and (91%) “I like using image technologies to record and document information”. However, the text analysis and extended responses indicate that the pre-service teachers do not appear to be discretionary about their choices of images beyond the recording of reality. No respondents revealed that they manipulated, edited or cropped images for more sophisticated purposes such as satirical or ironic intent before sending. ‘Photos on Facebook’ in the social communication environment were primarily used as an affective stamping of an event, for example a humorous moment. There was some indication that ‘signage’ an illustrative (factual) symbol is considered in terms of visual communication inquiry.

Textual analysis in Table 4 (below) indicates the main themes evident in pre-service teachers use of images in leisure and in daily life.

Table 4. Pre-service teachers’ image use in leisure and daily life



[Children Communicating](#)

[Documenting Facebook Family Images](#)

[Memory MMS Photos](#) [Recording Scrapbooking Taking](#)

[Photos Tumblr](#)

Note. \*Phrases and words are reported as text relational occurrence size

The findings in Table 4 indicate that pre-service teachers are aware of modalities to communicate with images, but appear unaware of how learning and understanding through visual inquiry modes carries the development of new understandings or critical insights.

The questionnaire asked participants to indicate their level of agreement or disagreement on a number of perception statements. As far as strong aspects are concerned the percentage findings (N=100) in this study indicate that participants believe images: a) provide more than description and facts (89%) b) meaning can be found in visual images c) making is important (72%) whereas, a small percentage indicated (28%) it was not important d) should be used to enhance digital virtual forms of communication (91%). Overall, the consideration and value indicated by pre-service teachers in these findings are that broadly images are important to them in making and communicating.

Comparatively, respondents (88%) consider that images provide more than just illustrating facts of information and image making is important in the communication of complex ideas. The findings indicate that respondents (93%) prefer to use images in a material form, such as paintings or prints to communicate. However, digital images are generally perceived to be more powerful at capturing a representation of an event, reality or moment. The majority of respondents (70%) indicate a printed visual image has more of an impact in their real world, than a digital media image. Interesting, a small shift of students (30%) consider digital media images as more significant. Overall, the nature of pre-service teachers' practice in using visual images at university and in leisure could be interpreted through the emergent technological trends. The different kinds of images used carried differing perceptual value, virtual images over real images, and photographs over drawings.

In response to beliefs and understanding of visual literacy the percentage findings indicate that respondents (N= 100): a) (90%) believe images are more than description and facts, b) (72%) making images is important, c) (91%) images can reinforce communication (words), d) (90%) consider digital images (film and media) more powerful than a drawing, e) (65%) consider drawing more powerful than a photo, f) (90%) state that images help them learn, g) (93%) see images as a form of literacy, and h) (92%) say you don't have to be an artist to make good images. Synthesising these findings one could speculate that these respondents do not grasp complex 21st century society uses of images at university and in leisure. Therefore, exposure to image application in learning needs to be intensified to articulate which kinds of images work best in different learning situations e.g. an expressive drawing vs. a documented image.



Sub-question 4: Do pre-service teachers' believe visual images are significant in the 21st century learning environment and what is their understanding of images in pedagogies?

The majority of respondents (90%) believe that people use images when they can't write well. However, the percentage findings also indicate respondents (53%) value the visual image as having more of an impact on student learning than written text. Whereas, equally the similar amount of respondents (47%) reported that the written text has more value.

The survey findings reveal that pre-service teachers overall are undecided about the value of images over text, and they significantly indicate their perception that people use images when they can't write well. This aligns with the trend currently argued in research on the bias for text over images and the privileging of text and that teachers make little conscious effort to integrate images into student learning (Grushka & Donnelly, 2010; Freedman, 2000; Tavin, 2003). This is significant in confirming the results that students are undecided about the value of text over images with further uncertainty towards writing as superior over meaning making. More over, that using the visual image is a secondary consideration, a trend also reflected in visual education by Davis (2008).

Another anomaly emerging is the softening indicated in the percentage statement findings related to opinions about student learning and the integration of visual images. Pre-service teachers believe that (N=100): a) (97%) all teachers NOT just creative arts teachers need skills and abilities in digital visual media, b) (97%) their subject will benefit from visual technologies, c) (97%) images support understanding of knowledge, d) (87%) images contain important subject relevance, and e) (92%) images support student engagement. The findings indicate that pre-service teachers are softening towards the use of images in student learning and integration of multi-disciplinary approaches in education. This trend aligns with the research that argues proficiency in reading and writing with paper text is no longer viewed as adequate for future citizens and a significant shift towards a more wide-ranging set of skills and understandings is needed (Zammit, 2008; Kress & Van Leeuwen, 2006; Anstey & Bull, 2006; Lankshear & Knobel, 2006; Kalantzis & Cope, 2005). This finding is significant as (50%) respondents have not yet engaged in the multi-literacy debate as this is their 1st year of study, but they indicate sensitivity to the literacy rhetoric.

Textual analysis in Table 5 (below) indicates 'image', 'skill' and 'communication' carry emphasis for respondents in their future teaching and learning. The positive occurrence of 'images' and 'communication' demonstrates a current desire by the respondents to increase their knowledge and understanding about these concepts in teaching.

Table 5. Pre-service teachers future perceptions about 21st century learning and teaching

[Classroom Communication Course](#) [Digital Media Experiment](#) [Far Fun Images Lessons Making](#) [Management Photography](#) [Photoshop to Create Posters](#) [Powerpoint Skills](#) [Smart Board Software](#) [Software Skills](#) [Students Teachers Tools](#) [Webquests](#)



Note. \*Phrases and words are reported as text relational occurrence size

An extended response example, a pre-service teachers understanding of future teaching and learning:

“A balance of use is important. Learning to gauge the student’s needs and adapting the lesson to satisfy the necessary outcomes is paramount. This may sometimes be done using antiquated methods or the use of current technologies such as digital imaging”.

The extended response and the results of this pilot study indicate a positive softening towards the role of images in 21st century learning. This assumption can be made, indicative of the findings of pre-service teachers’ personal use of images outside of university and in their daily life to communicate. These findings indicate that pre-service teachers can appreciate that working with images is an aspect of 21st century communicative competency in new digital environments. Contradictorily, tentativeness is indicated towards embedding images in the learning experiences they design for their students beyond simple motivation or illustration.

#### Discussion

From this initial pilot study, two key findings have been identified and will need to be further investigated.

Firstly, the literature and data indicates that potential educators both the digital natives generation and other, are entering pre-service teacher training with a lack of background experience and skill in using images and digital imaging technologies.

The study identified that pre-service teachers have a preference for making images in a real-world environment through using a hands-on material process to communicate. The literature indicated that communication occurs through a range of different multi-literacy’s and often inter-dependent modalities (New London Group, 1996) and that working and communicating with images is the responsibility across all functional and critical thinking domains in 21 st century learning (Partnership for 21st Century Skills, 2011). However, concerns are raised that pre-service teachers significantly perceive digital images to be more powerful at capturing a representation of an event, reality or moment than a drawing. In addition, photographs were also seen as an authentic depiction of reality. Little insight was gleaned from the responses that would indicate pre-service teachers understood the critical work inherent in image making such as: Who or what is privileged in the image?; What audience it is for? or What is the impact of images consumed across the digital platforms? The greater perceptual value of virtual images over real images and photographs over drawings in the findings indicates that pre-service teachers do not grasp the complex 21st century society uses of images. From these findings, further understanding and exposure to grasp these concepts of image application and the articulation of the way images can be best used to communicate in 21st century learning environments needs to be intensified for the pre-service teachers within integrated learning contexts.

Secondly, the mythologies and beliefs about using images are apparent through pre-service teachers’ tentativeness identified and indicated in their pervading teaching decisions about using and making images. The findings indicated that pre-service teachers are generally aware of the significance of images as a form of literacy and as a learning tool, but this appears to limit their understanding of how the creation of images, carry the development of





new understandings or critical insights. These findings correlate with those of Hudson and Hudson (2007) who found that after completion of an undergraduate teaching degree pre-service teachers preparedness for visual education was low, and subsequently impacted on their preparedness to use visual pedagogies. Further research is needed to substantiate if pre-service teacher's lack of knowledge upon entering training may further contribute to the insufficiency in understanding the importance of affective and critical communication aspects when working with images.

### Limitations

The data collection instruments and analysis used in the survey indicate emergent trends that capture pre-service teacher's interests and broad claims about images and pedagogy. This provides pedagogical implications for teaching students at any level and across subject disciplines. However, the findings of this pilot study acknowledge the limited generalizability due to the three features of the research, conducted by lecturers; in one specific university; and involving pre-service teachers through varying years of study. Additional research is needed with primary and secondary school students, pre-service teachers in earlier or later year of course studies, and/or at different institutions with a different lecturer before broad claims to generalizability can legitimately be substantiated.

### Conclusion

This initial pilot study in a regional Australian university identifies that an understanding of how to select and use the ubiquitous images of a multimodal 21st century learning environment are low for pre-service teachers. The overall that pre-service teachers do not completely understand the significant work of images in media or the critical capabilities students will need in the 21st century when working across material and digital platforms. The extent to which students and pre-service teachers are using visual education and in particular, how they use digital images and images generally in their everyday life, for study and in the classroom, needs further examination through a follow-up study. It is evident in the emerging trends that pre-service teachers are increasingly engaging with image forms in their daily lives but they are not adequately prepared to process what teaching and learning with images for meaning making and production consists of in the 21st century.

The numerous discipline-specific applications of visuality were identified as the pedagogical responsibility of all disciplines to develop the knowledge, skills and expertise across 21st century learning environments. Further research will need to examine if the perception about the potential work of images is limited by pre-service teachers own minimal experiences and skill development prior to and during teacher training? If so, what are the expectations and implications for pre-service teacher training in the 21st century learning environment, given that the pre-service teachers' capacities to meet the classroom students' inherent needs are also currently inadequately modelled? What this short survey can reveal is that the findings support current research claims that higher education is wanting in its preparation to develop sufficiently visually literate teachers for digitally mediated learning environments.

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Possibilities for learning through painting in secondary schools:  
embodiment and interpretation.

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### Abstract

In this paper I present a theoretical consideration of the educational significance of painting understood in terms of embodiment and interpretation in the context of secondary art education. The case for painting I propose stems from my work as an art teacher in primary and secondary schools and as a painter.

The case I present rests on two claims. First, that the crucial importance of painting can be identified in the embodied engagement that it permits the practitioner. In this regard I make reference to Merleau-Ponty's phenomenological accounts of painting (in Johnson [ed.] 1993). I suggest that an educational focus on painting as embodied practice could serve to counter the preference in some secondary schools for forms of detailed visual realism. The latter should be challenged by creating learning opportunities for pupils to realize symbolic or expressive aims informed by the material affordances of painting.

Second, I argue that painting practice can be considered an interpretative activity as it involves the practitioner in interpretative and transformative engagement with particular materials, tools, ideas and forms. I make reference to aspects of Gadamer's hermeneutic thought (1981, 1986, 2004) to signal correspondences between the interpretation and the production of works of art. I hold that approaching painting in this way can afford rich, explorative learning events for pupils, involving them in the interpretation and negotiation of physical materials, increasing their confidence in making and promoting responsibility for their own learning experiences.

### Key words

Embodiment, interpretation, learning, painting

### Introduction

In this paper I address the educational significance of painting in secondary art education by means of a theoretical response to the following question: what sorts of possibilities for learning might painting practice offer in secondary schools if understood as both an embodied and interpretative activity? The case I advance for painting practice at this educational level emphasizes its potential as a practice of transformation with particular physical materials, rather than its capacities as a means for representation. The perspective from which I attend to this question and the suggestions that I offer in responding to it, are determined by the concerns that inform my research interest in painting in secondary education. While my doctoral research refers to aspects of aesthetic, educational and hermeneutic theory, the impetus for the project came both from my work as an art teacher in primary and secondary schools over an eight year period, and from my own engagement as a painter, spanning a twenty year period. I have recently developed my research in a practical direction, having conducted a series of painting workshop sessions with a small group of secondary school pupils in a public gallery education department in the UK. The workshop sessions were



designed to foreground the material properties of paint with a view to promoting possibilities for making and learning.

I wish to suggest a pedagogical approach to painting that is informed by two related claims about the particularity of the practice. Before proceeding to these claims, however, I should signal my predilections and prejudices as an educator and painter with regard to painting. My particular commitment to painting is coloured by a long interest in traditions of European and American painting that extend from the thirteenth century in Europe to the present. In referring to 'painting practice' or 'the practice of painting', I am not suggesting that there is or could be any such unitary practice. In this respect it is worth citing Wentworth's observation in 'The Phenomenology of Painting' (2004) that there is "no single practice of fine art painting, but only distinct kinds of activities that have existed at different times and places, detached from one another" (p.20).

The first claim I present with regard to painting in secondary education is predicated upon a particular understanding of embodiment as a crucial characteristic of the activity. I suggest that a productive educational discussion of painting can be made with reference to the embodied engagement that it affords the practitioner. Approaching painting as a material and embodied practice in this context could serve to challenge the preference in some secondary schools for forms of visual realism that are limited in scope and characteristic of what Hughes (1998) describes as "school art". Such an approach might also generate learning opportunities for pupils, allowing them to realize symbolic and expressive ambitions through their work.

In stating a case for painting as an embodied practice, I consider the issue of representation with regard to painting in education. I refer to the attitude regarding representation that characterizes Vygotsky's analysis of children's drawings (2004), to which I oppose Bryson's critique of "perceptualism" (1983). I make reference too to Merleau-Ponty's phenomenological treatment of painting, as it appears in a series of essays (Merleau-Ponty collected in Johnson [ed.] 1993) and to its appraisal by Crowther (1993). In concluding this section of my paper I suggest that the particular form of engagement that painting elicits of the practitioner is determined by the body and its relations to tools and materials.

My second claim is that painting practice can usefully be conceived as an interpretative activity in the sense in which it involves the painter in continuous interpretative engagement with particular materials and tools. I refer to Gadamer's philosophical hermeneutic enterprise (1981, 1986, 2004) in order to convey certain correspondences between theories of artistic interpretation and artistic production. I address the question of interpretation in its relation to artistic production or formation with reference to Pareyson's theory of formativity (1988) and Peters' discussion (2009) of improvisatory practice in the arts. I refer also to what I describe as an attitude of openness on the part of the practitioner with regard to painting - an openness to experiment and risk-taking, and to the sorts of cues that working with paint can occasion. I suggest that approaching painting as an interpretative practice in secondary schools could help to promote pupils' confidence in their work and allow them to take greater responsibility for the pace and pattern of their learning.

#### Painting as embodied engagement

In presenting a notion of embodiment in connection with the practice of painting and its educational importance, I wish to refer to the work of Maurice Merleau-Ponty, the central theme of the philosophy of whom, as Crowther puts it, is "the primacy of embodiment" (1993: 41). I wish to align the following suggestions for a pedagogical approach to painting with Merleau-Ponty's treatment of painting in particular, which spans - indeed, evolves





through, three separate essays ('Cezanne's Doubt' [1945], 'Indirect Language and the Voices of Silence' [1952] and 'Eye and Mind' [1960] – collected in Johnson [1993]). A primary concern of Merleau-Ponty's with respect to painting is the significance of the perceiving body of the painter. Before moving to suggest how a phenomenological view of painting might inform an alternative approach to painting at secondary level (an approach that does not simply privilege the representational functions of the practice), I wish first to consider the notion of school art.

School art is discussed by various commentators on art education (Addison and Burgess, 2003; Allen, 1996; Hughes, 1998). Commenting on art education in the UK in the late 1990s, Hughes (1998) characterizes the art work produced in schools as tending towards "the illustrative and stylistically neutral", and compares it with, "the conceptually unambitious work of skilful amateur or semi-professional artists who exhibit with local art societies or with groups who dedicate themselves to a particular medium such as pastels, acrylics or watercolour" (p. 42).

Allen (1996) sees school art as "limited" in comparison with "the practices of the world of art, craft and design and the common visual experiences of young people" (p.88), while Addison and Burgess (2003) describe it as "a hermetically sealed field of knowledge in which 'making' is privileged in a persistently self-referential way" (p.158).

Addison and Burgess (2003) render their account of school art with reference to "the rehearsal of long-tried 'experiments' and stultifying exercises" (p. 159), its recruitment of "mimetic or expressive exemplars" (p.160) and its reliance on what they describe as the "modernist myths" of universality, originality and genius (p. 160-2). In identifying the experiences of art in school of student teachers on the art and design PGCE course at the Institute of Education, University of London, they refer to exercises "based on artists whose perceptual development is seen to depend on studying everyday objects: apples, Cezanne; flowers, O'Keefe; water, Monet" (2003: 159).

The research of Downing and Watson, 'School Art: What's in it? Exploring visual arts in secondary schools' (2004), suggests that painting enjoys a privileged position in art and design education in the UK. The research identified "the use of painting and drawing as the medium in which pupils work" and "the development of specific techniques and observational drawing skills" as "prevalent characteristics" of the art and design curriculum at Key Stage 3 and 4 in schools in the UK (2004: viii).

I would suggest that the stress on observational skills or accurate representation in secondary art education that Atkinson critiques in his discussion of the assessment discourse of art practice in the National Curriculum (2006) hinders explorative and imaginative work with paint at secondary level. The notion of representation that Atkinson challenges, that of the mirroring of perceptual experience (2006: 140), has much in common with that of Vygotsky, as it appears in his analysis of children's drawings in his essay 'Imagination and Creativity in Childhood' (2004). In this essay Vygotsky maps the development of children's drawings against a notion of "true representation and resemblance to reality" (2004: 78). This teleological view of the development of children's drawings shares the aim of the perceptualist account of art, as Bryson (1983) describes it.

For Bryson the perceptualist account of art is that of the drive towards the reproduction of "Universal Visual Experience", in which the work of the painter is "to advance towards the Essential Copy" (1983: 6), to ever more convincingly close the gap between a universally perceived world and its accurate transcription. Bryson effectively returns attention to the embodied and situated circumstances of the painter which the perceptualist account ignores:



Idiosyncracies of the palette, habitual deformations of the figures, the characteristic signature of the brushwork, these reflexes that spring from the body and from the past history of the painter are therefore consigned to an underside of the official ideology.(1983: 7)

In his essay 'Eye and Mind', written in 1960, Merleau-Ponty presents a view of the activity of the painter that is determined by the perceiving body:

It is by lending his [sic] body to the world that the artist changes the world into paintings. To understand these transubstantiations we must go back to the working, actual body – not the body as a chunk of space or a bundle of functions but that body which is an intertwining of vision and movement. (Merleau-Ponty in Johnson, 1993: 123-124)

'Eye and Mind' extends Merleau-Ponty's phenomenological concern with painting as it appears in his earlier essay, 'Cezanne's Doubt', written in 1945, in which he attributes to Cezanne the intention "to make visible how the world touches us" (ibid.: 70). It is in 'Eye and Mind' too that Merleau-Ponty defines vision as "a thinking that unequivocally decodes signs given within the body" (ibid.: 32). Vision, he asserts, "is a conditioned thought; it is born 'as occasioned' by what happens in the body; it is 'incited' to think by the body" (ibid.: 135-6).

Crowther (1993) shows that for Merleau-Ponty perception is both embodied and, in that the activity of the body "calls meaning into existence" (p.43), creative. Crowther further cites Merleau-Ponty's description in 'Indirect Language and the Voices of Silence' (in Johnson [ed.] 1993), published in 1952, of the painter's process of stylization that has its origin in her or his perceptual experience, and links this to the scope for meaning-making offered by a medium: "working in a medium enables the body to continue the creative stylizing process begun in the artist's perception itself, in order to concentrate the 'scattered' meanings found there, and make them exist in a unified concrete form" (Crowther, 1993: 45).

What sorts of decision-making does painting elicit from the painter? Drawing upon the work of Merleau-Ponty, Wentworth (2004) puts the matter adroitly in his assertion that "the actions of painters" cannot be accounted for "in terms of thoughts directing actions because there are no thoughts of the kind required" (p. 15). Painting he observes:

is not an activity fundamentally carried out by the mind, directing the mechanical body to perform actions in accordance with its mental representations. Rather it is a bodily activity, one that is an expression of the lived-body's way of being in the world. (ibid.)

Gerhard Richter's statement that, "painting has nothing to do with thinking, because in painting thinking is painting" (1995: 13), similarly challenges the view of painting as a purely mental activity. It is also worth attending in this regard to Deleuze's assertion that ideas are "already dedicated to a particular field", from his lecture 'What is the Creative Act?' (2007): "Ideas have to be treated like potentials already engaged in one mode of expression or another and inseparable from the mode of expression, such that I cannot say that I have an idea in general" (p. 317).

It could be asserted, therefore, that the decisions or ideas that the activity of painting elicits or demands of the painter are immanent to the practice – a material practice that educes a bodily engagement from the practitioner working in a specific environment with, and through, specific materials and tools.

What might a phenomenological view of painting or the commentaries of established adult painters on their practice, bring to the project of enhancing the learning and making



experiences of young people in secondary school contexts? I would suggest that a renewed emphasis on the embodied nature of painting might occasion a fuller appreciation of the range of technical, expressive and representational possibilities that working with paint licenses; possibilities that may be generated by the contingencies of handling paint in its various forms, and need not be restricted by the pursuit of spurious verisimilitude. I suggest in the following section, in which I address painting as an interpretative activity, that aspects of the kind of making that painting permits, which are arguably evident both in the work of experienced painters and that of young children, have to do with a level of 'immersive' engagement.

### Painting as an interpretative activity

In proposing painting as an interpretative practice or activity, I will suggest parallels between the interpretation of works of art and their production. In commencing my research in painting in secondary education, the possibility of addressing practice in art education from the perspective of interpretation theory was suggested to me by Atkinson's account of hermeneutic strategies in their relation to practice in art in education, in his 'Art in Education: Identity and Practice' (2002). Atkinson states that hermeneutics "provides a variety of theoretical tools and interpretational strategies that we can employ to interrogate the epistemological grounds of understanding and practice in the field of art education" (2002: 46). In presenting correspondences between a particular view of painting practice and a hermeneutic disposition to works of art, I refer below both to the philosophical hermeneutics of Hans-Georg Gadamer - specifically to his accounts of aesthetic experience as they appear in 'Truth and Method' (2004) and 'The Relevance of the Beautiful and Other Essays' (1986), and to Davey's elaboration of Gadamer's adopted term, *theoria* (2006). I then move to address what might be characterized as the interpretative dimension of painting practice with reference to Pareyson's theory of formativity as it is essayed by Eco (1989) and Vattimo (2010) (regrettably Pareyson's theory appears, has not yet seen English translation).

*Estetica. Teoria della formativita* (1988), in which the

### Gadamer: theories of artistic interpretation and production

In 'The Relevance of the Beautiful and Other Essays' (1986), Gadamer observes that in our concern with art, "there is always some reflective and intellectual accomplishment involved" (p. 28). It is "the challenge of the work", he asserts, that "brings the constructive accomplishment of the intellect into play" (ibid.). It is to the accomplishment of the spectator in her or his engagement with art that Gadamer addresses his comments too in 'Truth and Method' (2004), where he refers to the Greek concepts of *theoros* and *theoria*. *Theoros* designates a spectator, "someone who takes part in a delegation to a festival" (p. 122), while *theoria* describes, "a true participation", a "being totally involved in and carried away by what one sees" (ibid.). The sense of the total involvement of the spectator also informs Gadamer's definition of *theoria* in his essay 'On the Philosophic Element in the Sciences and the Scientific Character of Philosophy', from 'Reason in the Age of Science' (1981), in which he asserts that "it is a genuine sharing in an event, a real being present" (p.18).

Davey follows Gadamer's treatment of the concept of *theoria* in his essay 'Art and *theoria*' (2006) in locating its meaning in "sharing", "being-present" and "accomplishment":

It implies a being-present to the object of one's contemplation which requires a level of accomplishment achieved not by the adoption of a method but by intense practice. Unlike the technical applications of modern theory, *theoria* transcends questions of



utility and purpose: it is concerned with a being 'given away to something', a being taken up by it. (p. 27)

Davey suggests that for Gadamer, *theoria* "is not a method or set of regulae but a skill of participatory involvement" (ibid: 29).

I would suggest that a parallel can be drawn between the idea of the spectator involving her or himself in the work of art in a hermeneutic sense - a form of skilled participation that can be developed through practice, and that of the painter, giving her or himself up to, or being fully present at, what Matthews (2003) describes as "the unfolding event of the painting process" in his study of the painting activity of young children (p. 31). The concept of *theoria* affords a further correspondence between the activity of engaging with and interpreting works of art and that of painting. I would argue that painting can be comprehended pedagogically in its potential for intellectual and reflective accomplishment, and that this should significantly inform any rationale for its retention in secondary education.

#### Cues

The interpretative character of the formative processes of works of art is addressed by Luigi Pareyson in his '*Estetica. Teoria della formativita*' (1988), originally published in 1954. His aesthetic theory of formativity seems particularly useful in approaching painting as an interpretative practice. Vattimo's discussion of Pareyson's aesthetics (2010) shows that for Pareyson the formative process of a work of art is one of interpretation:

The formation of the work of art is an act not of creation but of interpretation: of a cue, of the materials (which, of course, are not only given but chosen), of the spirituality of an artist bent on the act of forming. (p. 83)

The relevance of Pareyson's theory of formativity with respect to an interpretative account of painting practice can be seen in its identification of cues. The sense of the painter's interpretative engagement with, "a set of suggestions that both a cultural tradition and the physical world have offered" her or him, as Eco (1989) characterizes Pareyson's aesthetics of formativity (p. 161), bears comparison with the notion of thematization adopted by Richard Wollheim in his discussion of the activity of painting in '*Painting as an Art*' (1987). Thematization is the process whereby the painter "abstracts some hitherto unconsidered, hence unintentional, aspect of what he [sic] is working on, and makes the thought of this feature contribute to guiding his future activity"; a process, Wollheim stresses, that is "crucial to the way painting must be carried out if it is to be an art" (1987: 20).

I was reminded of the potential of cues in painting activity by the work produced by the secondary school pupils who participated in the painting workshop sessions that I recently conducted for my research project. When pupils were prompted to experiment with different consistencies of paint and types of brushes, they subsequently recruited the resulting marks and patterns for their own representational purposes in highly imaginative ways.

Pareyson's identification of cues may further be compared to the account offered by Francis Bacon, in an interview with David Sylvester, of his manipulation of "marks that have been made by chance" (Bacon in Sylvester, 1993: 53): "by making these marks without knowing how they will behave, suddenly there comes something which your instinct seizes on as being for a moment the thing which you could begin to develop" (ibid: 54).

Peters (2009) observations on improvisatory practices in the arts may also be compared with Eco's characterization of Pareyson's theory and Wollheim's notion of thematization. Peters makes reference to the material constraints of improvisatory practice, commenting that, for the improviser, all material contains "historical patterns of human engagement and creativity





that impose limits on what can and cannot be done on the occasion of the material's subsequent reworking, whether improvised or not" (2009: 11). While the view of painting that I advocate is predicated upon access to or acquaintance with specific, culturally determined materials and tools - and with them ideas and expectations, I would assert that these very constraints can generate improvisatory, exploratory responses from young people. In short, working within such limits can present real opportunities for learning.

I would suggest that there are significant affinities between the questions of formativity, thematization and improvisation as they relate to an interpretative understanding of painting, and to the painting practice of young children. Matthews' detailed account of the painting activity of young children (2003) attends to the way in which young children "randomise" their action on purpose when painting, "in order that a wealth of possibilities emerge" (p.31). Eisner (2002) observes that when young children "have substantial experience with paint and brush' they are able to experiment and therefore appropriate 'images they did not previously have but that they can use in the course of their painting" (p.117).

The attitude of openness to experiment that both Matthews and Eisner identify in the painting activity of younger learners - a disposition to practice that encompasses risk-taking, should be encouraged in, and could prove productive and rewarding for, learners in secondary school contexts. The sense of "experience with paint and brush", to which Eisner refers, can be supported by sustaining explorative work with paint with older pupils. The notion of immersive engagement signalled earlier comprehends precisely such continuous experimentation with materials and tools, which, in turn, makes possible a progressive understanding of their capacities.

#### Conclusion: possibilities for learning through painting

I have suggested that painting might be addressed pedagogically as an embodied practice in the hope that such an approach might help to undercut the emphasis on forms of realism in school art and present possibilities for learners that are not constrained by the goal of "true representation and resemblance to reality" (Vygotsky, 2004: 78). I have argued that the demands painting makes of the painter are informed by the body's orientation to and engagement with certain sorts of materials and tools. Far from suggesting that the representational function of painting as it is practised in secondary schools be abandoned, I have sought here to question the pedagogical 'means-ends' approach to painting which privileges a particular understanding of visual realism. I hope that the approach I have suggested might encourage pupils wishing to follow representational ambitions in their work to do so in a considered way; that it might develop their awareness of, and sensitivity to, the transformative potential of paint when manipulated and applied to different surfaces.

In addressing painting as an interpretative practice I identified certain points of convergence between the interpretation and the production of works of art in the concept of *theoria*, the notion of engaged spectatorship delineated by Gadamer (1981, 1986, 2004) and Davey (2006). I sought to show that the level of participatory engagement demanded of the spectator of the work of art, accomplished through practice and characterized both by intellectual involvement and reflection, might fruitfully be compared with an attitude to making that could describe the activity of the painter. One might identify this as a way of being 'thoughtfully open' both to the properties of physical materials and to the ideas that they may generate.

I have asserted too that an interpretative and improvisatory orientation to practice in painting should be encouraged in learners at secondary level, potentially affording them greater scope for experiment and invention in their work. It is arguably not only learning that occurs for a





young person when they see that an experiment with a particular consistency of paint and a particular action with a specific brush can be repeated, refined, and ultimately recruited in their work, but a heightening of the sense of confidence and investment in their activity and work.

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## Exploring the relationship between environmental and art education in the context of pre-school education

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### Abstract

Natural environment constitutes not only the life support system for human beings but also a source of inspiration that challenges human inventiveness and leads human creativity. The relationship between art and the environment has been always very close and complementary as people have been using the arts from the early beginnings of history to represent nature, express their awe for the surrounding world and describe their visions for their existence within this world. Environmental education is an innovative educational movement that made its appearance in the late 60s in order to pedagogically address contemporary environmental problems having been caused by the unlimited technological and economic development that triggered environmental imbalance and social inequalities. Environmental art was introduced as a parallel expression of current environmental movement aiming also to raise awareness through various art forms with regards to environmental degradation and lowered levels of life quality in our planet. A combined version of the above-mentioned movements known as art-based environmental education or eco-art education is based on the premise that art can make a difference in raising environmental awareness among people. In this paper we discuss the relationship between environmental and art education having as point of reference the design and implementation of a pedagogical project which focuses on the enhancement of critical and creative thinking among Greek preschool children with regards to an environmental issue. We aim to explore creative ways in which these two fields are combined in order to develop a curriculum which promotes the principles and values of sustainability and uses art as its main pedagogical tool. More specifically, our discussion is centered on how environmental and art education can be integrated as a new way of learning about the environment and sustainability in the context of preschool education.

### Key words

Environmental education, environmental art, eco-art education, creative thinking



## Introduction

From prehistoric years people have been searching for creative ways to connect with their natural environment and express their perceptions of and ideas about it. Since then, human beings have been using natural resources to survive, expand their knowledge, house their activities and life and demonstrate innovative potential and imaginative skills. However, this human-nature close relationship begun to gradually falter during the 20th century giving its place to many current phenomena of environmental degradation, subversion of ecological balance and quality of life and diminished sustainability prospects.

### Environmental Education, Environmental Art, Art-based Environmental Education

Environmental Education (EE) was born in the 1960's as a response to the call by the environmental movement of the time to identify long-term strategies for addressing and dealing with the alarming new reality of the increasing number of local and global environmental issues. Even from the very start, EE decides to focus on the deeper causes of current environmental crisis, by highlighting the values that structure and support the people's relation to nature and their uses of the natural resources. It is proposed as a system of educational processes and pedagogical tools that aims to involve learners not only into realizing the essence of current environmental problems, but also in empowering them to promote essential changes in their relations with nature, other people and society in large (Flogaitis and Daskolia, 2004). The emphasis is thus put apart from raising awareness of complex environmental problems, on encouraging active citizenship and supporting participation in collectively shaping and determining the terms of sustainability (ibid).

Environmental Art (EA) also emerged in the 1960's as another suggestion of the environmental movement of responding to ecological crisis. The term refers to artwork that "helps improve our relationship with the natural world, including works that interpret nature, work with environmental forces and materials, re-envision our relationship with nature and reclaim or remediate damaged environments" (Inwood, 2008, p.60). Environmental and land artists often use nature as material, subject and setting, to shape artworks that stand mainly outdoors (Brady, 2007). Among EA's main goals is to help people understand the processes of ecological sustainability and to identify the environmental consequences in decisions having to do with social, political and economic development (Simon, 2006). Ecological art (or Eco-art) is one of the strands of EA referring to a contemporary art movement which addresses environmental issues with a more eco-friendly approach and methodology and often involving the concepts of collaboration and environmental restoration (Bower, 2010).

Although EE, in its early periods, was mostly associated with the sciences and science education, it soon established interdisciplinarity as one of its structural characteristics. Since the late 1970's EE promotes (at least in theory) a holistic approach of the environment and calls for exploring how the sciences can be met with humanities and the arts in a fruitful integration (Flogaitis and Liarakou, 2003). This is why we argue that art education can stand as a dynamic terrain that can supplement and promote EE. According to Orr (cited in Inwood, 2008) "ecological literacy will not be instilled in children, unless it is integrated into wide variety of subject areas, including the arts" (p.58). The emerging significance of integrating EE and EA has been highlighted by several scholars in the literature by supporting the view that EE can be greatly conveyed and further enriched through the educational use of the arts. Simon (2006) among others stresses that EA actually provides a practical holistic, interdisciplinary, problem-solving environmental management model, while Song (2008) argues that "art makes environmental education more experiential and helps to build



appreciation, awareness and a sense of shared responsibility for nature that students may carry throughout their lives” (p.13).

The first weaving between EE and the arts made its appearance in the beginning of the 1990’s in Finland, where a group of art educators expressed their concern about the deterioration of ecological crisis and started to discuss whether art could help in the development of a new and more profound form of EE (Boeckel, 2010). It was then, more specifically in 1992, that Meri-Helga Mantere coined the term ‘Art-based Environmental Education’ (AbEE) to support the view that sensitivity to the environment can be developed through artistic activities. Motivation to act for the good of the environment is based on positive, often aesthetic experiences within nature (ibid). Various similar terms have been also used, such as ‘ecological art education’ or ‘eco-art education’ (Inwood, 2008), all referring to a new type of education that “integrates art education with environmental education as means of developing awareness of and engagement with environmental concepts and issues as conservation, preservation, restoration and sustainability” (ibid, p. 58).

#### Environmental and Art Education in preschool settings

Early Childhood Education (ECE) should be considered as the starting point for lifelong learning regarding education for sustainability, as it is within the early years that children present the greatest ability to learn and develop (Davis, Engdahl, Otieno, Pramlinu-Samuelson, Siraj-Blatchford and Vallabh, 2009). In particular, Early Childhood Education for Sustainability (ECEfS) “recognizes that young children have capacities to be active agents of change now, as well as into the future, and that early learning is important for shaping environmental attitudes, knowledge and actions” (Davis, 2008, p.19-20). Education for sustainable development should help children to become active citizens contributing to a sustainable society, by giving them the opportunities to experience nature and community and develop their knowledge, values and concern for the environment. They thus need to learn critical and creative thinking and how to use experience and tools in decision making along with action taking for a sustainable future (Norddahl, 2008).

It is often stressed that the arts have a crucial impact on children’s spirit and mind since they serve as a vehicle for their developmental learning, offering essential opportunities for creative expression and problem solving (Adu-Agyem, Enti and Peligah, 2009). When taught in appropriate ways, the arts can offer young people authentic learning experiences to employ their minds, hearts and bodies. They are learning experiences that are real and meaningful for them (Fiske, 1999). Among several forms of art the most prominent as a medium for non-verbal expression is probably visual arts, as their particular tools and techniques can expand communication channels of the youngsters while they try to convey their thoughts and emotions (Epstein and Trimis, 2002). Moreover, the very process of expressing ideas through visual representations allows children to understand that their actions can actually convey meanings and messages to other people, and therefore they urge them to realize that in order to communicate, these representations should be comprehensible (Malaguzzi, 1998 cited in Epstein and Trimis, 2002).

#### Creative Thinking for Sustainability in Pre-School Education

Since the late 1990’s creativity has been increasingly recognized as a significant aspect in the early years and as a vital disposition in adult life for surviving and thriving in an increasingly uncertain and rapidly changing world (Craft, 2007). Although there is not a universally





accepted definition of creativity, mostly because of its complex nature that allows multiple approaches and explanations, it is usually defined as “an imaginative activity fashioned so as to produce outcomes that are both original and of value” (NACCCE, 1999, p.30). In particular, creative thinking is considered to be a key competency for the 21st century as it “involves the ability to offer new perspectives, generate novel and meaningful ideas, raise new questions and come up with solutions to ill-defined problems” (Sternberg & Lubart, 1999, cited in Beghetto, 2007, p. 1). In particular, as far as creativity in the early years is concerned, there has been a development of the notion that children’s creativity is driven by ‘possibility thinking’ (PT) (Craft, McConnon and Matthews, 2012). In other words, possibility thinking is at the core of all creativity in young children (Craft, Cremin, Burnard and Chappell, 2007) and more specifically at the heart of everyday, life-wide or else ‘little c’ creativity (Burnard, Craft, Cremin, with Duffy, Hanson, Keene, Haynes and Burns 2006; Craft, 2003). More specifically, “‘possibility thinking’ is a requisite tool for thinking creatively when children are engaged in imaginative activity. ‘Possibility thinking’ happens when children engage with everyday problems at a deep level and pose ‘what if’ questions that encourage them to seek novel and unusual solutions” (Faulkner, Coates, Craft and Duffy, 2006, p.195). Recent educational research is focused on classroom-based creativity with a growing number of attempts to identify what characterizes possibility thinking in young children’s learning experiences and how teachers approach it within their practice (see Craft, McConnon and Matthews, 2012; Cremin, Burnard and Craft 2006; Burnard, Craft, Cremin, with Duffy, Hanson, Keene, Haynes and Burns, 2006; Chappell, Craft, Burnard and Cremin, 2008, Grainger, Craft and Burnard, 2007), leading to what Craft (2005, cited in Vass, Littleton, Miell and Jones, 2008) refers to as a ‘revolution of creativity in education’ (p. 192). However, more emphasis has to be placed to identify how both students and teachers identify, define and substantiate creativity within the context of EE and EfSD activities, although the start has already been made (Daskolia, Dimos and Kampylis, 2012).

### **Our proposed pedagogical intervention: The eco-art project**

Taking into account that arts have the potential to foster pre-school education children’s ability to think and develop their skills for creative problem-solving (Epstein and Trimis, 2002), we designed a pedagogical intervention with a focus on the issues of consumption and waste management. The implementation and study of the project is taking place within the context of a kindergarten school in Athens engaging children aged between 4-5 years old and using the visual arts as the main pedagogical tool. This is an ongoing research study and the one we present here is a pilot eco-art project aiming to explore whether art can provide new perspectives and ways of thinking, expressing and acting in students, both at the individual and collective level, with regard to ecological sustainability. In particular, this project aims to investigate whether visual arts can be employed as appropriate means so that the pre-school students develop novel ways of perceiving and addressing environmental issues.

Before designing and implementing the present pedagogical intervention, the following criteria were thought as important to guide any subsequent decisions. The project should:

- Be open to modification, meaning that it would have an ongoing formulating character based on children’s interests and needs. This is consistent with the nature of action research, following a flexible spiral process encompassing the stages of planning, acting, observing and reflecting (Kemmis and McTaggart, 2000), as means for monitoring, understanding and improving of the educational process.



- Take into consideration children's actual concerns and real life situations, to help them build a sense of place and focus on issues that have a personal relevance to them. That is one of the main principles of Early Childhood Education for Sustainability emphasizing that, if we expect children to be active participants and citizens of sustainability, curriculum development should ensure the relevance of content to their everyday lives (Davis, Engdahl, Otieno, Pramlinu-Samuelson, Siraj-Blatchford and Vallabh, 2009).
- Provide children with the opportunity to approach selected artworks as means for meaning-generation, expression of views and ideas, reflection, inspiration and creative thinking. There are several studies arguing that children can be engaged in high quality art with regards to their personal experiences, as they have the intellectual skills of observing and reflecting on the artworks, assuming that engage them in meaningful conversations with these artworks (Epstein and Trimis, 2002; Eckhoff, 2008).
- Develop a framework that encourages family, school and community collaborations, and promotes alliances with artists and art practitioners willing to be involved in the process. The idea of the school open to community is consistent with one of the most important principles in education for sustainability, as it is based on the concept of promoting a common goal and vision to change school, education and society in general, within the context of sustainability (Flogaitis, 2011).
- Take into account the National Kindergarten Curriculum in Greece (YPEPTH - PI, 2003). More specifically, in the context of knowledge for the environment and human interaction within it, children are encouraged to: "develop their co-operation skills, acquire positive attitudes and behaviors towards their environment and exercise basic research procedures to seek answers to their questions". Furthermore, in the context of the development of creativity in the kindergarten school, children are encouraged to: "experience the beauty of nature, the environment and artworks, develop their interest for artistic creativity, use their own ideas as elements for artistic creation and production, discover that art can provide the means for expression and communication, as well as to share their own art creations in order to convey their ideas, feelings and visions for a better and more sustainable future".

The idea of dealing with the issues of consumption and waste management came up in our study's kindergarten school last May (2012), when the classroom trash can was overflowed before the end of school day, mostly by thrown paper which children had been using particularly while drawing. By spotting this incident, the teacher brought the can to classroom discussion, encouraging children to reflect on the concept of trash, therefore discussing which of these objects found inside the can should be actually thrown there. The discussion that followed, led the team to design an environmental project which all agreed to name: Trash or Treasure? After a brainstorming procedure, all ideas and questions to be answered regarding the topic were written down, in order for the team to organize and plan its work. One of the ideas that was taken to action the very next day was that of transforming the classroom's little grocery store into a bank of waste material, carefully sorted as children proposed. Some of the children brought recycled material from their home, whereas others started collecting different material during their school day. Those materials were gradually used by children in the creation of individual crafts and team art projects (Figure 1).

Figure 1: Children's crafts made of recycled materials



In addition, due to an upcoming visit to Vorres Museum in Athens ([www.vorresmuseum.gr](http://www.vorresmuseum.gr)) where children would have the opportunity to experience selected artwork with environmental orientation, as well as to join in a workshop related to 'Recycled Art', the nursery teacher brought some artwork samples (Figures 2 and 3) made by one of the artists whose work we were about to be introduced to.

Figure 2: 'Elephant juice'. Artwork made by artist George Vorres \*

Figure 3: 'Flowers'. Artwork made by ...



\*Photo source: [http://www.sitemaker.gr/georgevorres/page\\_GREEK\\_1.htm](http://www.sitemaker.gr/georgevorres/page_GREEK_1.htm)

The teacher using mainly open-ended questions tried to engage children in meaningful discussion regarding: “waste and recycled material and their potential”, “the issue of overconsumption and all those things we buy and waste”, “whether we need all this stuff we buy”, “what it means for the environment when we manufacture them”, questions regarding “the intention of the artist when he created such an artwork”, “why he used those material instead of others”, etc. Those artworks triggered children’s critical and creative thinking as they posed several questions, expressed their thoughts and ideas, discovered new meanings, made their own associations, and finally expressed themselves through collages, using the materials they collected. In Figures 4 and 5 a sample of the students’ artwork is shown:

Figure 4: Children’s collages made of recycled materials

Figure 5: Children’s crafts made of empty cups, recycled materials, old pencils and damaged plasticine



Furthermore, after reading a children’s book named ‘Give me another chance: a story for recycling’ (Chrysanthi Karaïskou, 2009), children were introduced to the process of recycling, sorting garbage and reconstructing new products out of recycled materials. The main characters of the story were badge of garbage thrown away in a forest. One particular scene of the book captured the students’ attention and fired up enthusiastic and interesting comments. In this particular scene, a group of children were looking for a place to play in the woods, but they passed by the heroes’ location, because it was full of garbage. With the use of open-ended questions, the teacher tried to elicit the students’ views and ideas and to help them reflect on the issue of waste management.



The next day the teacher brought a picture she found in the web (Figure 6), showing an actual forest being polluted by thrown garbage and she encouraged children to comment on that. Almost all children stressed that this place is not suitable for playing, mostly because of the thrown garbage, whereas others argued that there isn't enough space for them to play because of the garbage. When the teacher asked them to imagine how this place could be transformed to a suitable playground, children came up with several ideas, such as: 'I would like this place to have more grass and flowers', 'It would be wonderful if there was a little lake there instead of the garbage and some benches for the children to sit after getting tired playing' etc. Inspired by the children's vision, the teacher gave them the same picture photocopied in black and white, encouraging them to transform it into a place they would like to visit and play. The picture was given in black and white (Figure 7), because the teacher wanted to allow more possibilities for creativity. Consequently, most of the children used a mixed technique of both painting and collage. This particular type of art activity was based on the work of Y. I. K. Song (2009) and more information was elicited by the website <http://lesleyecoart.blogspot.gr/>. Figure 8 presents some of the children's creative artworks:

Figure 6: Original image \*



Figure 7: Image in black and white



\* Photo source: <http://www.agelioforos.gr/default.asp?pid=7&ct=4&artid=34958>

Figure 8: Children's remixed images







A few days later, children were encouraged to get engaged in a similar creative activity, using a picture the teacher brought, showing a rubbish dump (Figure 10). They were stimulated to express their views, share their concerns and make their own suggestions regarding possible interventions to resolve the problem. It is worth mentioning that most of the children noticed that seagulls were flying over the garbage and commented that this place was probably a nice beach before becoming a rubbish dump. Taking advantage of those ideas and the particular children's interest about how certain places were different some time before, the teacher initiated a discussion about: "the modern way of life", "whether our garbage was more in the past", etc. Then children were encouraged to imagine and create on the photocopied in black and white image (Figure 11) the place they presumed it existed there, before people started throwing their garbage as the picture shows. Figure 12 presents their reflective and creative artwork:

Figure 10: Original image \*

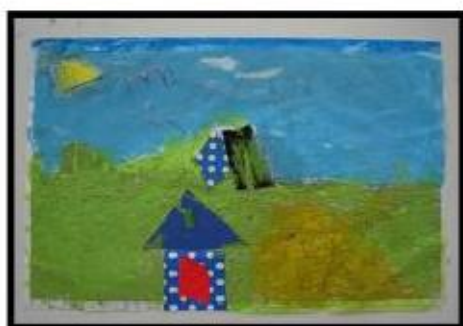


Figure 11: Image in black and white



\* Photo source: <http://www.keepingitkleen.com/blog/earth-day-and-beyond/attachment/landfill/>

Figure 12: Children's remixed images





Finally, due to the upcoming World Environment Day celebrated on the 5th of June, children shared their hopes and expectations for the future of the planet and their lives on it. Every child expressed its own wish and they wrote it down on a post-it. Then, they all decided to create their own Wishing Tree (Figure 13) made of recycled materials and they placed their wishes on it, imagining that post-its were a different kind of tree leaves. Children shared their vision for a more sustainable future, writing down their thoughts such as ‘I wish we didn’t have garbage’, ‘I wish there were more flowers’, ‘I want our planet to be clean’, ‘I am sorry we throw garbage!’, ‘I wish we were happier’.

Figure 13: Children’s ‘Wishing Tree’ made of recycled materials and post-its



### Some concluding thoughts and future work

Throughout the eco-art project, children were very excited with the whole process and their produced artworks and they talked about them with great enthusiasm. By taking part in this creative process they had the opportunity to express their ideas about the issues at stake as well as to create some artifacts of their own. They developed a greater confidence, by realizing that their views mattered and deserved to be heard. Relevant studies suggest that educational practice that fosters creativity can be seen as being 'learner inclusive' in taking children's ideas seriously (Craft, 2007). This kind of practice involves children and teachers in co-participating in the learning process, children in unfolding their knowledge and having the opportunity to be innovative (ibid). Through their reflective artworks children were able to convey their meanings of the world around them in a creative way. Their contact with artworks and photographs with an environmental orientation raised their critical and creative thinking, while getting involved in different creative tasks and activities. This is consistent with relevant literature referring that the aesthetic experience of the learners develops their creative ability and their ability for reflection and critical thinking (Delikari, 2011). Art viewing experiences may help children develop visual literacy skills, abilities of critical thinking as well as skills and abilities for imagination and creativity (Pavlou, 2011).

Finally, children displayed high participation in all brainstorming sessions as the particular technique that encouraged them to deal with the selected environmental issue. Through these sessions, children displayed a high degree of divergent thinking that is considered to be an indicator of creative potential, as it often leads to originality, a central feature of creativity (Runco and Acar, 2012). The issue of consumption and waste management appeared to be within children's interests and it raised a high degree of involvement. As referred in the literature, one variable that may facilitate creative production is one's interests. The more consistent and intense the interests are, the more creative are the students (Fasko, 2000-2001). Dealing with a realistic problem that was emerged from their daily routine in school encouraged children's motivation to high engagement and willing to co-operate and act in order to deal with this problem, critically analyze it and prepare a reasonable solution through art expression and art creation.

The present eco-art project is in progress as part of a pilot phase for the forthcoming research study to be taken place during the 2012-2013 school year. This study aimed to gain insights regarding the children's motivation and participation in an environmental project that emerged from their direct experiences, their particular concerns and expectations for a more sustainable school, using visual arts as the main pedagogical tool. These insights will be used to design and implement the main phase of the study, to fine-tune the research plan and to better analyze the particular context of pre-school settings.

### Acknowledgements

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## Using Technology As A Creative Tool To Enhance New Means Of Expression At Art Students' Work

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### Abstract

This research addressed the ability of students to get benefit from using technology in their artwork through workshops, which took place in 2011, it has continued for 3 months with students from faculty of Specific Education, Alexandria University. Each Student had performed creative artworks that explore the concept of assertion of culture identity, they used digital technology as an approach to enhance new means of art expression, such as digital cameras to take photographs, color printers and scanners to create digital images, and software applications like Photoshop to edit and create digital designs with a creative insight, that allowed them to generate innovative solutions and opportunities in applied communications skills that are so important to the workforce of today.

### Keywords

Technology, creative expression, students, artworks, digital photography

### Introduction

Technology has become a tool for creative expression as well as a source for artistic information. In fact, much of yesterday's technology is today's fine art. Two excellent examples of this are printmaking and photography. So the visual art and technology are mutually dependent upon one another.

Although science and art are separated one from another, but they are also directly related, we are living the era of science and digital technology, which has affected the creativity of the artist in various fields of arts, the computer is considered one of these modern and contemporary technology, that provided new horizons for creativity in the field of education, Therefore I believe that art educators at all levels must include digital technology as a part of the curriculum and not to stick only to classical techniques while teaching art, but also teach them how to use technology as a tool to create artistic imagery that effectively reflects and communicates their concerns and interests.

The harmonious blending of art and technology is ever present in our everyday lives. We are surrounded by visual and material culture that takes full advantage of the highest quality forms of visual digital technology. As majority of youth are totally impressed in this kind of visual culture, so It's important to give digital art more space in curriculum in order to attract students who might think they have no artistic talent and consequently show little interest in visual art and the natural and appealing familiarization of students with the use of PCs, while at the same time opening up their artistic ways of expression (Kampouroupoulou Maria, 2011, P.9 9). It's necessary to emphasis on the collaboration between digital technology and art, in order to develop creative thinking in undergraduate students by using computer as a way to produce innovative and distinctive artworks, and also use it to serve design ideas in art projects.



### The role of Technology in Contemporary Art

Technology plays a great role in contemporary arts, where it provides artists with another set of tools to express their creative vision and make it easily accessible to huge audience, Therefore art needs technology to grow, flourishes and meets the promoted aesthetic tastes and needs increasingly grow up to realize the global society.

The use of technologies throughout history has always affected the way artists create their work. The photograph created an astounding impact on modern art as artists responded to photography and also implemented it as an artistic tool. Current technologies have similarly allowed artists to use new tools to produce their works with completely new artistic processes.

By exploring how technology has impacted the world of art, artists can gain a better understanding of how to create new forms and processes that elder artists have not yet considered. Michael Noll was one of the first researchers to use a digital computer to create artistic patterns and to formalize the use of random processes in the creation of visual arts and that making him one of the earliest digital computer artists. He proposed in the 1960s that the digital computer might become a creative artistic medium. (Martin Krampen & Peter Seitz, 1967 p. 65-79). The cooperation between visual art and technology provided some artists with a means of manipulating existing imagery, they use technology as a part of their works, they might include images that show technological developments, mass produce posters, use many televisions all showing a different part of the same scene in an installation, use projectors to show images of people in a dark storefront, or use electronic signs to communicate messages.

A growing number of artists have a strong ambitious and aware of the new global contemporary art languages, Therefore they used new technology in their art works to introduce themselves as apart of this global world, as well as they defend their own social and cultural identity, In this way they present themselves as a new movement.

No one can deny that the computer demonstrates a radical extension in art media and techniques, the inherent possibilities in the computer as a creative tool will do little to change those idioms of art, which rely primarily on the dialogue between the artist, his ideas and the canvas. They will, however, increase the scope of art and contribute to its diversity. (Jasia Reichardt; 1971. P.54)

Some of artists have been involved with computer technology to generate and manipulate with images, such as an American feminist artist “Barbara Kruger”, much of her work engages the merging of found photographs from existing sources with pithy and aggressive text, that involves the viewer in the struggle for power and control that her captions speak to, she develops her ideas on a computer. The British feminist film theorist “Laura Mulvey” argues that Kruger adds text that cuts across the picture plane to found and enlarged photographs, creating messages that are sometimes (a silent cry of personal pain) and sometimes (a slogan of political anger). Figure 1. (Laura Mulvey. 2009. P.132).

“Debbie Rose Mayer”, one of American artist and Professor at the Institute of Fort Lauderdale in Florida, she said “When I started drawing my paintings on a computer I've faced a lot of critics from artists and my academic colleagues about the credibility of this art and its importance in the intellectual movement of modern formative arts”. Most of them detracted from the value of this work on both artistic and creative levels, particularly classic artists. To face such critics I took several years of attempts to convince them that digital art is considered the art of exceptional value and distinctive and that the computer as a artistic device represent specific addition in the field of artistic creativity.

Figure 1: Barbara Kruger, Your Body is a Battleground, 1989 Photographic silkscreen

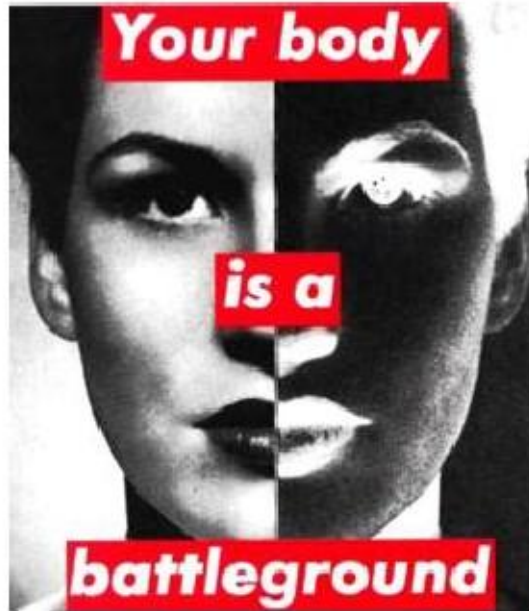
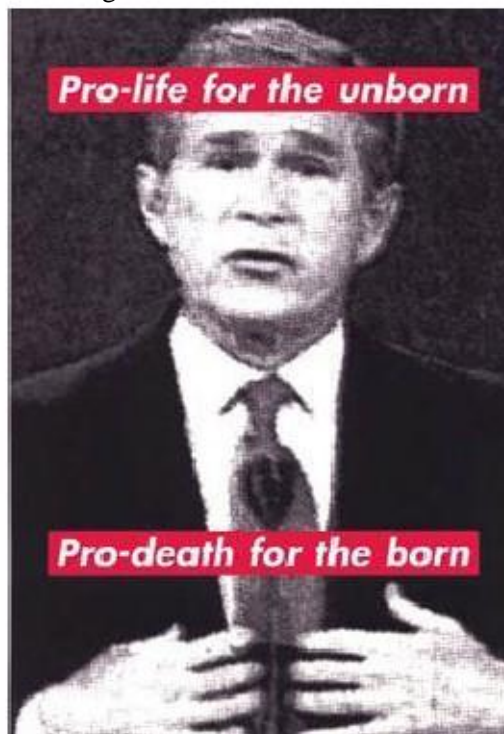


Figure 2: Barbara Kruger Pro-life for the unborn/ Pro-death for the born) 2004



Using technology in art is a way for the developing the artwork and submits it in modern methods; however, the digital art cannot cancel the artist's efforts because the human mind drives the technology and not vice versa. On the other hand it achieves the artwork within



short time and hidden all flaws and corrects its negative points, it is the responsibility of contemporary artists to control these new technologies in order to expand their potential to create new forms of art.

### Enhance New Means of Expression through Digital Technology

Each medium possesses has its own unique characteristics and qualities in application. Students are encouraged to experiment with a range of mediums that guided them to reach to the desired expression, they can also mix different media with computer technique for creative interpretation and communication of ideas. Students should thus be guided to think, understand and apply the qualities of the media in context to the objectives and effects desired rather than be solely trained on the technicalities of the media.

The medium need not sit in isolated purity. There is no law that forbids paint and photography from combining on a single surface. Quote from the British painter Richard Hamilton, "From my perspective there is no limits on subject matter or stylistic languages of expression, I see no virtue in circumscribing the technical means of realization. The image will always be more important than the rationale of its execution". (Halmilton Richard: 1997.p7).

We are already equipped with multiple art techniques, and art mediums, they are not limited as only watercolor, oil painting, or sketching with pencil, but surely they are more, where artists could use multiple methods, processes or means of expression to demonstrate confirm their points of views, as well as digital technology which, supported artists to close the gap between the Idea and representation, and art educator can also use it as an approach for solving problems of art in teaching undergraduate's students.

#### 1. Photography as a Creative Process in Creating a New Artwork

Since the mid nineteenth century, photography has truly become a fusion between science and the creative eye. As with any new electronic gadget of today, the first box cameras captured the curiosity of people who wanted to know what they were capable of producing. While the concept of photography was understood before the daguerreotype came into existence. Artists reacted to this new device with amazement and curiosity, while some artists refused to accept photography as an art form and protested that photography was a soulless. This technology could be used only as a tool to assist artists in drafting their artwork, although the capability of projecting an image was not new, in the nineteenth century the technology introduced by the camera obscura took an innovative direction. (Arnason and Kalb: 2003, p.15). The camera did not eliminate realistic painting, and technology will not eliminate the traditions of fine art. From the 1960s till today, photography considered one of trends in contemporary art.

The contemporary Iranian artist "Shirin Neshat", who used photos as a base of her art she used mixed media pieces of silver gelatin with ink sense and cover parts of the female face and body with abstract designs and Persian calligraphy. She chooses specific compositional audience. The selection of these four elements of Neshat's choice of photography as a way of expression are important so that they allow the artist to communicate with her audience in a manner which she thought agreeable to be as reproduction of "reality." Figure 3,4.

She said in one of her interview "I have found that the simplicity of the image is essential to give a sense of clarity within its very complex setting. To that effect, I use black and white photography, which also echoes the dichotomies I am interested in exploring and highlights



the juxtapositions of the ideas I'm visualizing". (Shadi Sheybani: 1999, Interview).

The Contemporary Egyptian Artist "Sabah Naim" is walking along streets with camera in hand, she observes that were people too busy to notice her. She found them with anonymous faces singled out in a sea of strangers. The more anonymous and obscure a subject, the greater her fascination. She discreetly steals these frames of life; sometimes caught by the subject Naim nevertheless walks away with what she wants in her camera, and she apply her works by using a variety of media and techniques, from drawing to stitching her canvases, she forms simple, often blanched sections that contrast softly with the monochrome print, Figure 5. (Shady El Sayed: 2007, p.267). Naim showed visually stunning photographic compositions of common Egyptian people approach to her work, which are instantly recognizable: the manipulation of photographs with various inputs of color, abstractions and her signature use of neatly folded newspaper. Naim introduces embroidery to her photographs, confirming her belief that medium should not be limiting to what she's attempting to portray, Figure 6.

Digital art and photography seem to be the reincarnation of what painting portrait was to original photography. In it lays a new sense of control and exact ability. Much more like the control of paint on canvas, but much less like the well-established medium, photography; even paint on canvas can be controlled digitally. Using common illustration software such as Corel Draw, Adobe illustrator, Adobe Photoshop, and many more, you can actually paint an entire oil painting using only an electronic pen hooked up to a pad. When things are like painting and photography seem to define the entire realm of the art industry, the idea of a Digital tool doing these things more efficiently

Figure 3: Shirin Neshat 'I am its Secret' 1993" The Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles, Private Collection, New York



Figure 4: Shirin Neshat, Speechless, 1996 print and ink,



Figure 5: Sabah Naim, City People 2003 Mixed Media 140 x 135 cm



Figure 6: Sabah Naim, Cairo Street 2006, Mixed Media on paper



## 2. Using Computer as a part of the creative process:

Photography may not be final Project, but it may become part of a creative process. Computer enables to achieve innovation and distinctive artworks, and also it serves ideas in some creative projects. Software applications such as Photoshop allows the user to transform and manipulate photos and images by applying filters or taking parts of one picture and putting them into another in order to create a new form.

Trends of technology have an impact on arts, and on the way we develop our creativity and imagination. With computer programs such as Adobe Photoshop, Adobe Illustrator, CorelDraw and etc. allowed to some artists and graphic designers to explore new ways to envision and develop their work. These types of software applications help artists to bring new forms into existence. The computer acts as an assistance tool in the process of creativity and imagination, they are enormously differing from traditional techniques.

Advancements in technology and computer aided arts and allowed artists to explore new forms of artistic representation that placed a greater emphasis on the imaginative and aesthetic qualities of art. As for the steps followed by the artist “Debbie Rose Mayer” in creating her painting, she says " I usually start by collecting the largest possible number of photographs related to the subject and I do copies and scan them, after that I use Photoshop program to combine the proposed images of scanner, and put them in the right place on the screen in order to serve the idea of artwork. The number of used images in the same work may reach to about 26 to 28 images. Then I continue to move image on the screen until I find the suitable situation for each image in the painting as a whole. Sometimes I have to use digital light effects to deepen the idea and strengthening it. Figure 7.

I believe that the digital art has no limited process, on certain words, any student who has talent and knowledge of using computer programs, such as Photoshop to develop endless formations of artwork projects, which unify the artistic vision imaginative capacity with high-tech computer programs to achieve together exaggerations of artworks that were not being



realized without this technology. I'm personally one of ardent to art of computer and I take time and effort needed to create paintings and visual formation to stimulate the human mind and develop the imagination.

Figure 7: Debbie Rose Mayer, Judgment in the Garden, Graphic Design



#### Enhancing Students' Artworks through Digital Technology

This research addressed the ability of students to get benefit from using technology in their artwork through workshops, which took place in 2011, it has continued for 3 months with undergraduate students Figure 8. The researcher has noticed that students at the Faculty of Specific Education, Alexandria University, attend painting and drawing courses which often required to work by using traditional mediums and techniques such as watercolor painting or oil painting, and teaching only with transitional mediums don't help to solve some problems, that undergraduate students faced while creating artworks, therefore I used digital technology as a creative tool to develop students' skills and creative thinking, where creativity Included set of basic creative abilities according to the Torrance and Guilford of creative thinking Such as Fluency, Flexibility, Originality and Elaboration of Ideas.

Laura H. Chapman has been referred, that the practice is mainly aimed to understand the role of art as it means development the creative power to transform and use materials and tools into modes of art expression, so that the learner through the exercise of certain activities, which make artworks take the form of the physical.

She adds that the creative artwork as an area of humanitarian operations include thinking and feeling, perception, imagination and expression, and through the exercise of those operations, the learner is gaining visual language of the artwork, that helps him forming and formulation the artwork and gain the ability to innovate as well. (Dina Adel: 2001. P.113)

Students explore the influence of technology on artists as it applies to sources of inspiration the development of ideas or images and choice of tools to communicate visual art ideas. Digital image capture is the combination of many technologies as it is considered as an easy mix of photography and scanners for computer to allow students to add their images and



drawings to the computer.

Computer could not produce or create ideas by itself; however it helps to reduce undergraduate student's effort for the production of art project. Software Application such as Photoshop presents many possibilities to help students of art to create their works in less time with satisfactory and innovative results. Computer becomes a different kind of the student tools; so as the student can create various forms and then they can repeat forms in different sizes and change colors. Students also can add and delete any image and motive without trouble.

#### The Practical Framework:

The current study identifies an approach based on combining of appliance with advantages of our heritage assaying to explore deeds and expression of cultural identity. In return, our relationship identification with tools of modern technology, that we use now in all aspects of life in order to know the truth and the reality such integration and contradictory coexistence, which can be the same as form of contemporary identity.

Each Student has performed a creative art work that explore the concept of assertion of culture identity, which was focused on places and neighborhood in Alexandria city, and to achieve that by using digital technology as an approach to enhance new means of art expression, such as digital cameras, computer, color printers and scanners to create digital images, and they used software applications like Photoshop CS to edit and create digital images with a creative insight that enabled undergraduate art students to generate innovative solutions and opportunities to apply them. There is no doubt that such capabilities should help students to develop their own skills and make them more able to gain new ideas which they easily promotes them.

This paper addressed the ability of undergraduate students enabling them from using technology in their works. I dealt with students who might think they have no artistic talent and consequently show little interest in visual art and who are lack in art expression or who face problems to achieve composition successfully, therefore students been divided into three groups according to problems they faced while creating their artworks:

#### 1st Group:

The 1st group consists artworks, which has been used digital technology in order to help students to create artistic composition Art is a means of entertainment, who feel that their imagination and creativity are enhanced when they are engaged in Art projects and believe that they are interested in Art, it helps them to develop aesthetic standards. Students said that Technology makes Art more accessible to audience and that they know how to use a computer to change shapes and zoom in details by Photoshop program, which allows students to transform images by applying filters or taking parts of one picture and putting them into another. Figure (9), (10), (11), (12), (13)

#### 2nd Group:

The 2nd group consists of students, who are facing problem not only with their imagination, but also with well-chosen color combinations at their artworks. In fact, there are colors that work so badly together that they could literally hurt the eyes when staring or would hinder from understanding images. On the other hand, well color combinations don't just help catch attention; but they help sustain interest also.



Photoshop one of the software programs, which aid to generate many color scheme in order to help uninspired students and to give them possibility of choosing colors easily and how to use in specific artworks and related to the tasks. After that students apply their works on papers or canvas by using acrylic color and add some changes to be more expressed to their ideas. Figure (14), (15), (16), (17).

### 3rd Group:

The 3rd group consists of students who used digital technology in order to help them to create new forms and artistic compositions. The computer here is not used to generate an end design, but it plays an essential role as a part of the creative process.

And the main aim in this group is to make mutual coexistence of modes of artistic production between traditional and technological ways.

Students are consumers with freedom to choose technological tools that complement rather than they can replace more traditional methods of artistic creation, and there is no perceived risk in their minds because they perceive technology as neutral at worst and positively enabling at best. Figure (18), (19), (20).

Figure 8: The art workshop which took place in 2011, with undergraduate students from Faculty of Specific Education, Art Education department, Alexandria University



1st Group



Figure 9: Student's artwork by using Photoshop program, inspired from photographs above

The Student used possibilities of Photoshop program in order to achieve successfully composition of artwork by using pictures photographic which took by digital camera for one of the old neighborhoods in Alexandria city. The student picked out pictures of the Tram and one of the worn windows from old building, she manipulated with those pictures by using Photoshop CS filters drawing effect, sizes, color and she added part of her old painting as background after emphasized on colors.

I have noticed that using photography and Photoshop Program helped her to create and promote her idea in less time with satisfactory and innovative results.



Figure 10: Student's artwork by using Photoshop program, inspired from photograph above

Kom El Dikka considers one of the famous and oldest neighborhoods in Alexandria. The student has chosen one of the old and dilapidated buildings in her artwork, She said that, "My grandmother was living in that quarter and she wanted to appear the beauty of old things around us". In her artwork, she achieved the flexibility and freedom of art expression by using possibilities of Adobe Photoshop program. She achieved also the interdependence of the elements and forms in her artwork besides using Arabic calligraphy.

The utilization of photographs as an aid to Bring out the values of expressive in artwork, as it helps student to generate new ideas. Photoshop program allowed the fluency and freedom of expression and successful composition for artwork by using pictures photographic,





Figure 11: Student's artwork by using Photoshop program, inspired from photograph above

which took for old building. The photograph has highlighted the values of the expressive in this work of art. The student used only brown color and its degrees in order to give the impression of old heritage. She realized the balance in artwork in terms of putting the image of balcony in the middle; she exceeded the rules of Arabic calligraphy and made it as artistic element in order to make another composition with an aesthetic values.



Figure 12: Student's artwork by using Photoshop program, inspired from photographs above

El Mursi Abul Abbas Mosque was built primarily in 1775 over the tomb of a Spanish scholar and saint in Alexandria, and became over times the most famous mosques at Alexandria. Photographs in this artwork highlighted the values of the expressive work of art. The students achieved it by using Adobe Photoshop harmony between artistic elements to give aesthetic dimensions. Student has manipulated with another photo in the background, of Sayed Darwish Theatre in Alexandria that designed based on the architectural style of the Greek architect. In terms Alexandria replete with a diverse heritage, the student makes coexists between the oriental and Greek style architecture in order to emphasis on culture diversity in the city.



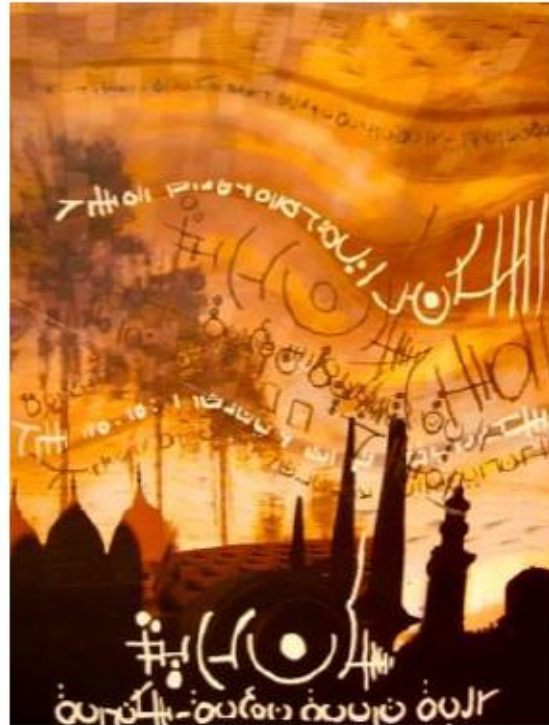


Figure 13: Student's artwork by using Photoshop program, inspired from his own photographs

In this artwork student collected photos of famous and remarkable historical sights in Alexandria city and put them together after using silhouette effect to emphasize the power of actuators shape. He exceeded the rules of Arabic calligraphy and made it as artistic form in order to make another composition, he emphasis on the contrast between the color of writing and the elements. The student realized the balance between the constituent elements of the artwork.

Using Adobe Photoshop contributed to deal with symbols and shapes with a flexibility and versatility. This artwork addresses the elements and forms in order to express cultural identity

2nd Group



Figure 14: Student's artwork by Acrylic after using Photoshop to generate color scheme inspired from photographs above

Student achieved the flexibility and freedom of art expression by using possibilities of Adob Photoshop program. She picked One of photos that photographed of window from old building, she changed color by Photoshop and she added Motifs. Students achieved successful composition for artwork and colors. After several attempts she used cool colors tend more than warm colors such as Blue, gray, silver in order to have a calming effect and to give a sense of comforting and nurturing. After that she applied it on paper by using Acrylic color.



Figure 15: Student's artwork by Acrylic after using Photoshop to generate color scheme inspired from

photographs highlighted the values of the expressive the artwork. Student used the Photoshop program to change colors After that she apply their works on paper by Acrylic color after using the possibilities of Photoshop such as transform images by applying filters, she achieved a successful color composition in her artwork, after that she applied it on paper by using Acrylic color.



Figure 16: Student's artwork by Acrylic after using Photoshop to generate color scheme inspired from photographs above

Student used the Photoshop program to change colors and manipulate the photograph, and show more details of one of old shrine in Alexandria. It highlighted the values of the expressive art. The student used Photoshop program in order to generate color scheme, such as warm color in his specific artwork in order to evoke emotions ranging from feelings of warmth and comfort to feelings of anger and hostility, after that she applied it on paper by using Acrylic color.





Figure 17: Student's artwork by Acrylic after using Photoshop to generate color scheme inspired from photographs above

The student transformed images by applying filters and taking parts of one photographs and putting them into another in order to create an artistic composition by using both of Photo and Photoshop program to generate color scheme, after that she applied it on paper by using Acrylic color



3rd Group



Figure 18: Student's artwork by using Photoshop and drawing sketching

The student started by collecting photographs of the famous Castles in Alexandria (Qait bye) that built by Quait bye, who ruled Egypt between 1468 and 1496, she picked out one of the coastal passages photo, which is located in the north eastern part of the fortress. She scanned one of her of Egyptian woman. After that the stage of using Photoshop to combine the proposed images of scanner, and put them in the right place on the screen in order to serve the idea of artwork. Student by such steps achieved mutual coexistence of modes of artistic production between traditional and technological way.



Figure 19: Student's artwork by using oil color and collage on printed canvas

Mermaid Statue one of the famous sculpture in Alexandria city, at this artwork students created artistic composition and developed her idea through coexistence between traditional and technological Techniques. The student printed his design after she has transformed images by applying filters, taking parts of one picture and putting them into another by Photoshop program. By digital technology create artistic composition and develop her idea. After that, the student print it on canvas and use variety of media and techniques, from drawing, paint with oil color and add collage on her canvas.



Figure 20: Student's artwork by using oil color and collage on printed canvas

The student inspired this composition from Mermaid Statue after using the possibilities of Photoshop such as images transformation by applying filters and taking parts of one picture and putting them into another. She added more details and other materials after printing it on canvas. She achieved the flexibility and freedom of art expression through mixing both of traditional and technological Techniques, photography and computer enhanced student's imagination and creativity.

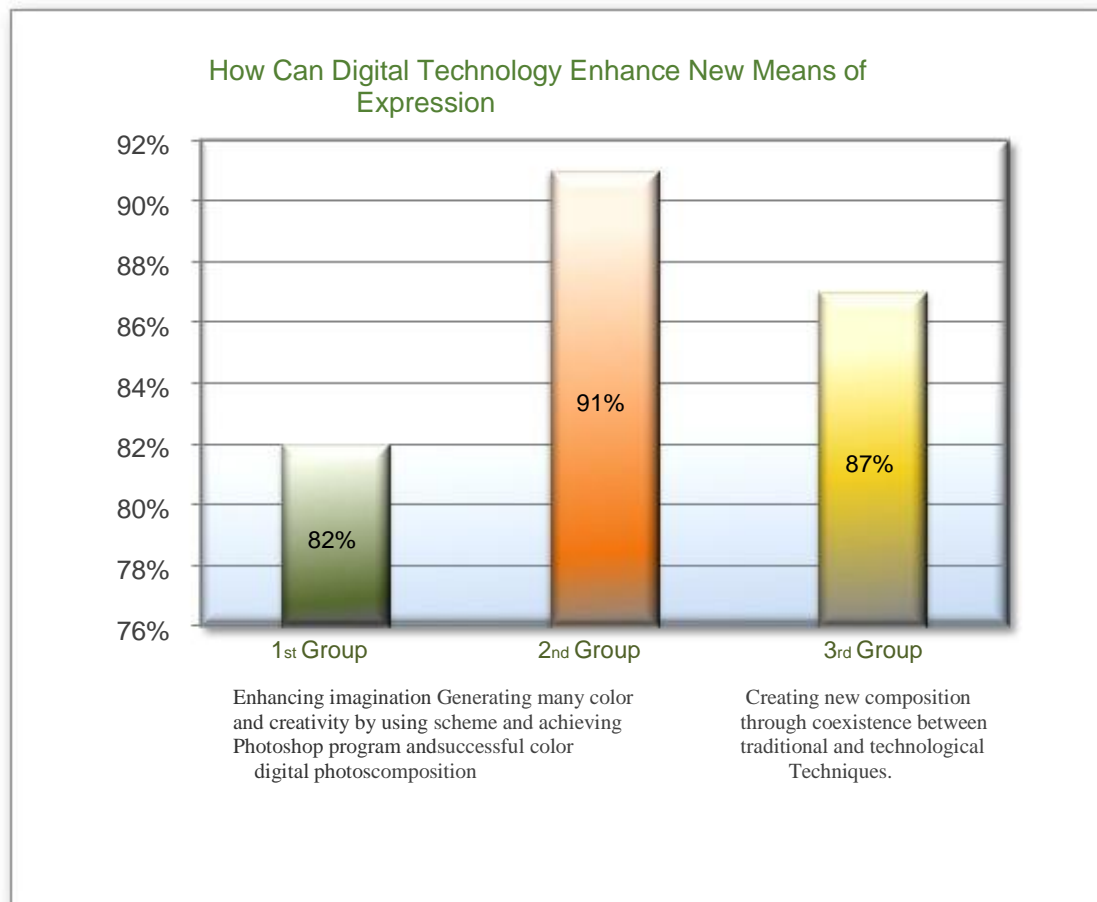
### Statistic and Analysis of the Results:

The majority of Questionnaire's items have been based on Chapman 's steps for the exercise of the artwork, which includes the ability to form ideas, the ability to develop ideas, the ability to use art materials, respond to the visual elements, Analysis and interpretation and to judge the work of art.

After survey the satisfaction rate of arbitrators in field of art education came proportion high in all the items on the form, the following form illustrates this figure 21.

- Percentage of satisfaction on student's artworks in 1st Group is 82%, which refers that Technology helps students to form and develop ideas as well as enhanced imagination and creativity.
- Percentage of satisfaction on student's artworks in 2nd Group is 91%, which means that Technology helped uninspired students to achieve successful combinations, color combinations and choose what colors to use in specific artworks related tasks.
- Percentage of satisfaction on student's artworks in 3rd Group is 87%, which refers students able to create artistic composition and develop their ideas through coexistence between traditional and technological Techniques.

Figure 21: Satisfaction rate proportion of how can digital technology enhance new means of expression





## Conclusion

New Technology promotes the artistic character of multimedia applications, creates new types of Art, and supports boundaries between art and technological applications to be more indistinguishable. The use of digital Technologies in Art leads to the creation of new learning fields that motivate the students to be accurate and positive. Therefore instructors in art education field has to develop creative thinking in their students through using new technologies as a way to produce innovation and distinctive works of art.

Artistic expression is an important aspect of Arts education. It refers to the evoked feeling and ideas that are expressed through works of art. It not only gives an opportunity for students to express themselves artistically, but also it provides students with an opportunity to become aware of how artists both past and present have expressed themselves through their achievements. As well, Artistic expression involves the world we live in, and the ways in which art is used to express our values and beliefs of the society.

In the field of expressive art there are infinite numbers of ways to express, and approaches in a different ways. Art is timeless and doesn't fade away with the latest trend. It has been proven through the ages that art are changing and technology will not eliminate the traditions of fine art.

It is time to broaden the focus of creating new digital technology from new computer tools towards new creativity support systems, and from the programmer to the generalized digital creator. In the time to come, the computer should be molded by the ideas of anyone who wishes to create within its possibilities. It will become a creative medium in the truest sense. Digital artists are currently the closest fit to the ubiquitous digital creators of the future, and it is their work, which is responsible for much of the innovation in interaction technology today.

## Results:

- Digital technology presents many possibilities to help student of art to create their works in less time with satisfactory and innovative results.
- The role of technology in contemporary arts, where it provides artists with another set of tools to express their creative vision and make it easily accessible to huge audience.
- Using digital technology as a creative tool developed creative thinking of students and produce artworks, which characterized with Fluency, Flexibility, Originality and Elaboration of Ideas.
- Through coexistence between traditional and technological Techniques, students able to create artistic composition and develop their ideas.
- Technology proved that it enables to create many performances and responds to the arts. Each of these disciplines is special applicable communications skill that is so important to the workforce of today.
- Advancements in technology aided art education students to explore new forms of artistic representation that realized greatest emphasis on the imaginative and aesthetic qualities of art.

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## General and Sustainable Learning through Craft Education

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### Abstract

Our children are nowadays open to a huge number of external impulses and stimuli. However, the ability to initiate and plan one's own activities and perform accordingly enhances private enterprise and autonomy. This is why school should provide such learning opportunities that create generic learning which is applicable in the world outside school.

Teacher-controlled versus learner-independent teaching form the two opposite ends of everyday craft teaching practices. In many countries schools do not teach pupils how to use their own hands and body purposefully – technologies have replaced this. However, modern brain research has shown that practising manual skills is relevant to the individual's brain activity and overall development. The teacher's involvement in arts and crafts enables the feasible teaching objectives which create multisensory for learning objectives children. Teacher-controlled learning produces mechanical and repetitive learning, which at best ends up as competent mastery of separate technical skills. Yet this teaching strategy enhances the student's dependence on guidance and tries to suppress student-initiated experimental activities. The teacher's narrow technical management of the subject matter is sufficient.

In student-centered learning the objectives are experiential and creative, and tuition emphasizes solving problems created by the learners. Independent craft projects highlight the learners' own ideas, meanings and goals, and guidance tends to tutor student-driven actions. The teacher's deep understanding of the subject matter allows personalized learning goals and differentiation.

Developing the thinking skills to direct working, just as the skills to manipulate and control concrete material and environmental issues, are more vital than the coincidental subject-specific contents of craft courses. Thus, teaching craft is finding a balance between the different teaching strategies with the aims of pass technical learning and producing applicable skills which enable pupils to draw general conclusions and act in the real world.

This presentation examines craft teaching and tries to identify what kind of teaching approaches would offer applicable learning.

### Key words

Craft teaching, generic skills, learning objectives, teaching skills

### Present-day learning in general

Our children are nowadays open to a huge number of external impulses and stimuli. Children sometimes tell how the news causes them feelings of discomfort since they are not automatically able to filter out negative media coverage. In the Finnish National Curriculum (FNBE 2004) it is emphasized that children live within the spheres of influence of school and home simultaneously, which requires that the two educational forces should cooperate and interact in supporting the pupils' growth. School is to support the educational task of the home and to take responsibility for the pupil's education. The curriculum states that school



should be guided by humanity and co-operation and should not encourage individual performance and competition. School should also promote the abilities to plan one's own work and engage in critical thinking. The new school should not advance blind obedience and rote learning but enhance entrepreneurship and autonomy by giving opportunities to initiate, plan and carry out one's own activities. This is why school should provide learning opportunities which create generic learning that is also applicable in the world outside school.

Present-day learning in school environments and teaching based on textbooks do not seem to be part of the current media age. Modern learning takes place everywhere and the pupil experiences meaningful learning via the Internet and other media, through social media and in leisure time activities. The changes in society, in learning from formal to informal, in loosely structured and ubiquitous learning environments, should be reflected as change in schools because there is a danger that a large proportion of pupils will drop out of meaningful learning. (Pohjola 2011).

The simultaneousness of life has increased; the Internet generation is used to the flow of digitally-sourced information displayed on a screen. The young generation is accustomed to multitasking, to obtaining and combining information from discontinuous flows of image, movement and music. The intensive use of ICT can affect cognitive features such as the immediate gratification of needs, the ability to multitask and concentrate as well as the development of visual literacy. (FNBE 2009b). However, basic skills like literacy and numeracy as well as learning to think are still important. A quick search of the Internet with the words "literacy" and "future" highlight the assortment of literacies, such as visual, social, media, network, computer, alphabetic, library, information and cultural literacies. Extra attention should be paid to the skills needed to mix different media as well as to the interpretation of meanings. So, complementing easily obtainable knowledge, the practising of new literacies stresses self-regulation and functional skills in order to integrate the flow of information with reflective and metacognitive skills.

### Generic Learning as a part of Craft Education

In this paper sustainable learning is considered as the development of generic thinking. Generic thinking refers to the idea of those wide-ranging and adaptable thinking skills which allow us to cope in new situations and solve problems spontaneously by structuring and reasoning. Managing a complex situation with flexible information processing and precise evaluation ability is strongly influenced by reading the situation and the environment: how does the individual spontaneously act in a given situation. Thus, working in changing situations produces continuous re-positioning and related applied learning from experience. To be able to work in the future in unpredictable and un-routine-like working environments people will need problem-solving skills, communication and information processing skills, planning and self-management skills, as well as the skills of using new tools and technologies that support working ( Enkenberg 2005).

In Nordhaug's (1991) words meta-competencies refer to generalizable knowledge (e.g., communication skills, creativity, learning skills and language skills) that can be applied in a variety of assignments and jobs but also in a range of operational environments. Meta-competencies are infrastructural knowledge, skills and the ability to apply the information in diverse everyday situations and tasks. Meta-competencies also reflect the ability, for example, to ask (themselves, others, or from things) the right questions; to perceive problematic or practical issues and to develop solutions to various problems. According to Senge (1990) the focus in learning organizations should be on generative learning ('learning that enhances our



capacity to create') instead of adaptive learning (acting regularly in the same way', but on a routine basis).

As for sustainable craft education, ideologically it is not only about maintaining traditional techniques but also about preserving and developing culture, which includes good design as well as appropriate and environmentally-friendly material choices and practices. Sustainable craft production means carefully manufactured products that are worth repairing and are not thrown away when used. The restored or overhauled objects will be used further and they do not burden the environment as waste. High work quality and correct choices of production materials extend the product lifecycle. Responsible craft-entrepreneurship connects production, the consumer and the environment. (Taito Group 2012).

Entrepreneurship education connected with craft education is not about economic life and establishing companies but rather a part of lifelong learning and the development of the life skills needed. Entrepreneurship education is about promoting spontaneous and proactive learning, which gives the learners the opportunity to develop their own skills. Entrepreneurship education in this context is a question of life management, active interaction, self-guided action, responsibility and innovation by means of detecting internal initiative and situational potential. Entrepreneurship education is also part of the school curriculum in Finland and quite often it is seen as a part of craft education. The focus is on the learner's own activity and learning takes place in a simulated or real-world setting. Instruction is based on problem-solving and interaction and the teacher's role evolves from that of a disseminator of information to one of an organiser, guide and learning environment planner (MEC 2009, 17).

#### Craft Education development in Finland

The first teacher seminary in Finland started in 1863 and the ideas of the seminary followed the principles of Central European teacher seminaries (Vuorinen 2003). Diesterweg, Fröbel and Pestalozzi were the most influential educationalists of that time, and their work directed the educational ideas for Finnish kindergartens and primary schools. The basis for the forthcoming subject of craft was the goal of equal opportunities in education and harmonious personality (adapted from Diesterweg), the theories of learning through play and active participation, construction and building (adapted from Fröbel) as well as the development of human nature along the three dimensions of head, heart and hand (adapted from Pestalozzi) (Günther 1993, Heiland 1993). So, instead of dealing only with words, children should learn through activity and draw their own conclusions through observation and reflection, and try to make sense of experiences and situations (Soëtard 1994). To promote these ideas the subject of handicraft was developed for the Finnish school curriculum. The subject handicraft was to promote pupils' activity and independent enterprise and the would-be teacher of that time was supposed to be practical and handy. (Vuorinen 2003).

Rural Finnish girls were taught 'women's crafts', i.e., sewing, weaving, knitting, and boys 'men's work', which was mostly carpentry. The craft works produced were primarily household utility articles, and a collection of craft models determined the teaching in primary school. The teaching was intended to advance the student's abilities and skills from easier models to more difficult. Model series publications also showed exactly which working postures, movements and exercises were required to be learnt using certain tools and in what order they should be learned. From the beginning of the 19th century the pupils no longer needed to manage the whole craft process because working life in general was undergoing a transition to the division of labour because of industrialisation. (Craft Museum of Finland).



Craft education was not only meant to practise technical activity but also to develop children both physically and mentally. According to the educational goals, craft work was to be neither professional nor mechanical. The pupil should be allowed to ideate and plan the objects according to his or her imaginative ideas. Properly organized craft teaching was meant to develop the child's manual dexterity and understanding of shape and beauty, in pursuance of self-reflection, innovativeness and creativity. However, craft teaching in urban primary schools was not a compulsory subject. In girls' schools handicraft was "for the daughters of civilized parents to obtain information and training in handicrafts", which was considered to be a good and class-conscious women's education. On the other hand, handicraft was not taught at all to upper-class boys, who were educated to be priests and university officials. (Craft Museum of Finland).

The current national curriculum in Finland determines the guidelines for a nine-year compulsory education. The key objective of the basic elementary school is equality, which guarantees university-level studies to all, irrespective of social status and domicile. Gender equality is reflected in craft teaching: it is possible for girls and boys to study both technical work and textile work according to choice. During the history of the primary school craft education contents have varied slightly: the products have been connected either with nature, technology or environmental issues. In theme-based work attention has been paid to the student's own needs, problem solving and individual ideas. Primary school craft education still contains two material realms: soft and hard materials: textile craft is more committed to art education, designing and self-expression, whereas technical craft concentrates on technology and science. The production of artefacts is seen as a process starting from initial ideas and ending in a finished product. (Craft Museum of Finland).

In the National Core Curriculum (FNBE 2004) present-day craft education is meant to develop the pupil's crafts skills so that the pupil's self-esteem grows and the pupil experiences joy and satisfaction when working. The aim is also to increase the pupil's responsibility for design and use of materials, to value the quality of work and materials, and to be critical when considering the causes and effects of the choices made. In all grades there is an emphasis on planning, creative solutions and understanding the quality of work and materials.

Making requires the ability to combine technical production skills and imagination. Craft skills consist of diverse skills: there are cognitive skills such as thinking and problem-solving skills; physical skills, such as hand-eye coordination skills, spatial perception, dexterity, accuracy and speed, as well as social skills such as teamwork and dealing with cultural issues. Handicraft education makes it possible to transmit and reform cultural heritage and it also allows access to other cultures. Handicraft teaching creates the basis for craft skills, to master the whole craft process and to manage it. (FNBE 2004).

It is obvious and clear how the current craft curriculum is based on the historical chain dating back to the start of craft teaching (Kiviniemi & Vuorinen 2010). In Finland curricular reform is again under general discussion and many stakeholders want to influence the range and extent of subjects in the curriculum. To prepare the political decision-making the Finnish National Board of Education (2009a) carried out a survey on the primary education core curriculum, lesson allocation and the curriculum planning process. According to the respondents (N=1200) more lessons should be provided for art and craft subjects plus physical education. Another highlighted concern was the predominant stressing of knowledge instead of experiential and applied subjects in school education.

The development of future craft education obtains its guidelines from research in craft science and craft education. Pöllänen (2009) names the diverse pedagogical models for learning craft





in schools as 1) craft as product-making; 2) craft as skill and knowledge building and 3) craft as design and problem-solving. The first model (product-making) emphasizes the product made by one's own hand by following ready-made instructions, whereas the second model (knowledge building) extends craft making from model-based product preparation into building one's skills and knowledge. The last model (designing) focuses on learning self-orientation and working skills, where experiences and emotions are meaningful for the learner.

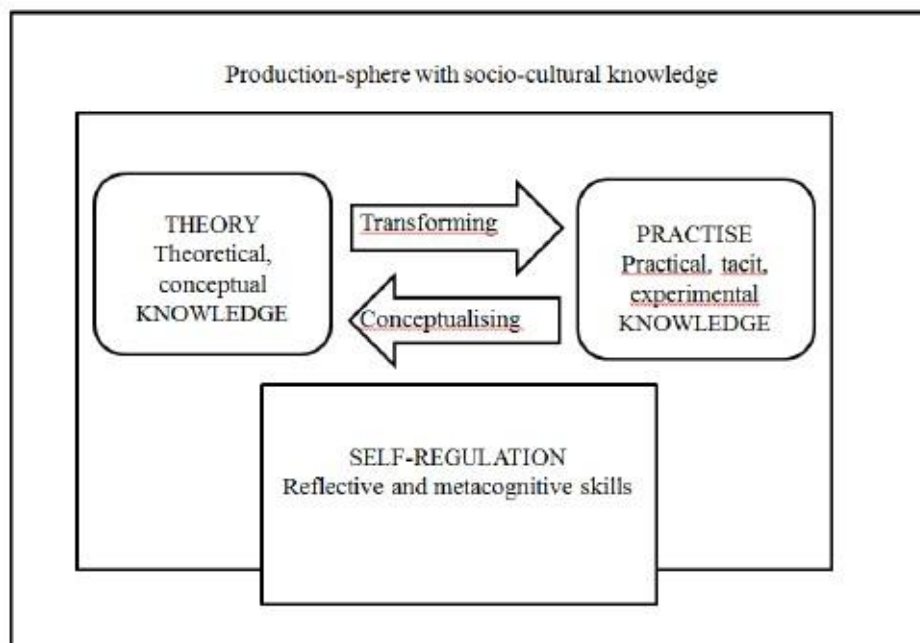
According to an expert panel in a Delphi study (Paajanen & Rastas 2010), it is likely that the future trend in craft education will be that certain core contents (both in technical and textile work, with the addition of new technological issues) are offered for all and after that there will be student-centered learning methods with increasing optionality. No major changes will take place in teaching methods but it is likely that the use of ICT will increase in the designing of the products. From the student's point of view, technical skills are important but generalizable skills and knowledge are emphasized. Experts are largely in agreement about future developments but there is a need to clarify the purpose and foundation of the subject from the pupils' point of view.

The Internet has also changed the culture and meaning of present-day crafts, generating collaborative networks, for example, for live-role-play communities, hobbyists and peer group cooperation in the social media. Handicraft is no longer trapped in the slow processes of change in closed institutions like schools but it spreads rapidly and unrestrictedly widely through the Internet. Finding out about foreign crafting cultures has been simplified and cultural boundaries are easily crossed. The blogs and social networks provide enthusiasts with instructions and support as well as a showroom and publicity. Craft making is connected with well-being, having fun, self-expression and productive skills.

#### Integrative craft pedagogy and sustainable learning outcomes

The model of integrative pedagogy (Figure 1) is also highly applicable when portraying craft education procedure. The model clarifies aware crafting activity and visibly combines learned and experienced knowledge in the productive sphere. In the model theoretical knowledge is seen as universal and formal in nature and it includes knowledge and technical information needed in preparation of the craft project. The knowledge is applied and transformed purposefully when producing the artifact. In contrast to the theoretical knowledge mentioned, practical knowledge and experience are gained through practice. This form of knowledge can also be referred to as procedural knowledge, or simply as skills. Practical knowledge is not easy to explicate; it tends to be intuitive, implicit or tacit in nature. The third constituent of expertise is self-regulative knowledge. The development of self-regulative knowledge requires the learner's reflection on his or her own activities. In this model, reflection links theoretical knowledge with practical knowledge in the arena of making. Even if the acquired experiences concern the ongoing making, the reflected findings and possible new observations make the summative knowledge of the process generalizable to other projects. As seen in the 'Systemic whole of a self-governed craft process' depicted in the figure below, product making takes place in a certain socio-cultural environment. Thus, another significant component of the maker's development of expertise is sociocultural knowledge (taking place in the productive sphere), which is embedded in social practices and in the tools and artifacts used in social practices. (Adapted from Tynjälä, 2008; Tynjälä, Slotte, Nieminen, Lonka & Olkinuora, 2006; Heikkinen, Tynjälä & Kiviniemi 2011).

Figure 1: Systemic whole of a self-governed craft process



When analysing the teaching approaches in craft education, the opposite ends of everyday craft teaching practices are formed by ‘teacher-controlled’ versus ‘learner-independent’ teaching models. In many countries art and craft in the sense of using one’s hands and body purposefully is not taught in schools. However, modern brain research has shown that practising manual skills is relevant to the individual’s brain activity and overall development. The teacher’s involvement in arts and crafts enables the definition of feasible teaching objectives for workshops to specify multisensory learning objectives for children.

Teacher-controlled learning is likely to produce mechanical and repetitive learning, which at best ends up as mastery of the separate technical skills. Yet this teaching strategy increases the student’s dependence on guidance and tries to suppress student-initiated experimental activities. However, the teacher’s narrow technical management of the subject matter is sufficient. In student-centred learning the objectives are experiential and creative and the tuition emphasizes solving problems created by the learners. Independent craft projects highlight the learners’ own ideas, meanings and goals, and the guidance tends to tutor student-driven actions. The teacher’s deep understanding of the subject matter allows personalized learning goals and differentiation in teaching. Developing the thinking skills required in order to steer and monitor working, just as the skills to manipulate and control concrete material and environmental issues, are more vital than the coincidental subject specific contents of craft courses. Thus, teaching craft is finding a balance between different teaching strategies with the aim of passing on both technical learning and applicable skills, which together enable the pupil to draw general conclusions and act in the real world.

The undivided craft process (as opposed to the divided craft process) stresses the initiated, executed and evaluated process carried out by the maker. The objective of the activity is to go deeply into the creative process of craft and to manage the process with a critical approach. However, craft education in the educational setting has a twofold purpose: the crafting approach includes a strong focus on independent, investigative actions and thinking but pupils



working in the same group are allowed and encouraged to develop a shared understanding of the process and create communal ways when working. In the divided craft process the maker follows the plans and instructions of another designer and manufactures a replica of the model product. In both its undivided and divided forms, the craft process itself needs personal process monitoring. When technical skills are to be learned, it is easy to start with divided projects. However, personalized projects deepen motivation and thus the effort of learning seems lighter.

### General learning as a main goal in the curriculum

This article has examined craft teaching and tried to identify the kind of teaching approaches that offer sustainable learning. Handicraft education in Finland tends to combine the two sections (hard and soft materials and techniques) into a unified design and production subject. Regardless of source materials, the phase of making is a process-oriented and structured activity, including ideation, design, construction and production. Craft education also needs an in-depth conception of learning which specifies the learner's status: whether the learner is the target of the teaching or an active player.

Each curriculum is constructed through societal debate and policy making. The curriculum reflects the values and the chosen learning theory which guide the teaching of school subjects. According to Hilmola and Syrjäläinen (2012) the most recent curricula (FNBE 2004) for craft includes 416 different qualifiers that describe the tasks, objectives, content and assessment of the subject. According to the authors the attributes overlap with each other. In the future it will be important to write down what the objectives of craft education are and what the future vision of craft as a subject is. The prospective national curriculum will show whether the existence of the subject is justified solely with historical facts or whether the subject is re-described using contemporary concepts and up-to-date terms. The old traditional objectives no longer seem to correspond to the needs of modern life. What will be the qualitative and dynamic learning in craft, when material supply is self-evident and the making of products is no longer necessary?

The focus might be on generic skills centering on decision-making, independent self-direction and individual self-expression, along with mastery of the whole craft process with a variety of craft techniques, designing, and material decisions. Craft as a subject seems to deserve a place in the curriculum by offering opportunities to apply theory with practice. The teacher's position is notable in a new way: the question is how to challenge and guide the students to design such craft processes which advance learning and which are suitably motivating and challenging. Learning from our peers is natural when we see how others proceed and how they solve certain problems in their own projects. Similarly, the shift to dialogic tutoring and instructional methods is important.

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## Concrete Poetry and Didactics of Second Language Learning. The Contribution of a Literature Genre to the Development of Language and Creative Skills of Foreign Language Learners

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### Abstract

One of the creative instructional materials in second language teaching is the use of literature and more specifically concrete poetry; a lyric form, in which the visual elements are used to enhance the meaning of text and are considered of equal importance to it. The fact that concrete poems make use of the typographical arrangement of words as a comment on the fundamental instability of language is an aspect which could be of pedagogical interest to foreign language learners.

This notion plays a key role in our theoretical study, in which we aim to explore the specific features of concrete poetry in order to examine its contribution to the development of communicative language competence as well as the development of creative skills of foreign language learners. Concrete poems as an authentic text are to be implemented in a project-based, communicative-pragmatic and student-oriented approach of language teaching. More specifically, using examples from teaching German as a foreign language we examine the contribution of concrete poetry in both receptive and productive language skills.

This particular approach to foreign language teaching and culture through concrete poetry could encourage learners to use their creative potential more effectively and possibly facilitate foreign language learning.

**Keywords:** Concrete/Visual Poetry, Second Language Learning, Literature Teaching

### Introduction

As foreign language teachers our aim is to facilitate learners as much as possible and reshape the learning process by inventing new methods and techniques. The presupposition is, of course that all these will prove to be useful in the acquisition of the foreign language.

Nowadays, everybody needs to understand quickly, as well as to be understood quickly and this is only possible through direct language and scripture, claims Eugen Gomringer in one of his programmatic essays on concrete poetry (Gomringer, 1972). Still true in our digitally dominated era, this observation explains the renewed interest in concrete poetry (Olson, 2011). The question is, if this modern postulate for “quick communication” (ibid) still indicated by the contemporary trends in our language, is or should be reflected in foreign language teaching methods.

The present theoretical essay examines the contribution of concrete poetry to the development of language skills (i.e. reading, writing, listening and speaking) and language areas (i.e. vocabulary, grammar and pronunciation), as well as the development of intercultural,

emotional-social and creative skills of foreign language learners, in particular that of German as a foreign language at a beginner's level (A1-2).

### What is concrete poetry? An approximate definition

According to the German literature lexicon Metzler (Schweike & Schweike, 1990), concrete poetry is the attempt to produce written speech using the concrete material of language (syllables, letters, words) without reference to any semantic or syntactical aspects. In other words concrete poetry is a literature genre (Pineda, 1995; Hanson, 2009), a lyric form of language, wherein the visual elements are not only used to enhance the meaning of the text but are considered to be of equal importance. A concrete poem is one in which the words of the poem constitute a picture or a design. In short, concrete poetry is a poem as a picture (Brod, 1983; Bohn, 2011) where the hierarchy of signs is considered to be very important (Tsur, 2000).

Two forms of visual poetry are mentioned in Metzler's (ibid.) definition: Acoustic (Sprechgedichte) and visual concrete poetry. Perhaps the most famous visual concrete poem is *The Apple* by Reinhard Döhl (1965).



Döhl, R. (1965)

Kopfermann (1974) adds some more categories of concrete poems:

- i) Semantic concrete poetry, which could be grammatical or non-grammatical.
- ii) Non-semantic (nonsense lyric) concrete poetry.
- iii) Montage concrete poetry.

Jandl in an informal lecture-demonstration according to Rollingson (1972) categorizes his poems for the purpose presentation in a classroom in the following groups:

- a) Those using words with their semantic meanings, as in the poem "antipoden". (see below p. 6) These poems engage the reader in the activity of supplying the thought process, which completes the poem (ibid.)
- b) Those made of sounds and letters, such as the poem "schtzngrmm", and
- c) Poems with a "twist"; an unexpected play of words or sounds.



theoretical frame by claiming that ... «την μεν ζωγραφίαν ποίησιν σιωπῶσαν προσηγόρευεν, την δε ποίησιν ζωγραφίαν λαλούσαν» (ibid).



Simmius of Rhodos, Technopaignia (300 B.C.)

### Why use art and literature in the foreign language classroom?

By incorporating art in foreign language lessons we make use of a tool that could possibly be of assistance to the reading and writing skills of our students. In this sense, we are interested in art as a vehicle of cultural elements. As the art object in the classroom serves non-aesthetic purposes we are talking about the destruction of any autonomous work of art (Kügler, 1988)

The American philosopher and educator John Dewey (1916) emphasizes the role of formulated experience in communication comparing it with art:

“The experience has to be formulated in order to be communicated. The formulate requires getting outside of it, seeing it as another would see it, considering what points of contact it has with the life of another so that it may be got into such form that he can appreciate its meaning... All communication is like art.”

Research on the matter has shown that multiple arguments exist that legitimize the use of arts in education. As Fiske (1999) concludes art might alter the learning experience in the following ways: “The arts reach students in ways that they are not otherwise being reached. The arts connect students to themselves and each other. The arts transform the environment for learning. The arts provide learning opportunities for adults in the lives of young people. The arts provide new challenges for those students already considered successful. The arts connect learning experiences to the world of real work. Especially in terms of project-based learning, the study demonstrates clearly that arts enhance learning.”

According to Collie & Slater (1987), there are four main reasons, which may lead a language teacher to use literature in the classroom. These are the following:

#### i) Valuable Authentic material

Literature is considered to be valuable authentic material, which implies that literature in contradiction to the texts of schoolbooks is not created for the primary purpose of teaching a language. More specifically, while reading literary texts, students may become familiar with



many different linguistic forms, communicative functions and meanings; and they also have to cope with language that is primarily addressed to native speakers.

ii) Cultural Enrichment

Though the world of a novel, play, or short story is an imaginary one, it presents a full and colorful setting in which characters from many social / regional backgrounds are presented. The reader can discover the way the characters in such literary works see the outside world. This vivid world can help the foreigner who is a learner to better understand the codes and tensions that shape a society through the visual literacy of semiotics. Moreover, literature adds a lot to the cultural grammar of learners.

iii) Language Enrichment

Literature provides learners with a wide range of individual lexical or syntactic structures. Students can acquire insight into many features of the written language. They learn about the syntax and discourse functions of sentences, the variety of possible structures, and different ways of connecting ideas. They can develop and enrich their own writing skills, while improving at the same time their communicative and cultural competence.

iv) Personal Involvement

Literature can be useful in the language learning process due to the personal involvement it fosters upon the reader. Once the student reads a literary text, he begins to inhabit the text. He is drawn into the text. Understanding the meaning of lexical items or phrases becomes less significant than pursuing the actual development of the story. This can have beneficial effects upon the whole language learning process.

Why use concrete poetry in the foreign language classroom?

To begin with, it is not always recommended to use the genre of concrete poetry in the foreign language classroom (Kast, 1994 according to Koziel, 1998). Students tend to avoid the complexity of literature when they know they can ‘hide’ behind the “protective space” of poetry (ibid).

    w    w  
    d    i  
  n    n    n  
  i    d    i    d  
w            w

Gomringer, E. (1953)

The major argument for using poetry in the foreign language classroom is in most cases the emotional aspect of poems. The argument of “emotional literacy” (Templer, 2009) should not





be totally rejected, despite the fact that concrete poetry defines itself as a non-conventional and non-traditional genre, which is against subjectivity and individual expression (Kopfermann, 1974). Solt (1970) also stresses the attempt of concrete poetry theory works to distinguish concrete poetry from older forms of poetry "...the concrete poet seeks to relieve the poem of its centuries-old burden of ideas, symbolic reference, allusion and repetitious emotional content. . . ."

For example in his poem "antipoden" Ernst Jandl reads the poem, as Rollingson (1972) states "...in a loud monotone way, giving equal stress to each line. With no smile or chuckle, he submits words stacked on one another: papers, table, floor, cellar, globe, cellar, room, floor, table, papers...It does so without emotion, without great surprise, or wonder. It is merely allowing the reader to observe the fact." Yet in the recorded reading of the poem by the author (which can be found in [http://www.ernstjandl.com/movie\\_antipoden.html](http://www.ernstjandl.com/movie_antipoden.html)), the poet's voice seems to rise from time to time. In any case, concrete poems seem to address the readers sometimes in a playful way and other times in an emotional way, regardless of the author's intentions.

„antipoden“

		steht ein keller
	und unter diesem	
		steht ein zimmer
steht ein blatt	und unter diesem	
und unter diesem		steht ein boden
steht ein blatt	und unter diesem	
und unter diesem		steht ein tisch
steht ein blatt	und unter diesem	
und unter diesem		steht ein blatt
steht ein blatt	und unter diesem	
und unter diesem		steht ein blatt
steht ein tisch	und unter diesem	
und unter diesem		steht ein blatt
steht ein boden	und unter diesem	
und unter diesem		steht ein zimmer
steht ein zimmer	und unter diesem	
und unter diesem		steht ein Keller
steht ein Keller	und unter diesem	
und unter diesem		steht ein Erdball
steht ein Erdball	und unter diesem	

Jandl, E.

Concluding the discussion of genre definition, we could summarize some typical features of concrete poetry, which could provide relevant arguments for their use in foreign language classrooms. The following list is by no means exhaustive.



i) The manifestation of concrete poetry itself emphasizes the fact that concrete poetry should be utilized as an **object** (Gomringer, 1972). As opposed to traditional lyric forms, it doesn't entail a subjective individual expression of feelings; it is supposed to be a form of realistic art, which imitates reality (Kopfermann, 1974).

Teachers as well as learners could exploit the possibilities that a concrete poem offers; that is, they should not be afraid of deconstructing it by analyzing, rewriting and reproducing an autonomous work of art (Kügler, 1988).

ii) Concrete poetry is a form of experimental art that refers to and reflects the **medium**, which is language (Kopfermann, 1974). The visual elements in a concrete poem are constitutive as they build part of the poem. The form correlates with the medium (Gomringer, 1972).

The same applies to the foreign language lessons, where language is simultaneously the medium and the goal of communication. Furthermore, as Blume (2005) points out, the confrontation with a poem invites students to experiment with the limits of language and language as a whole. The words of nonsense poems have “**a verbal nature**” and it's all about a nonsense game, with no transcendental meaning (ibid). Krusche & Krechel (1992) also notice that concrete poems demonstrate how language functions and help students understand the possibilities of reshaping language structures through declination and conjugation.

iii) Concrete poetry is **simple and readily comprehensible, manageable** and because of its short form **easily memorized**. A poem made up of a few lexical elements, placed in space conveys an idea (Gomringer, 1972).

In contrast to teachers who claim that poetry is difficult to use in the classroom, even in our mother tongue, because of difficult vocabulary, complex structure, and its abstract nature in general, concrete poems give learners a unique opportunity both to understand and reproduce poems at the beginning of the second language lesson. Furthermore, its simplicity allows students to focus on conceptual aspects of language in terms of vocabulary and pronunciation.

Moreover, the simple patterns of rhythms, rhyme and cadence help children to learn their very first words from poems (Holmes & Moulton, 2001).

The simple form of concrete poems could also be used in creative writing exercises. Stevik (1989, according to Gerngross, Krenn & Puchta, 1999) has shown in his research that semantic connections in memory, “lexical chunks”, which are built while writing, enable foreign language learners successfully use their acquired knowledge of the foreign language.

iv) In addition, concrete poetry leads to the understanding of language in its material dimension. Priority is given to form, the signifikant (lat=significans) vs significat (lat=significatum).

This is what foreign language learners perceive when they first read or hear a foreign language text, a visual image and a sound. From a learning psychology perspective, a concrete text could be seen and sound in its simplicity as familiar as it is for a native speaker.

schweigen schweigen schweigen  
schweigen schweigen schweigen  
schweigens chweigen  
schweigen schweigen schweigen  
schweigen schweigen schweigen

Gomringer, E. (1972)



v) In concrete poetry the writer does not always ignore language norms, grammar and syntax or semantics, but sometimes he/she deconstructs them in a playful way and hence creates an anti-grammatical pattern (Krechel, 1987; Esselborn, 1990).

When approaching a relatively simple poem, foreign language learners concentrate on a limited number of patterns that follow or violate rules. This fact may help students to understand the significance or usefulness of their mistakes.

#### Umgangsformen

Mich ichze ich  
Dich duze ich  
Sie sieze ich  
Uns wirze ich  
Euch ihrze ich  
Sie sieze ich

Ich halte mich an die Regeln

Marti, K.

### The Development of Language Skills

One of the distinctive features of poetry in general is the manipulation of linguistic structures for the sake of a literary effect. Some fundamental characteristics of concrete poetry and their implementation in foreign language lessons were mentioned. In what follows we give a brief description of the additional benefits of the use of poems in the foreign language lessons. Emphasis will be placed upon the productive as well as on the receptive student skills.

#### The development of creative receptive skills

##### Listening

Through listening of simple concrete poems, learners can:

- Simultaneously pay attention to visual and oral input. This has a multi-sensory effect, as visuals support comprehension and form-meaning correspondence, both of which enhance the listening skills and contribute to higher levels of learner motivation. (the teacher can control the oral process by stopping, repeating, and starting up chunks that begin and end at logical points)
- recognize patterns of stress, rhythm, and intonation and how they signal information and intent
- pay attention to vocabulary and rhythm, which according to studies develops oral language skills
- learn new vocabulary related to a topic or idea
- have the chance to think about language

What is more, the development of oral language skills has a strong correlation to proficiency in reading.



### Reading

Through reading, learners can:

- expand their vocabulary knowledge
- work with different rhythms and rhyme patterns
- bring the poem to life by reading it out loud
- improve confidence and oral language skills, as well as their reading fluency (by reading poems out loud)
- understand how language creates an image or mood
- encourage visual images (Gleason, 2007)

The development of creative productions skills

### Speaking

Through reading poems, learners can:

- exercise pronunciation, stress, rhythm, and intonation
- exercise phonetics and phonology
- use familiar and less familiar vocabulary
- experiment with words in a playful way (Warner, 2004)
- practice specific syntactic structures such as phrases, word order, and verb tenses
- develop confidence in their ability of story-telling

### Writing

Through writing poems, learners can:

- create a poetic text with familiar and new vocabulary
- use the dictionary or thesaurus to find words that serve their vision
- develop literary reading skills through creative writing (Urlaub, 2011)
- play with language and have lots of fun (Krusche & Krechel, 1992)
- practice correct spelling
- explore the writing experience without fear of overstepping the strict rules of traditional writing
- develop a critical way of thinking and come up with and eventually write down complex ideas in a simple way (Müller-Michaels, 1984)
- develop confidence in their ability to share ideas in writing
- have the opportunity to talk about important ideas and feelings (Mummert, 1989)
- share their personal interpretations
- associate/connect with social studies, history, science, and even math lessons



## Summary and Conclusion

One of the creative instructional materials in second language teaching is the use of literature and more specifically concrete poetry. Our goal has been to show that not only the (inter)cultural dimension of literature can enrich the contents of learning, but also a constitutive element of concrete poetry, namely the visual one could possibly enhance the learning process.

This notion played a key role in our theoretical study, in which we tried to explore the specific features of concrete poetry in order to examine its contribution to the development of the communicative language competence as well as the development of creative skills of learners. However, it should be noted that all these arguments are on a theoretical basis and more research on the subject should be conducted in the near future. The ideal would be to put all the above into practice in a foreign language classroom. In this way, we would be able to attest to the verification of all the above suppositions and draw the well-deserved attention to the significance of concrete poetry in teaching a foreign language.

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## As an illustrator-in-schools: Reflections on a personal itinerary

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### Abstract

Artists' involvement in formal primary education is accepted to benefit mutually the children, teachers and artists involved. Such involvement can vary from long residencies to short visits. In Greece, artists-in-schools is not an established practice, with the exception of the National Book Centre of Greece, which organizes and supports one-day visits of children's book illustrators to schools. The form of the visits and the nature of the activities are open to be negotiated by the involved teachers and artists. In this paper, I present and discuss my recent experiences as an illustrator-in-schools. I describe an approach to my one-off visits, which included discussion about the illustrator profession and art, access to original illustrations, critical team work on thematic illustration folders, and practical art activities. Taking a reflective critical stance and drawing data from a personal diary, pupils' questionnaires, written reports of the visits, discussions with teachers, and pupils' artworks, I investigate the impact of my visits on children, teachers and myself. I look into my complex professional identity as an art educator, researcher and illustrator. I conclude that my experience enabled me to develop a positive synergy between my different professional roles and facilitated a better understanding of who I am and what I can do.

### Key words

Illustrator-in-schools, illustrated children's books, professional identity, primary schools, art education

### Artists-in-schools

Visual artists' involvement in formal education has a long history internationally. In the UK particularly, there is a rich and influential tradition on this approach. 'Artists in Wigan Schools', initiated in 1984 in Wigan, in Greater Manchester, was an innovative large scale scheme, which received national and international recognition. It was the first systematic attempt to place practicing artists in every school, in one educational authority. Young, unemployed, local visual artists were invited to set up their studios within the school. They divided equally their time between the development of their work and working with students on school art projects (Taylor, 1991). Since then, programmes that bring together visual artists and schools are organized by local or central authorities, foundations, fine art schools, museums, galleries and agencies in many different countries.

Artists-in-schools projects can take many different forms. They can vary from long residencies and establishment of art studios to schools (artists-in-residence) to short one-off visits. The artists can (a) concentrate on making their own art work, (b) present completed art works to pupils, or (c) facilitate and instruct them to make their own work (Sharp & Dust, 1996;). Usually, two or all of these approaches are combined providing greater benefits to pupils.

Artists-in-schools projects are broadly accepted to benefit mutually the children, teachers and artists involved (Tiller & Clifford, 2011). According to Sharp & Dust (1996):



#### Pupils can

- gain an insight into the professional arts world
- learn about the process of art-making
- transfer some of the artist's approaches and methods into their own art making
- develop their existing art skills and learn new techniques
- experience a different approach to learning
- develop a positive relationship with a fellow artist.

#### Schools can

- enrich the art curriculum
- contribute to teachers' professional development
- help teachers introduce a new area of study
- use art as a medium for learning across the curriculum
- promote a positive image of the school.

#### Artists can

- find a source of employment
- reach a wider audience
- discuss work in progress and observe audience reactions to their work
- experience the pleasure of helping pupils to develop their artistic skills and interests
- break down the isolation of working on their own
- help to develop a next generation of artists and audiences

#### The potential of children's book art in the classroom

The visual is a generic and indispensable component in children's literature. Illustrated children's books, especially picture books, with their enormous variety, heterogeneity and artistic quality, are valuable as a source and subject-matter for learning about and through art. They are recommended as a catalyst for productive contemporary pedagogy, 'rich questioning, higher order thinking, and critical visual literacy for all age groups'. (Ashton, 2001, p.37). Illustrated books are part of children's world since their early years and book pictures are in many cases their first exposure to art. Therefore, children's literature is considered as 'eminently suited to introduce children to the world of visual art' (Sipe, 2001, p.197).

Children's illustrated literature has been used into the classroom to promote a variety of concepts across the curriculum, e.g. for developing literacy skills (Graham 1990). Johnson (1993) involves children in book-making projects where the book itself is the end product. Because he addresses the book as a concept, as a whole, perceives book arts as a way to process many curricular subjects such as art, design, technology and writing. Yet, a considerable number of studies explore in particular the potential of the visual aspects of children's books for art education (Kiefer, 1995; Marantz et al, 1994; Mitchell, 1995).



Illustration in children's books is often used to initiate practical art work and foster learning about the elements and principles of art, art media and techniques. For example, Morgan (2000) utilises the art medium used and particular technique developed by the illustrator to teach children about certain water-colour qualities and effects. As well as art production, Mitchell (1990) asserts that book illustrations have the rich potential to teach art criticism and history concepts. For example, picture books that present fictional accounts of children and animals encountering art can introduce a child to art history 'through a familiar genre' (p.842). Doonan (1993) sees the use of picture books in schools as a means for developing visual awareness, an understanding of how visual art communicates meaning.

### Illustrators-in-schools

Children's book illustrators can themselves be valuable sources for learning and response in the schools. Because their art focuses on children audiences they may be more tuned with their needs and interests than other visual artists. Moreover, children are familiar with and fans of their art. They are surrounded by it both in their classroom and at home. According to Kiefer (1995), illustrated books 'can be rich sources for learning and response in all classrooms' (p.18). Older children in particular, are more aware about the real artist behind the book and can perceive her as a subject of dialogue or study.

Illustrators-in-schools projects take a variety of forms. Illustrators, like other artists, can involve in classroom life taking up one or more of Sharp's and Dust's (1996) approaches. For example, Morgan (1995) refers to a comic-strip artist and book illustrator who brings some of his publications to school and works on his new project in front of the children. In another case, a graphic designer and book illustrator shows to the children examples of his art and describes the process of his work in an one-day-visit. Afterwards the class teacher uses this process as a model for a class illustration project (Meagen, 1995). In another case, a school and community bookmaking project is facilitated by a writer, a printmaker, an illustrator and a bookbinder working alongside the children as support and stimulation (Binch and Clive, 1994).

Recognition of the rich educational potential of illustrators visiting schools has led many agencies and libraries internationally to specialize in bringing together successful illustrators and pupils through creative workshops and programmes (e.g. Class Act Agency, 2012; National Library of New Zealand, 2012).

### The National Book Centre of Greece

Artists-in-schools is not an established practice in Greece. Isolated visits of artists in schools and classes are subject to their teachers' initiatives and the invited artists' willingness, who are not supported financially for their participation (Labitsi, 2008). An exception to this pattern is the National Book Centre of Greece. This Centre is an organization of the Greek Ministry of Culture, which establishes the national book policy. Among its priorities is fostering book reading in Greece through 40 programmes running progressively since 2004.

The 'Authors and Illustrators at Schools Programme', in particular, invites children's book artists (as well as authors) to visit school pupils and develop a creative dialogue between them, concerning books and literature (National Book Centre of Greece, 2012). Schools can choose freely from a list of collaborating illustrators working and living in Greece. The Centre connects the school with the invited illustrator and arranges the practical aspects of the



collaboration. The visits are one-off and supported financially. In every visit up to 50 pupils are involved. The form of the visit and the nature of the activities are open to be negotiated by the involved teachers and artists and consist of three stages:

- preparation
- communication and interaction with pupils
- follow-up activities.

### Professional identity

Winslade (2002) defines professional identity with the statement: 'This is who I am and this is what I try to do in the world'. Art teachers who are also artists and researchers themselves perceive their professional and personal identities as complex, unclear and often contradicting with each other. Lim (2006) an art teacher, visual artist and doctorate student asks herself: 'Am I an artist, art educator, or researcher? Can I be all three?' (p.1).

Identity should be seen as dynamic and constantly changing rather than fixed and static (Collanus et al, 2012). Vygotsky (1978) stresses a sociogenic formation of the 'self', which he perceives as a complex emergent phenomenon continually produced through the individual's interaction with others and the cultural world. 'Identity's function is future oriented' and is developed through life experiences (Dowling, 2011, p.12).

Art teachers who are also artists and researchers consider that their experiences in each of these domains facilitate a better understanding of themselves as professionals and improve their practices in the others (Lim, 2006). As Dowling (2011, p. 48) writes: 'My perspective as artist/teacher has been enhanced from consciously thinking through the role of researcher. I believe this experience will permeate doth personally and professionally'. Sullivan (2005, p.152) refers to the boundaries set between disciplines and professions as 'assumed'. She underlines that artworks can be seen as 'sites of possibility for making art, thinking about art, and teaching art'.

A/r/tography, a relatively new arts research methodology, examines the in-between spaces of art making, researching and teaching. A/r/tographers are artists-researchers-teachers who integrate these multiple roles in their personal and professional lives. These identities occur simultaneously in time and space (Irwin and Cosson, 2004). A/r/tography understands artists/art teachers/researchers as having multiple identities but is not limited to this notion. 'A/r/tographers live their artworks, represent their understanding and perform their pedagogical positions. They integrate knowing, doing and making through aesthetic experiences' (Irwin, 2004 in Lim, 2006, p. 8).

### The research

I can define myself as a teacher and art educator with long experience in primary and higher education and as an active researcher in the field of art education. At the same time, I identify myself as a professional children's book illustrator. This background, enabled me to participate to the 'Authors and Illustrators at Schools Programme' of the National Book Centre of Greece and visit several Greek primary school classes. Yet, I approached this new professional experience (illustrator-in-schools) with an inquiring mind. I set out to design, practice and critically reflect on an approach to these one-off visits to schools, record and





investigate their impact on children, teachers and myself, as well as learn more about my different professional identities and practices and how they relate with each other.

I approached this small scale qualitative study as reflective practice, thoughtfully studying my own experiences and improving my practices (Schon, 1996; Ferraro, 2000). I used multiple data collection tools in order to reflect on and evaluate the experiences of all participating (Cohen et al, 2001): a personal reflective diary, questionnaires to pupils, written reports of the visits (also required by the National Book Centre of Greece), informal discussions with teachers, and photographs of pupils' artworks.

### The visits

During the 2011-2012 school year, I was involved as a professional illustrator in seven visits taking place in five primary schools. Drawing from my professional experience and literature about the artists-in-schools concept, the nature of the illustration art and successful illustrator-in-schools projects (e.g. Sharp & Dust, 1996; Tiller & Clifford, 2011; Sipe, 2001; Morgan, 1995; 2000; Kiefer, 1995), I designed my visits aiming pupils to:

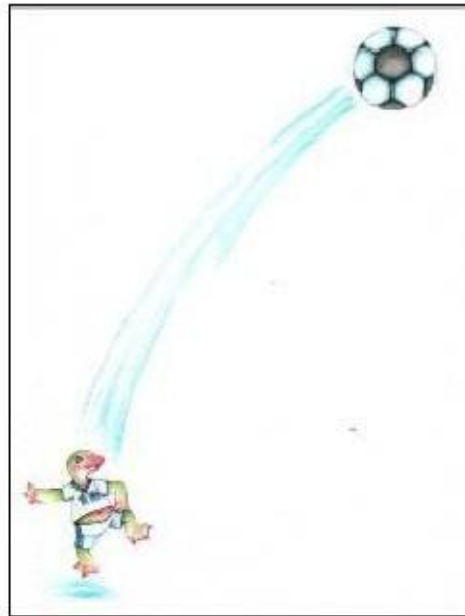
- develop positive and meaningful experiences from their interaction with a professional illustrator
- understand aspects of the illustration profession and its creative processes (e.g. planning and preparatory work, development of book characters/scenes, visual research and references, the logic of book design and cover)
- look at and handle original illustration works
- draw connections between theirs and the illustrator's child art experiences
- draw from a visual artist's practices and techniques

In order to prepare for the visits, I communicated with the participating teachers, discussed their needs, expectations and priorities. Teachers were encouraged to make links between their classes' current and prospective activities/projects and my visit. Ways for preparing pupils and linking my visit with their prior experiences were proposed and investigated. Finally, an agreement to a common plan of action was made and practicalities were dealt with.

Each project was divided in three parts, and its design was informed by the particularities of the participating class and critical reflection on my previous visit experiences:

#### I. Introduction

Initially, I was introducing myself to the group. Friendly and open discussion was initiated by pupils' questions (usually prepared beforehand). In order to respond adequately, I presented and discussed samples of my art work as a child, during my art studies or as a professional; for example, studies from life in sketchbooks, drawings of popular comic characters, experimental drawings of story characters, anthropomorphized objects and animals. I shared visual images that had influenced me as a child and teenager, such as my favorite children's books and picture collections. Also, I explained aspects of the process of becoming an illustrator and illustrating a book through specific visual examples. In some cases, I shared unpublished illustrations of mine and used them for 'guess the story' games with pupils (Figures 1, 2). The form and content of this first part of every visit varied, subject to pupils' age, pre-visit experiences and preparation, questions and preferences.



Figures 1 and 2: Unpublished illustrations initially created for the literary primary school textbook Anthology A - B Year.

## II. Team work

Next, the pupils in small teams explored folders including some of my original illustrations, preparatory drawings and sketch books, a copy of the illustrated book that was relevant with this visual material and a set of questions for the pupils. The folders were thematic, different for each team and adapted to every visit's aims. For example, in one case, 'The Sea Folder' referred to my book 'The Clan and the Crab' and other illustrations about the sea world (Figure 3). In another case, the 'Mammal', 'Fish', 'Bird', 'Amphibian/serpent' and 'Insect' folders were compiled to meet the content of a class's on-going school project. Each team interacted with their folder for about 30-40 minutes using my and their teachers' aid and briefly presented aspects of it to the whole class at the end of the session.

## III. Art workshop

Finally, the pupils were invited to produce their own artwork; for example, (a) to make a drawing inspired by the theme and content of the folder explored, (b) to design a book cover for a story they had created for the visit or a known story their team had chosen. Finally, their art works were casually exhibited and discussed by the whole class. In the closure of the visit, pupils commented on the whole experience and often proposed after-visit activities.



Figure 3: The Sea Folder

## Outcomes

### Children

Children had many opportunities to ask questions about my work and life. Their questions focused both on my personal and professional life, were either general or referred to specific illustrations or books that children were familiar with. For example, they asked:

Where do you live?

Do you have children? How many?

Why did you become an illustrator?

How do you make your illustrations?

How do you decide the content of your illustrations?

Why did you make this picture?

Which of your illustration/s you like best?

If you could start again would you become an illustrator?

Who is your favorite illustrator and why?

How do you manage to make a character look the same in all the pictures of the book?

The personal questions, usually coming by the youngest pupils, suggested that they were seeking to become familiar with the unknown adult coming to their class and relate with her

through common life experiences. Many of the questions had a provoking simplicity. Others suggested that the pupils had (or could develop) sophisticated understandings of the nature and characteristics of book art as well as the illustrator as visual artist and meaning maker (Kiefer, 1995).

Children explored actively, discussed enthusiastically, exchanged views and expressed preferences about thematically cohesive illustration folders. They were given the opportunity to look at closely and handle original illustrations, drawings and sketches which usually do not reach books' audiences. This experience enthused and informed them about the techniques, procedures and complexities of the illustration art. It enhanced their commitment, as expressed in their written responses to an after-visit questionnaire:

I came in contact with another world.

I had no idea that illustration was so interesting.

I liked most the original illustrations that Miss Vasiliki showed us.

I liked most that we worked in teams.

I learnt that it takes a lot of time to make an illustration.

I learned that you need to feel and love what you do.

Yet, the final practical part of the visit was probably the most enjoyable for the pupils. As they wrote:

I liked most that I made my own drawings.

I would love to do more drawing.

I would also like to show you my own sketchbooks.

I learned to believe in what I make.

Although children had limited time to produce art, their artworks were in their majority sophisticated technically and thematically. Often, they worked closely from the original illustrations, used them as direct visual references and their responses bared resemblance with them (Figures 4-7). According to Kiefer (1995), this process can enable children to develop better understandings of an artist's style, preferences and art techniques.



Figure 4: Illustration from the book *The Clam and the Crab*



Figure 5: Pupil's drawing of a shark attacking a little crab





Figure 6: Illustration of an old wise crab,  
from the book *The Clam and the Crab*



Figure 7: Pupil's drawing of the old wise crab

However, close study of children's drawings shows that they did not mechanically copy the source illustrations. They were eclectic and creative in their response to them and developed their own humorous details and narrative material. For example, in one case, the book cover depicting a couple of young mice living in a loft, inspires a pupil's artwork, who however changes the setting (from inside to outside) and simplifies it, underlines the feelings of the mice using heart shape affection symbols and prefers a different title (Figures 8, 9).



Figure 8: Cover of the book *A mouse different from the others*



Figure 9: Pupil's drawing entitled 'The little mice dancing'



In an illustration of imaginary orthodontic work on a line of big teeth, a child adds a new humorous episode (a van carrying away teeth) (Figures 10, 11).



Figure 10: Illustration from the Book Farfiro's braces



Figure 11: Pupil's drawing of imaginary orthodontic work

Children's preferred full colour to their visual retellings of black and white illustrations. In terms of their thematic choices, they showed clear preference to specific illustrations that depicted emotionally charged or strong action scenes and created many different retellings of them. For example, many children focused on an illustration of a sad parrot whose lies about an allegedly aristocratic origin have been uncovered and is isolated by the other animal inhabitants of a pet shop. This is a significant turning point in the book *The conceited French parrot* and the only illustration I had depicted the protagonist in a cage, employing it as a metaphor and symbol of his emotional state (Figure 12). Children's variety of visual approaches to this scene (Figures 13-18) demonstrated their ability to interpret creatively book art. The fact that they followed a readily available model did not affect their work's character and creative intention (Golomb, 2004) Also, it suggested and possibly enhanced their readiness to recognize important narrative structure components such as story decisive moments and turning points (Nodelman, 1996; Labitsi, 2009).

In any case, children developed individual visual reactions to stories obviously interesting and relevant to their lives. The quality and variety of their artwork suggests that the prior critical study rather enlarged 'the possibilities of the practical activity' because it gave them access and insight to ideas and meanings and how these can be constructed in visual terms (Buchanan, 1995, pp.36-37).



Figure 12: Illustration from  
The conceited French parrot



Figure 13: Pupil's drawing of the parrot in his  
cage

On the whole, pupils:

- enjoyed their contact with original illustrations
- enjoyed working in teams
- felt that learned how to draw better and became more self-confident about their art making
- learnt about aspects of the illustration processes and profession
- produced creative artwork and communicated personal meaning
- expressed their willingness to engage in post-visit illustration activities, e.g. to produce their own illustrated books.

Pupils' enthusiastic responses and commitment, the quality of their artwork and their sophisticated understandings about theirs and illustrators' art making, suggest that the projects I designed, run and reflectively evaluated were balanced, engaging and provided positive learning experiences. The physical presence of a professional illustrator in the classroom and interaction with her, broke their everyday routine and offered alternative ways of school work. Illustration in children's books, especially in its original form, was proved to be valuable source material for art and narrative learning, critical study, communication, team work and development of self-understanding and confidence (Figures 19-20).



Figures 14-18: Pupils' drawings of the parrot in his cage



Figure 19: Year 3 pupils during the illustration workshop



Figure 20: Year 1 pupils during the illustration workshop



## Teachers

My visits were welcomed by the staff of each school. They were eager to help in any way they could. The degree of teachers' openness and establishment of good communication affected the success of the visits. The more pupils were familiarized by their teachers with my illustration work and had developed questions and themes for discussion prior to the visit, the more enthusiastic and informed their participation during it and their commitment to critical and practical activities. Also, teachers' active participation during the visit (e.g. helping children with the study of their illustration folders) was another important parameter for a successful and rewarding for all experience.

On the whole, teachers' reactions and informal discussions after the visit suggested they:

- felt that learnt about the art and book illustration
- found the experience stimulating and enjoyable for them and their pupils
- were likely to organize follow-up activities and link my visit with class work in many different school subjects.

## Myself

My illustrator-in-schools experience was refreshing and rewarding, deep, challenging and autobiographical. The fact that all participant pupils had used or were using the school textbook *Anthology for A-B Year* provided a common ground and cultivated a familiarity with each other, even when they knew little about my other illustrated books. Children's positive reactions and very often flattering comments to my art made me reassess and appreciate more its qualities and impact. Their clear preferences to specific illustrations (not necessary those I considered myself as the most successful) often surprised and enabled me deepen on children's tastes, aesthetic and thematic preferences. For example, there was an almost homophonous preference, especially between boys, of the illustration of a balloon injured by thumbtack rain (Figure 21). Quite popular among girls was a mother-child tender scene. Children related more with illustrations using anthropomorphism and metamorphosis, humor and exaggeration, suggesting thread and action, as well as tenderness and affection. As underlined in many studies children's preferences were gender oriented (Golomb, 2004).



Figure 21: Illustration from the textbook *Anthology for A-B Year*





A valuable outcome of my experience was my research into my child art practices and preferences. This endoscopic endeavor was necessary in order to find visual evidence that pupils could relate with and make meaningful connections with their own art experiences. As a result, I recalled the child artist in me and brought together my past and present art experiences in a meaningful continuum.

On the whole, taking up the role of a visiting illustrator was beneficial in many ways. I:

- observed pupils' reactions to my art, took pride and gained more self-confidence about it
- found an audience for my 'unseen' unpublished illustrations
- designed, tested out and improved through practice and reflection an approach for illustrators-in-schools projects
- compiled a personal art biography which provided self-justification for my adult professional decisions and orientations.

Moreover, my experience enabled me to formulate a list of practical guidelines possibly helpful for illustrators with no pedagogical background, who wish to participate in school projects (Table 1).

Table 1: Guidelines for the good illustrator-in-schools practice

1. Establish good communication with the teachers and listen carefully to their priorities and expectations
2. Negotiate with them the aims and structure of the visit
3. Prepare a pre-visit information pack for the teachers including a list of the books you have illustrated
4. Underline the importance of the pupils' preparation and make specific suggestions for pre-visit activities
5. Be clear and realistic about the objectives of your visit
6. Every visit is unique: adjust the aims and themes of the workshop according to pupils' age and experiences
7. Link the visit with the class's on-going and perspective school work
8. Organize work in teams
9. Work with small groups and be willing to repeat the visit/workshop instead of having a large noisy audience
10. Bring your original work, sketch-books and preparatory drawings with you
11. Let children hold and handle it, they will respect it if you ask them to do so
12. Bring also unsuccessful, unfinished and unpublished illustration work
13. Share your memories, your art work and preferences as a child
14. Be sincere when answering to pupils' questions
15. Make sure there is enough time for practical art activities

16. Encourage pupils during the practical art work, make suggestions and give advice
17. Be willing to look at and comment on pupils' previous art work if asked.
18. Take teachers on-board (enthuse them)
19. Propose after-visit activities to pupils and teachers
20. If possible, offer to make a follow-up visit in order to support children's further work

### My professional identities

My involvement in this illustrator-in-schools project and research study was initiated and informed by my different professional identities as an art educator, illustrator and researcher. Often, I questioned myself: How these professional roles connect and communicate with each other? Do they distort each other? At some point, I wrote in my diary:

I will never be able to feel and act purely as an illustrator who visits a school and communicates her art work with a children audience. I won't be able to leave the teacher out of the door.

A quick sketch of myself under (or rather pointed by) my three different professional identities in my reflective diary is characteristic of an uncomfortable and even threatening professional dichotomy at that point (Figure 22). Yet, another visual reference in the same diary later in the study, suggested a different understanding of my professional identities as interconnecting, internalized self-components (Figure 23). As the study was progressing, I realized that my identities functioned together not antagonizing, but collaborating. They constructed a complex, multiple, dynamic, yet cohesive self in an analogy with a/r/tographers who experience their multiple roles simultaneously in their personal and professional lives (Irwin and Cosson, 2004).

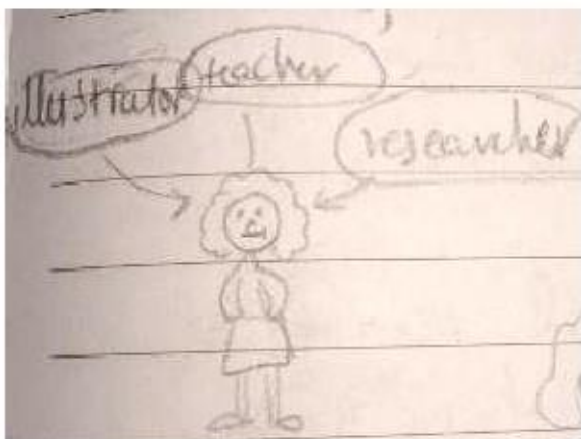


Figure 22: First diary sketch of myself and my professional identities.

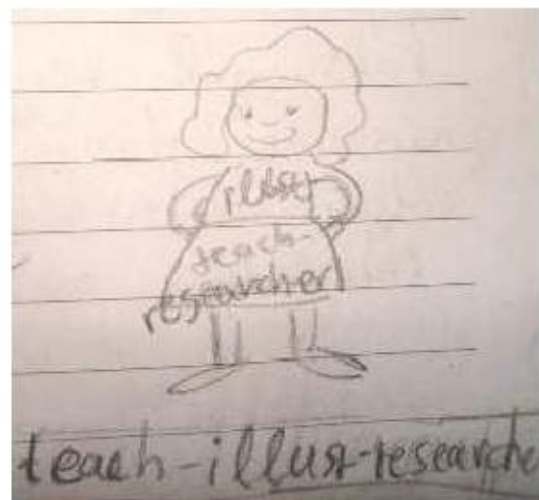


Figure 23: Second diary sketch of myself and my professional identities.



## Conclusions

My illustrator-in-schools experience and my reflective critical stance towards it enabled me to experience a positive synergy between my different professional roles. I couldn't feel purely as an illustrator because simply I was not one. The teacher and researcher followed me in my visits to the classes, and this was not necessary negative. Similarly with Lim (2006) and Dowling (2011), I felt that my multiple roles supported and informed each other, enhancing my practices and providing depth to my inquiry. Their synergy facilitated a better understanding of the complexities of who I am and can do:

The teacher inside enabled me to design meaningful and engaging for the pupils experiences that respected their needs and level, and to come up with guidelines potentially helpful for other illustrators.

- The researcher inside enabled me to ask questions about my illustrator-in-schools experiences, to gather and analyse data, to reflect on what I did and how to improve it.
- The illustrator inside gave me the opportunity to connect with pupils and teachers in a new refreshing way: on the basis of my art work and how this talks to them.

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## The Place of Theater Group in the Pedagogy of Theater in Brazil

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### Abstract

This paper is part of my monograph in the course of Specialization in Art Education, held at Faculdade Sete de Setembro, in the city of Fortaleza, Brazil. The research is about the contributions of Brazilian theater groups to the teaching of theater art, as well as to theater based research in education. For this, I studied the place of theater groups inside the disciplinary field of Pedagogy of Theater - or Theater Education - , in Brazil. The methodology was literature review on the following topics: historical overview about independent theater ensembles in Brazil; epistemological and methodological approaches in the discipline of Theater Education in Brazil. It was also conducted a documental research on the history, objectives and aesthetics of some Brazilian theater groups, besides a brief state of the question on the place of theater groups in theater pedagogy and educational research trough arts. With this work it was possible to reflect on the contributions that theater groups offer to theater teaching and arts based research. The emergence of a theater guided by the concept of theater group, resulted in a reformulation of principles and pedagogical practices related not only to artistic production, but also with a different social engagement and responsibility of theater artists, who engaged not only with cultural development of local and regional communities, but also with the self-sustainable work of artists.

### Key words

Theater Group, Pedagogy of Theater, Theater Education, Theater Based Research.

### Introduction

This work was born from my experience as an actress formed inside two groups of theater which I had the luck to found and work as performer, researcher and physical trainer, from 2005 to 2009, in Fortaleza, Brazil. Inside the experimental groups Gira and Mimo 4, I initiated all my current researchers, both artistic and theoretical. And with my colleagues I had the opportunity to put into practice principles of the contemporary political movement of theater group that is being developed in Brazil in the last decades.

Working with these groups awakened my interest to research the place of theater groups in Theater Education, since I lived and observed the rich pedagogical and educational environment promoted by the experience of being a performer in a group inspired by theater group movement. Good amount of my technical training and political formation has its base in the groups Gira and Mimo and the diverse exchanges with another groups and artists.

This research has, therefore, the main objective to study the relations established between: the theoretical-practical field that is being developed by theater groups in Brazil, and the disciplinary field of Pedagogy of Theater or Theater Education. This involves studying both

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<sup>4</sup> Blog of group Mimo: <http://teatro-mimo.blogspot.com.br/>



the principles and practices of groups, in their relation to the Pedagogy of Theatre and its approaches to teaching and research in Theater Education.

The terminologies Pedagogy of Theater and Theater Education, which I use interchangeably in this paper, refer to the disciplinary field that is being built in Brazil in relation to the practices of teaching and research in theater and education. The references I have to address issues related to this field are those proposed by the Working Group on Pedagogy of Theater and Theater in Education, from the Brazilian Association for Research and Graduate Studies in Performing Arts (ABRACE)<sup>5</sup>.

The methodology was literature review about the following topics: historical overview about theater groups in Brazil and the concept of theater group; epistemological and methodological approaches in theater pedagogy; as well as documental research about the principles and practices of some groups, associations and theater movements in Brazil. The sources were papers, portfolios, group histories and research proposals, found in blogs and websites of associations and cultural centers. It was also conducted a state of issue, a survey of researches that address or are related to pedagogical practices and social projects of groups and collectives of theater in Brazil. This survey took into account the researches published through the Working Group in Pedagogy of Theatre and Theater in Education of ABRACE, found in the acts of Congress and Scientific Meetings of the association in the years of 2007, 2008, 2009 and 2010.

### Theater groups in Brazil

In the history of Brazilian theater, it can be observed, since the forties, the emergence of amateur theater groups that opposed the commercial theater, represented, at that time, by companies of recognized directors and famous actors. But it was not until the sixties and seventies that theater groups, as nucleus of cultural resistance, got a higher level of articulation and communication, finding national visibility and exerting international influence in Latin America. The military dictatorships that dominated Latin America in the sixties and seventies favored the emergence of theater groups inspired by militant vigor. These groups organized themselves as avant-garde collectives, which functioned as instruments of political and cultural action (Carreira, 2006).

The militant paradigm of the sixties and seventies had their speech and actions towards direct political intervention in society, both through spectacles and courses, workshops and other pedagogical activities. Some of the most representative of this period, at a national level, were the Arena<sup>6</sup>, Oficina<sup>7</sup> and União e Olho Vivo<sup>8</sup>. Besides these collectives, Iná Camargo also

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<sup>5</sup> Portal ABRACE: [www.portalabrace.org](http://www.portalabrace.org)

<sup>6</sup> References on the history of Arena may be found in: <http://www2.uol.com.br/teatroarena/arena.html>

Itaú Cultural encyclopedia also offer a brief historic of the group:

[http://www.itaucultural.org.br/aplicexternas/enciclopedia\\_teatro/index.cfm?fuseaction=cias\\_biografia&cd\\_verbete=657](http://www.itaucultural.org.br/aplicexternas/enciclopedia_teatro/index.cfm?fuseaction=cias_biografia&cd_verbete=657)

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Blog of Teatro Oficina Uzyna Uzona: <http://blog.teatroficina.com.br/>

Webpage: [http://teatroficina.uol.com.br/uzyna\\_uzona](http://teatroficina.uol.com.br/uzyna_uzona)

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Blog of the group: <http://tuov2010.blogspot.com/>

Webpage: <http://www.teatropopularolhovivo.hpg.com.br/>

Brief historic of the group União e Olho Vivo retrieved in:

[http://www.itaucultural.org.br/aplicexternas/enciclopedia\\_teatro/index.cfm?fuseaction=cias\\_biografia&cd\\_verbete=660](http://www.itaucultural.org.br/aplicexternas/enciclopedia_teatro/index.cfm?fuseaction=cias_biografia&cd_verbete=660)



points out other radical proposals of that time, "as the forms of epic theater and the agitprop of the CPC of UNE."<sup>9</sup> (Costa, n.d, p. 2)

With the end of dictatorship and the beginning of the democratization process of the country, the vanguard models of political activism entered in crisis. New needs and concerns arose among Brazilian artists, related to the particularities of theater making, which had special influence from the alternative scene of European theater. The European thinking about independent theater had already spread throughout Europe in the late nineteenth century. The *Théâtre Libre*, in Paris, from director André Antoine, the *Lab Theater* of Jerzy Grotowski and the *Living Theatre*, are some of the European experience in independent theater scene. But it was only with the visit of Eugenio Barba, Italian director of group *Odin Teatret*, organized in 1987 by INACEN<sup>10</sup> that was observed a concrete transition towards the modes of organization and group production in Brazilian theater.

According to Professor André Carreira, researcher at the State University of Santa Catarina (UDESC,) Barba and groups like *Odin Teatret*, *Farfa*<sup>11</sup> y *Táscabile*<sup>12</sup>, became a recurring theme in discussions of artists, influencing modes of organization and collective production in theater. (Carreira, n.d/2)

Oliveira reminds that Theater Anthropology from Eugenio Barba became the major reference to the new theater, which opened new possibilities of discoveries centered in the work of the actor: his practice as a personal discovery and as an exercise of encountering the other. This principle indicates a new field of research: "the study of expressive behavior of human beings in a state of organized representation, and the pursuit of shared elements between different cultural references". (Oliveira, n.d)

For the group *Odin*, the theatrical phenomenon lies in two poles. The institutional theater would be in an extreme, and would be the one protected and subsidized by the cultural values located in the capitalist logic of industry fun. At the other extreme would be the vanguard of experimental theater and research. (Barba, 1994, 2006)

From this bipolar overview of theater scene, Barba proposes what he calls the *Third Theatre*, a theater zone that lives outside of those two poles, standing outside the major cultural centers and lodges itself in the periphery. The *Third Theatre* seeks to establish its own space, alternative, propitious to the independent group, basing itself on a hard and continuous work, and based on the respect for differences.

In this sense, Theatre Anthropology, materialized in practice as the *Third Theatre*, makes reference to a new position of theater artiste, a political and ethical attitude that would find in the group its base for training and cultural action. This new form of theater would seek not only new organizational forms and new models of spectacles, but also a new understanding of the place of theater in society. A place that is defined as one in which you can establish new relations among people, through the mediation of scenic experience.

Theatre Group arises from the proposals suggested by Barba, through the principles of Theatre Anthropology and the *Third Theatre*. This type of theater is recognized by the appreciation of the notion of collective that is located in a peripheral zone of the artistic environment. Barba (2000) explains that groups of *Third Theatre* do not belong to a single

<sup>9</sup> UNE: National Union of Students in Brazil.

<sup>10</sup> Instituto Nacional de Artes Cênicas.

<sup>11</sup>

Farfa is a group headquartered in Denmark.

<sup>12</sup>

Webpage of theater group Tascabile: <http://www.teatrotascabile.org/ospitalita.htm>



strand. But all have in common the experience in a situation of discrimination, be it personal, cultural, professional, economic or political.

Eugenio Barba was heavily influenced by avant-garde theater practices of the sixties and seventies, and other influences that marked important moments of rupture in the thinking and doing of theater making. Some of Barba's references are the following masters: Stanislavski, Meyerhold, Craig, Copeau, Etienne Decroux, Artaud, Brecht, and Grotowski. All they focused their research and practice in the art of the actor, as the main element of contemporary theater, what constituted itself as dissident and resistant movements against capitalist practices of commodification of actor's work.

Thus, Barba thought a theater that is based on the work of the actor. And that prospect could only become viable in the perspective of the collective work, of a group that has casting stability, and that proposes to think and build a theater project in a long term. A group form constituted as an ideological community referent.

Theater of Latin America has been greatly influenced by Barba. His proposal for a Third Theatre, which is the matrix of breaking the rules of commercial theater, coincides with the socio-economic and cultural situation of this part of the world, which is the lack of resources for the theater, and an insecurity that forces artists to choose theater for the love and pleasure of the work.

It was only after the visit of Eugenio Barba to Brazil that the expression Theatre Group came to be used as differential compared to others collectives of theater. Therefore, during the eighties, theater groups began to divide into two streams. As Carreira (2006) explains, on one side were the groups who worked mainly in the urban periphery, with clear tenor of political proposals, and who considered themselves independent. And in the second part, were the groups committed to the research of scenic language. With the latter, the experimentation of new ways of doing theater appears evident as a result of creative processes and usually belonged to the group's proposal. (Fernandes in Carreira, 2006)

Carreira also explains that the new collective dynamics of Theater Group differed from the militant groups by its focus of work. If before the groups were guided by a clearly leftist ideological discourse, focusing on the collective political action through dialogue and direct contact with the public, now the groups hold more attention to developing technical and artistic quality of scenic language.

Carreira believes that artists of Theatre Group movement began to perform militancy on theater itself. In this militancy, the collective is guided by a different notion of "groupality". The group structure constitutes the very engine of training, creation and production. The functions of each member are articulated horizontally through collaborative processes and projects of collective creation. The research and construction of a poetic language that identifies the group also constitute essential elements of the groups that are anchored in the movement of Theater Group.

The term theater group is very present in the context of independent theater movement. At the present time, theater group have been understood as theatrical practices that define themselves by the use of actor training, the pursuit of stability of the cast, for a long term project and the organization of pedagogical practices. (Carreira and Oliveira, 2005, p. 1)13

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<sup>13</sup> Original text in Portuguese. Translation to English made by the author.



Many groups in Brazil start to organize themselves following the model proposed by Barba, consolidated as Theater Group. The group **Galpão14**, from Minas Gerais, and the group **Ói Nóis Aqui Traveiz15**, from Rio Grande do Sul, are examples of the first collectives that shape the transition moment from groups located in a militant paradigm to the contemporary movement of theater group. Carreira (2010) points out, about the **Galpão** and the **Ói Nóis**, that both groups had in its initial trajectory some relations to the mobilizations that marked the late seventies and early eighties. But he clarifies that the participation of these collectives in student and syndical protests didn't were the focus of their respective projects.

Indeed, the new concept of "groupality" was one of the striking elements of the constitution of the groups that came to form and consolidate their work in the eighties. Thereafter, the work of the group was redirected to artistic experimentation, constant and disciplined, because just in this way it was possible to achieve new research in scenic language and the construction of a poetic that could identify the group.

As a result, the place where the group works got to represent a place of training and meeting, where the group performs its work management, production, training and other spectacular and pedagogical projects. Thus the search for a headquarters became necessary to new groups that emerged in the Brazilian scene of the eighties. To have its own space has become essential to compose the notion of a group, because it is linked to the constant practical training and the emergence of poetics through which the identity of the group is constructed. Besides becoming a symbolic milestone for the group, the space also provides the basic structure for the group to organize their survival through the maintenance and continuity of the various activities that are part of the agenda of these collectives.

The headquarter is defined as the place in which the group is founded, every day, as a creative unit. A place because the headquarter is considered a historical space where identity is constructed, which fits closely to the collective mandate to build symbolic alternative zones against the impersonal merchandise procedures. The headquarter represents the place of reference and political space that groups claim as an instrument to boost the survival of the collective. Note that the headquarter is not always a theater as a place of presentations. One of the most prominent function of the headquarter is the realization of pedagogical work. The offering of workshops and training sessions occupy so much time of the group's agenda, which is related to their income through projects for public announcements. The use of the headquarter also relates to the adoption of social counterparts policies required in many public announcements. Therefore, having a headquarter implies the offering of an eventual course to an audience, or to open its space for the community through social projects made in collaboration with artistic making. (Carreira, 2010, p. 3)16

The social and educational projects of theater groups are, therefore, some of the main activities of the collective. These projects are also directly related to livelihood, and make the group of theater a socioeconomic resource for the life of theater workers and artists.

Other topics to be considered in relation to the scenario related to theater group today refer to contemporary movements that have been fighting for this new theater making. Important gains have been made that benefit artistic community and society. Among these achievements, I would cite the formation of the **Cooperativa de Teatro de São Paulo17**, the

<sup>14</sup> Webpage of group Galpão: <http://www.grupogalpao.com.br/port/home/>

<sup>15</sup> Webpage of group Ói Nóis Aqui Traveiz: <http://www.oinoisaquitraveiz.com.br/>

<sup>16</sup>

Original text in Portuguese. Translation to English made by the author.

<sup>17</sup>

<http://www.cooperativadeteatro.com.br/2010/>





Cooperativa de Teatro da Bahia18, and the Movimento Todo Teatro é Político, Pró-Cooperativa Cearense de Teatro19.

Other activities also have marked the current scenario. Brazilian collectives are undergoing processes increasingly intense of articulation among themselves, through different achievements at national, regional and local levels. Fernando Yamamoto (2009), director of group Clowns of Shakespeare, from Natal, Rio Grande do Norte, identifies four different trends that are happening as movements of articulation between groups. Regarding events of thought, Yamamoto points out numerous seminars and cycles of debate, which seek to establish relations with thinkers from other areas and members of other groups. He also mentions the increasing number of events such as festivals and exhibitions, and the importance of the program *Próximo Ato* - International Meeting of Contemporary Theatre, sponsored by Itaú Cultural. Yamamoto also cites political movements such as Redemoinho, a “Brazilian Movement of Spaces of Creation, Sharing and Research in Theater”<sup>20</sup>. Yamamoto also mention current articulations made by groups that aim to form alliances focused on artistic making, such as the one made between the group *Espanca*, from Belo Horizonte, *Grupo XIX de Teatro*, from São Paulo, and *Cia. Brasileira de Teatro*, from Curitiba, which share not only aesthetic affinity, but also develop together other actions.

### Theater groups in educational research

When inventorying recurring concepts and practices in Brazil, Koudela and Santana (2005) suggest some methodologies, such as: the *lehrstück* or learning play from the didactic theater of German playwright Bertolt Brecht; the theater of spontaneity of Romanian Jacob Levy Moreno; the theater of the oppressed of Brazilian Augusto Boal and theater games of American Viola Spolin. “It can be said that there are several methodological approaches to theater education, born independently in different educational and cultural contexts and largely strangers to each other”. (Koudela and Santana, 2005, p. 147)<sup>21</sup>

Koudela still mentions the practice of amateur theater and Community Theater, but she doesn't points out relevant works or authors that include educational research related to these practices. Japiassu (2001) also makes no reference to the practices of theater groups as a methodological approach in theater pedagogy. Besides the methodologies first pointed out by Koudela and Santana, Japiassu also adds Fred Newman's social therapy of performance, in his list of pedagogical approaches of theater in education.

Of all the methodologies discussed, the system of theater games seems to be the most recurring one in the pedagogical methodologies of theater educators and professional actors who work both in formal school and social projects. As Koudela explains, the term Pedagogy of Theatre is being used in Brazil in recent decades to designate research on the theory and practice of theatrical language at various levels and teaching modalities. “This strand focuses primarily on research with emphasis on theater game and play theory, with different theoretical basis.” (Koudela, 2005, p. 152, 153)<sup>22</sup>

In the case of games, references revolve around the dramatic play and theater game. The dramatic play finds its antecedents in Anglo-Saxon approach of drama, developed by English

<sup>18</sup> <http://coopbaianadeteatro.blogspot.com/>

<sup>19</sup> <http://movimentocoopce.blogspot.com/>

<sup>20</sup> <http://www.galpaocinehorto.com.br/projetos/redemoinho>

<sup>21</sup> Original text in Portuguese. Translation by the author

<sup>22</sup> Original text in Portuguese. Translation by the author.



playwright and educator Peter Slade. But theater game is primarily represented by the works of American actress and teacher Viola Spolin, which had application in different areas: education and actors' training, programs of study in nonverbal communication, group dynamics, etc. (Japiassu, 2001)

Much of the epistemological foundation of theater games came from the constructivist approach, and more precisely from the contributions of Swiss biologist Jean Piaget. Piaget developed empirical and positivist research on the development of the intelligence of the child, which resulted in the Classical Genetic Epistemology and the Psychology of Child Development. According to Japiassu (2001), the approaches of theater in education, both instrumental and aesthetic ones, were largely determined by the educational policies of nations and grounded in this epistemology. Courtney (2003) also sheds light on the origins of scientific and philosophical thought which guided these approaches of theater in education:

Its origins, in philosophy, rely on Plato, Aristotle, Rousseau and Rebelais. It is based both in social anthropology and social psychology, as well as in psychoanalysis and child psychotherapy. It originates partly in modern theories of knowledge, in theories of behavioral imitation, psycholinguistics and developmental psychology of Piaget. In this context, it is the center of modern creative education: from it flows all the arts and all scientific methods are developed through it. (Courtney, 2003, p. XXI)

Thus, much of the justification for entering theater in education, both in the formal school curriculum as in many projects of socio-educational intervention, are related to the methodology of the games, dramatic or theatrical, based on the constructivist epistemology, centered on the development of child, and based on the psychogenesis of language, in semiotic or symbolic function, on the phases that constitute the development of intelligence, therefore, on the cognitive abilities of the child. (Koudela, 1991, 2004; Courtney, 2003; Japiassu, 2001).

In other moment, Koudela (2005) points others experiences related to theater in education. When mentioning the research interests of theater educators, she indicates at least three recurring themes: the games, the theater as cultural action and theater in teacher education. According to the Brazilian professor and researcher, who also coordinated the working group Pedagogy of Theatre and Theater in Education from ABRACE, investigations have been incorporating both theory and practice of theater, and its insertion at various levels and teaching modalities. And within that area we find researches focused on theater game and game theory, with different rationales.

The space as a triggering element of play and privileged place for coping and risk is one of the recurring themes, as well as the creation of images made from the games and the proposition of poetic texts as triggers of the pedagogical process. The perspective of interaction between game and narrative is another aspect highlighted. (Koudela, 2005, p. 152)<sup>23</sup>

Another trend pointed out by Koudela is related to the approach of theater as cultural action. In this line, the themes revolve around contemporary social problems such as drugs, violence and the environment, usually approached from working with children and adolescents. These surveys usually develop within non-governmental organizations, in research and extension programs of universities and through support of private enterprise. Researches that emerge in these areas are concerned with criteria established for the conduct of projects in cultural and community action, in both state and private spheres, as well as in third sector.

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<sup>23</sup> Original text in Portuguese. Translation to English made by the author.



Another strand emphasizes the importance of the development of theater arts in teacher education. These surveys focus on linking body and voice, and voice as corporeality. The Pedagogy of Theatre also includes the spectator in the appreciation of theatrical spectacles. As the spectator in the spectacle, the teacher can explore the educational support materials to transform an excursion to theater in a significant experience, through the mobilization of the process of creation and appreciation of their students. (Idem)

In addition to games, the approaches of theater in education also include the politic poetics of Bertolt Brecht and Augusto Boal, strong references of many art educators and theater groups. Italian director Eugenio Barba and his proposals for a Third Theatre, as well as many models of collectives who came to develop in Brazil because of his influence, however, still are not sufficiently addressed in Theatre Pedagogy.

Much of the discourse and practices of some collectives are related to the understanding the socio-cultural reality, aiming, albeit indirectly, the emancipation of individuals, the awareness of their condition of oppression and socio-economic and cultural marginalization, as well as the invitation to participatory action in the community.

These discourses and practices are closely related to Critical Pedagogy from Brazilian Paulo Freire. Freire's proposal to popular education and the development of critical thinking was one of the main influences of Augusto Boal and his poetics of the oppressed. Boal, together with German playwright Bertolt Brecht are referents for several groups in Brazil. But I think it is very necessary to expand the epistemological and methodological approach that guides critical thinking and practices of Theatre Education in Brazil.

Post critical theory, for example, are an intrinsic and necessary part of contemporary approaches in art education. Silva (2001) offers a basic panorama of theories comprehended under the umbrella of post critical thinking: gender and sexuality theories, feminist and queer pedagogies, multiculturalist education, postcolonialist and the importance to address ethnic and racial relations, visual culture and cultural studies. Berry (2000) explores the multiple ways through which these new paradigm could be materialized in dramatic arts. Koudela (2005) mention these contemporary paradigms in what they are being applying in the Pedagogy of Theater:

The Pedagogy of Theatre has as reference contemporary theories of critical and cultural studies critics, such as deconstructionism, feminism and postmodernism. In this type of theater educators and students employ conventions that challenge, resist and dismantle systems of privilege created by the dominant discourses and discursive practices of modern Western culture. Thus, the practice of dramatic action creates spaces and opportunities to shape the postmodern and postcolonial consciousness, sensitive to the plurality, diversity, inclusion and social justice. (Koudela, 2005, p. 153)

Although post critical paradigm already exists in practices and researches in other countries, Theater Pedagogy in Brazil still observes a lack of interest in these approaches. Therefore, most of Theater in Education approach is still based on constructivist paradigm related to the creativeness and expressiveness of children, and in some extend, on the political poetics of Boal and Brecht, when theater pedagogy is related to critical and cultural action.

Through the review of texts presented at ABRACE meetings (Scientific Meetings and Conferences - years 2007, 2008, 2009 and 2010), it was also possible to see that few studies relate or refer to educational projects and pedagogical aspects based on theater groups' practices. Most research projects that address pedagogical and social projects of theater groups are those related to the approach of community theatre.



The researches of Netto (2010) and Concilio (2008, 2009, 2010) were some of the few that are related to the pedagogical work of specific theater groups. Other surveys that indicate an interest between theater groups and Theatre Pedagogy deal with theater in communities, with an approach in community based theater and community based performance.

One of the main references on theater in community in Brazil is the researcher Marcia Pompeo Nogueira, a member of the Art Center of the State University of Santa Catarina (CEART of UDESC). In some papers, Nogueira (2007, 2009, 2010) discusses theater in community as an effective practice in the whole Brazil, but with a lack of appropriate academic-scientific interest.

Nogueira (2010) points out some of the many ways in which theater is being developed in communities all throughout Brazil. She finds several modalities of theatrical practices such as: the ones developed in NGOs all across the country; theater in context of political and social movements; religious community theater; theater practices as public policies; independent community theater practices, which are linked to local communities. Nogueira puts the theater group as one of the approaches in theater in community, and cites, in addition to group *Companhia do Latão*, the experience of group *Ói Nós Aqui Traveiz*, through workshops held in various neighborhoods of the city of Porto Alegre since 1988.

### The contributions of Theater Groups for Theater in Education

The considerations I want to do in relation to the contributions of theater groups are about the themes and teaching practices in theater. The Pedagogy of Theatre today, in addition to concerns about technical and artistic training, in addition to concerns about the social and biological development of children and in addition to concerns about critical thinking about society and culture, cannot forget an essential part of making theater, which is intricately related to the artistic and political realm of contemporary scene, represented by theater groups, collectives and their political movements. This essential part of education and training regard to the knowledge, training and professional development related to: the activities of management and administration of collective production; dissemination and communication of works and group projects; legal and juridical content dealing with theater making; cultural policies to support local development and the economy that enables self-management and financial survival of groups.

As we can see through theater group's practices, the knowledge related to those themes and issues has never been out of the life and experience of collective theater. Quite the contrary, such activities represent one of the mainsprings that support groups and allow their creative activities, research and their social and pedagogical projects. We cannot lose sight that the work of the collective also deserves to be appreciated as socioeconomic resource, and the themes and disciplines listed above are essential to generate the stability of the collective work in theater art.

Management training and legal issues education - such as cultural rights guaranteed by the Constitution - related to the work of groups seems to be absent or limited both in higher Theater education and in the curricula of schools and social programs that seek to educate and train artists and cultural agents in theater field.

One of the reasons that seem to contribute to not consider those disciplines is the myth created around the actor's work. As pointed by Ney Piacentini, actor and president of the Theater Cooperative of São Paulo, the art of the actor is mythologized as a pure work, intended only to creative processes and aesthetic contemplation.



In a lecture held in Fortaleza, Ceará, Piacentitni also points to the need for the actor to confront the reality that these days it is not possible to do theater to earn money in order to reap great financial benefits. He also considers a trilogy that comprises, today, the reality of the work of the actor, and that allows their survival, which is his work as an artist, teacher and manager. And ultimately alert to the need for training of the actor in other fields than only those of aesthetics and art.

Currently, management and pedagogical activities are fundamental to the life of the artist of theater group. Thus I think it is worth asking: what place do those disciplines, listed above, occupy in the agendas of Pedagogy of Theatre? How could be addressed the administrative functions and issues of the group in school curriculum or educational programs in other educational institutions and cultural centers?

Pedagogy of Theatre cannot lose sight that theater pedagogy also involves theater making, and that in addition to concerns about child development, artistic quality, aesthetic knowledge and socio-educational action, in addition to all these concerns, theater making should be contemplated as a possibility of working and source of economic resources for its components. This is part of the political and social action of the group, and therefore should be studied and analyzed in order to be properly inserted into school curricula and other educational programs, as it has been happening in projects of education and training offered by some theater groups and cooperatives.

The singularities of theater groups' discourses and practices can offer elements to be considered and also problematized in the Pedagogy of Theatre, both in its ontological and epistemological bases as in its methodological practices.

An interdisciplinary approach between business, law, communication, and economy could contribute to the formation of the artist-citizen. Such an approach would seek to understand themes and topics as: theater group management; the writing of artistic and pedagogical projects; production, dissemination and communication of spectacular and pedagogical projects; labor laws; artists' rights and cultural rights; cultural public policies to develop local theater; community cultural development; local sustainable development; sustainable economy, etc.

Beyond the interdisciplinarity that involves the dynamics of collective theater, another contribution that we could take from group theatre experience refers to their practice of exchanges. Much of the artist training takes place through pedagogical exchanges: of training, of research in theater arts, of thoughts and reflections on the contemporary scene; collaborative exchanges of shared processes of creation and staging; organization of festivals, exhibitions and other events.

These exchanges take place in various relational contexts. Can be made between groups that have aesthetic affinity, between professional groups and amateurs; between groups and communities; groups and academia; groups and schools; groups and other socio-cultural agents, including health and education ones.

The universe of possibilities is very wide, and it is the task of Theatre Pedagogy to include such specifics not only as proposals for the education of students and artists as political citizens, in all levels and contexts of learning in theater, but also as object of pedagogical and educational research. Theatre groups suggest to pedagogy numerous topics, content, training methodologies, strategies of socio-political articulation and organization, mechanisms of self-sustaining development, etc. And also constitute potential nucleus of research in the field of education, since many groups work directly with social projects in many different contexts.





The contributions between theater groups and the Pedagogy of Theatre are important and necessary to have in consideration. Collectives can offer new themes, content and training practices for teaching in theater and theater based research. Groups also can drink from many sources related to contemporary educational research to improve their teaching and researching interests and practices.

It seems that dialogue between theater groups and educational researchers are still open in the disciplinary field of Theatre Pedagogy, and I believe it is essential to take them as needed in educational research. The work of the collective is already part of contemporary theater making, and thus can contribute significantly to research in pedagogy and education.

I also believe that many collectives incorporate in its dynamics the notion of interdisciplinarity, so necessary in the education for citizenship in today's times, marked by the fragmentation of knowledge. The numerous models of associations and groups can provide themes and topics so important to a new approach of Theatre in Education.

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## Sharing Artist Books for arts education practice and inquire

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### Abstract

The purpose of this workshop is to develop awareness of the potentialities of artists books in educational and research practices .Through sharing visual notes in artist sketchbooks educators develop other forms of interactive learning processes, in the edges of identity and collective spaces. Participants will be invited to create collaborative artists books during the entire congress. Through a visual practice based experience we will discuss relational pedagogy strategies , collaborative and peer learning approaches to education. Sharing artists books is a practice which challenges the limits of individual appropriation and authorship.

### Key words

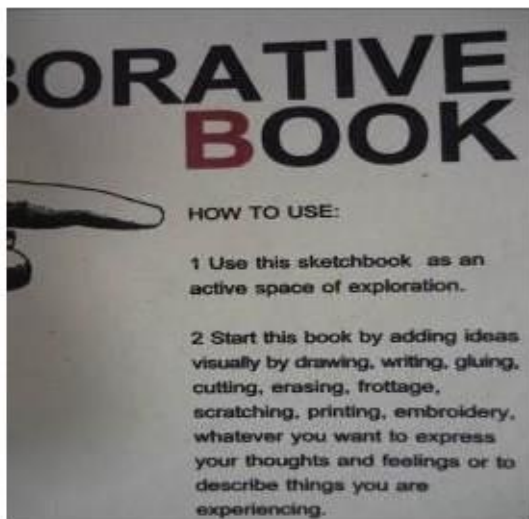
Arts based research, sketchbooks, 'cahier d'artist', artist book, interactive learning

### Introduction

A visual essay follows







Teachers, artists and researchers have been using sketchbooks to explore ideas, thoughts and reflections in written and visual forms. What we propose in this series of workshops is the use of collaborative books to share art teachers experiences and memories, creating a communication tool based on collaborative learning. During the InSEA 2012 European Regional conference in Lemesos researchers from C3 started a group to develop collaborative sketchbooks in-between congresses . The books were specially handmade for the workshop by people in ASSOL bindery . The participants will explore the sketchbook received in Lemesos with friends ; colleagues or students and in the next InSEA congress the completed sketchbooks will be exhibited. Meanwhile a blog is available to send images of the work in progress (<http://sharingsketchbooks.wordpress.com/>).





## Model making: A tool for visualizing the built environment and how it continues to play a vital and increasing role as a teaching method.

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### Abstract

Computer design software is now readily available, making the art of physical model making a medium of the past. Students are starting to lack the skills of physical model making which demonstrates space, form and scale. By learning through the model making process it enables students to have an enhanced interaction with their ideas, as well as allowing their concepts to be developed. By exploring the creative use of space and the development of practical skills from initial concepts through to project presentation, students are given an independent approach to learning, designing and problem solving. Once students understand the basic principles of physical model making as a tool for visualization of the built environment, they will have gained sufficient knowledge to continue on to the technological environment of the recent decades. Model making does not only allow the student to explore their ideas, but also allows effective communication. An analysis highlights the encouragement of research through design at all stages to demonstrate an understanding of the physical, functional and aesthetic relationship between humans and objects in space, in terms of their scale and proportion.

### Key words

3D Visualization, Design Communication, Design Process, Teaching Methodology

### Introduction

“Some people have always been sceptical about technological breakthroughs. With radio, people will stop reading. With television, people will stop thinking. With the internet, it will all be impersonal and people will never see each other again. There’s some truth in each case. But then the real artists, the real thinkers, will push through that envelop and will succeed.” Frank O’Ghery (Futagawa, 2002).

We now live in a “cultural and social revolution brought on by telecommunication and information technologies. It is an era of accelerated change where the flow of information has superseded material exchange.” (Zellner, 1999). Due to this we are seeing the mediums of architecture and interior design transforming rapidly.

This paper analyses methods of physical model making as a tool for visualizing the built environment and how it continues to play a vital role in the design process. Specifically concentrating on how it should be considered as the basic foundation for the communication of 3D space despite the increased technology available to us. The discussed methods are aimed at beginner Interior Design students, specifically within their first year of studies. Various stages and developments of the model making process are illustrated through student



case studies, along with the demonstration of successfully communicated 3D space. It is essential to identify that the following argument is not a disagreement of the use of technology within our discipline; the paper illustrates that without the core basics of physical model making students cannot progress to the technological environment of recent decades.

Computer design packages are now readily available, from professional software to basic modeling programs. For many students this makes the art of physical model making a medium of the past. Students are beginning to lack skills of model making through an urge to use new technologies available, but it is questionable if these methods can truly demonstrate space, form and scale. If physical model making skills affect the imagination and creativity of students: Can students continue to deliver original and successful solutions to contemporary design?

### What is the physical model?

Echenique as quoted by Gursoy (2010) defines the physical model as “a representation of reality, where representation is the expression of certain relevant characteristics of the observed reality and where the reality consists of the object or systems that exist, have existed or may exist.” Gursoy continues to explain that, “a model is considered as a representation tool and therefore can be noted important for communicating information within many disciplines.” (Gursoy, 2010, p6) Models are used to express designer’s ideas, but it is important to note that each model has a specific use dependant on the requirements of a project.

### Types of models

The most recognizable model is the presentation model, the presentation model is used to display final design ideas, but it is important to note that beginner students along with professionals can employ other model making techniques.

### Concept Models

A major type of physical model employed by students is the concept model; concept models enhance the design process by allowing designers to create quick and easy models to visualize their design concepts. As explained by Dunn (2010) “The use of conceptual models as a medium of thought not only facilitates the design process of the model maker but enables his initial creative impulses or intentions.” (pp.95)

### Site Models

Site models are of extreme importance for the designer to understand the surrounding elements of a design. Through the creation of existing site models the designer especially the beginner student can visualize the 3D space, limitations and possibilities when in their studio. Alternatively when a new building or space is created it allows the designer to visualize the proposed design within an existing landscape.

### Spatial/ Interior architecture models

A spatial model is a valuable tool when discussing the discipline of interior design. It allows the student or designer to explore spatial features of their designs. They may explore structural forms, the relationship of volumes within a space, light and shadow, along with scale and layout. More specifically, the interior architecture model allows designers to focus on interior details in order to investigate their design ideas, but it is important to note that



using the correct scale is of extreme importance to represent an idea which is closely linked to reality.

### Design Development Models

Design development models are seen as a process of 3D sketching. It is a process which has been developed known as Research for design. Research for design is a method which is encouraged at all stages of the design process in order to demonstrate the understanding of the physical, functional and aesthetic relationship between humans and objects in space, in terms of their scale and proportion. Research for design remains a strong teaching method and continues to be a significant process throughout students' project work and subsequent design work. As defined by Merry (2009) it is a method of personal testing for a designer or student, through a series of successive models students can build on their design aesthetics. Through a creation of similar, each time improved designs this method can fill in gaps between initial design ideas, prototypes and final design concepts. As children learn through touching, playing and building, the physical model making process allows us to think, learn and improve our designs. The physical model becomes a tool for trial and error, and can also be defined as personal conclusions and decision making. Students may have initial design ideas, but until visualized in an appropriate manner cannot fully realize a designs potential thus defining this method as a problem solving exercise. An example of this is through the use of materials. If a prototype is produced with the use of wood, and the student or lecturer is not satisfied with the result, he or she may move on to the next prototype using different materials. This is not only a method that should be thought of as a basic teaching method, it can be adapted to any level of teaching or later professional work.

### Computer aided design (CAD)

When discussing computer aided design models, we have two mediums. Firstly the 2D form of the computer generated model and secondly the accelerated technology of 3D printed models. In order to use 3D printers' students should have prior knowledge and understanding of 3D space and volume which is delivered through the physical model making process. CAD design is a continent method of visualizing design ideas, but it cannot help students to understand the physicality of materials in terms of their textures, depths and tactility. Computer technology can give us the advantage of creating quick models but if change is needed to a design this may becomes difficult for the beginner student. It is also important to note that Interior Designers must have a level of creativity and understanding of spatial functions, while CAD technicians focus purely on the visual outcome. Frank O'Ghery explains "I don't think there's any reason an architect can't succeed using only the computer, but I just didn't like it." He continues to comment that "If you look at a model, there is a human quality to it. It has feeling. The computer model is too devoid of any kind of feeling. When I see it on the computer, it's terrible; I want to change the design. When I see in model form, I like it better. I'm just more comfortable going from a physical model to reality." (Futagawa, 2002 pp13)

There are various other types of models which designers can explore, ranging from structural models, block and massing models to full size prototypes. In the context of Interior Design and the target group of beginner students it is important to realize these sub-groups of the model making process so that students can effectively understand the volume, scale and layout of 3D space, as well as spatial forms.



### Why we make models

Sketching is seen as the first stage in the design process, many theorists have explored the importance of sketching in early stages. Model making can be seen as an extension of the sketching process. Dunn (2010) believes “The representation of creative ideas is of primary importance with any design-based discipline.” (pp. 6) When analyzing disciplines such as architecture and in the specific field of Interior Design where the results are something that we cannot see finished at the final concept stage, the representation of creative ideas are of extreme importance.

Dunn (2010) also reminds us that, it is important to remember that we are discussing the discipline of interior design where model making takes on more than just an aesthetic purpose. When looking at other disciplines of art and design, mediums such as paintings and sculptures have a purely visual outcome, but through model making for interior designers we begin to understand function. Glover (2010) highlights that artistic models are “objects of contemplation, raised up and set apart from us, in the rarified world of museums and galleries.” But “buildings on the other hand are objects of utility. We live in them. We scheme in them. We peer out of them, watchfully.” (pp. 88)

Models communicate an overall aesthetic but also reveal materials, texture, size, volume, color, scale and layout. It is important for students to understand that no matter which subject they are involved in, each has its own language, and for interior designers model making along with architectural plans and drawing become their method of communication. Drawing, sketching and talking have been considered valid methods and so should model making continue to be. It becomes a visual tool where learners can understand and communicate to each other as well as their lecturers. In the professional world model making continues to be a valid design tool. Louis Vuitton believe that “prototype models are not only useful for studying material functionality and detailing but also for previewing what is acceptable in terms of LV’s image.” They create models for “research, engineering, image, architecture, lighting design, client approval and maintenance analysis.” (Mostafavi, 2003, pp. 22)

### Model making as a teaching methodology

When discussing model making as a tool for visualizing the built environment playing a vital and increasing role as a teaching method for beginner students, if done successfully it can clearly communicate to the lecturer in order to develop and revise design ideas. By learning through the model making process it enables students to have an enhanced interaction with their ideas, as well as allowing their concepts to be developed. By exploring the creative use of space and the development of practical skills from the initial design concepts through to project presentation, it allows students to have an independent approach to learning, designing and problem solving.

### Concept Models in Design Practice

Beginner students’ language for architectural drawing is not developed sufficiently to communicate their ideas clearly and precisely. Model making becomes a method of communication which is crucial to their continued studies.

### Case Study 1: 3D and the organic



Figure 1.1



Figure 1.2

Figure 1.3

By encouraging students to explore creativity through sketchbook techniques they build on a personal design philosophy. Starting from sketchbook experimentation students transform their ideas from two dimensions to three dimensions. Beginner students may have difficulties visualizing 3D forms especially organic shapes in 3D volumes; this can be successfully understood through model making. Figures 1.1 - 1.3 demonstrates a process of sketchbook experimentation and how it has been successfully applied in a conceptual model, allowing both the student and lecture to successfully understand the layout and volume of the 3D space.

### Case Study 2: Materials for Model Making

Model making is not a complex medium, various materials can be explored and employed, materials can range from cardboard to Styrofoam, acrylic, wood or even clay. Through an exploration of diverse materials students can begin with creative playful approaches through to a complex and precise professional presentation models. The Edge design institute founded in Hong Kong, have the aim of an accelerated work process. In order to generate ideas quickly they devised a simple strategy which is to use lego blocks as a medium for conceptual models. (Krasny, 2008) Just as mind mapping in design is usually seen as sketching we encourage students to mind mapping using 3D means.



Figure 2.1

Figure 2.2

Figure 2.3

Figure 2.4



Figure 2.5



Figures 2.1 – 2.5 demonstrates the student creating quick extensions of initial sketched concepts. The student demonstrates the idea of the Jenga game as an initial inspiration and through a succession of trial and error models has transformed these basic blocks it into a livable space. Students do not need complicated model making workshops at an early stage, what is required is to be able to extrude ideas from their sketch books with available materials. From the moment the student leaves the creative environment of their studio, work taken into a workshop has the potential to lose creativity. Quick models are seen as a valuable extension to the sketching process.

### Design Process Models Explored

Model making can also be considered as a continuous process which can be repeated, edited and continued until the conclusion of a design. Dunn (2010) explains that, “Fundamentally the physical architecture model allows us to perceive the three dimensional experience rather than having to imagine it.” (pp. 8)

### Case Study 3: Decision making



Figure 3.1



Figure 3.2



Figure 3.3

In many cases conceptual ideas are visualised for further stages of design development, such as implementation to site or for material requirement. Figures 3.1 – 3.3 outlines a project which required students to create conceptual ideas for the redesign of an existing space. The student’s initial concept was the roots of trees which were explored and manipulated to form the internal structure of the space. The development of the idea in the form of photos and sketches lead to a final 3D outcome. The 3D form allowed the student to place the volumes within the existing space leading to a final design, allowing appropriate materials for the internal structure of the space to be identified. It is of extreme importance that students identify with materials realistic for a final design and understand how design concepts in the

form of 3D models can be transformed to appear closer to a final design. Students are encouraged to deal with the quality and properties of a material, learning how to treat the installation of various materials through project work.

#### Case Study 4: Research to Conclusions

An initial stage of any design project requires students to conduct both theoretical and visual research, which leads to experimentation in creative forms. Students later develop models based on their research and creative process. Discussing the first design project which students encounter they are limited to both size and materials, making the project a manageable size for them. (Figures 4.1- 4.2) A majority of the analyzed students began with no prior knowledge in the design field. It is important that students do not work on large scale projects and models until they have gained the sufficient skills. Through the development models students begin to understand the use of the space, in terms of size and scale through the addition of figures, landscapes and model placement. Model making does not only allow students to visualize their ideas but also becomes a tool which aids final architectural drawings. Through the space being physically accessible rather than imagined through 2D drawings or purely imagination students are given a tool to visualize their design. Their architectural language can be enhanced as they can successfully visualize the various required elevations, sections and floor plans by easily turning the physical object. The model making process is considered the beginners tool in reading, and understanding architectural plans.



Figure 4.1



Figure 4.2

#### The Dialogue of Model Making

Computer aided design can now offer new techniques to the learner which gives tools to further enhance the design process. It is important to note that the computer is a tool, it can enhance and facilitate the visualization of design work but it cannot enhance creativity which does not exist. The issue of the discussed argument surrounds; if students can develop creative and dynamic understanding as well as the potentials of 3D interior space without basic skills of model making. In an interview with Frank O'Ghery he explains that "models are a way of studying. It's the way of working I feel most comfortable with. That's how I design. I ask someone in my staff to start for me, they will bring it in, and then I'll fold something here, cut something there. They will work on it some more and bring it again. The model lets me have a dialog with my staff." Frank O'Ghery (Futagawa, 2002). Just as model

making allows professionals to have a dialogue with their staff it allows students to have a dialogue not only with their lectures but also with their peers.

### Photographic Transformation

Physical model making is a medium which represents interior space as closely to reality as possible, but what is the result when students are required to represent their work in a two dimensional form? Students are encouraged to use the medium of photography, although this can raise problems. If bad photos are taken students could potentially lose all of the advantages which they have gained through the model making process. Textures could appear flat, colors distorted, shadows faded, volumes unclear and scale confused. If done badly Mitnick (2008) compares it to like “watching a bad actor playing a role in which we notice the acting without wanting to, because it appears unnatural to its setting.” (pp. 73)

Photography has the potential to take ideas from three dimensional forms to two dimensional images; a well taken photo can actually enhance a model giving it a more realistic appearance. There are various processes which students can follow to create a more realistic appearance such as correct lighting, accurate angles, high quality cameras and a suitable background.

### Case Study 5: Photographic Illusions

The final stage of any design project is to present work in a 2D form. Figures 5.1 – 5.2 illustrate how the treatment of simple mounting board has given the illusion of concrete. Through successful photographic techniques the model appears as a full scale building in an appropriate setting, by using correct angles and lighting.

Mitnick (2008) believes that “sometimes fake things feel more real than the things that they are faking. Because they are reconstructions of something else, they may capture an exaggerated feature.” (pp.74) Specific techniques are used to give these effects and in the field of Interior Design models can look as if they are from a movie set, something that is a portrayal of reality.



Figure 5.1



Figure 5.2



Figure 5.3

### Case Study 6: Angles and Perspectives

A focus on correct perspectives when presenting any aspect of design work is encouraged, from initial sketches through to final photos. As a tool for photography students must use correct angles and hold the camera in different levels. As previously mentioned light and shadow is the key to giving models a realistic appearance. Figures 6.1 – 6.2 demonstrates how successful photography can enhance models giving an impression of realistic space.



Figure 6.1

### Case Study 7: CAD enhancement

Successful images become a vital communication tool for students which are continued in their careers when communicating proposals to clients. In later years of study it is also considered a valuable stage of the design process which can be taken and adapted in CAD programs.

Figures 7.1 – 7.3 explains how simple models created from the uncomplicated mediums of foam board and colored paper has been successfully photographed to create images which are realistic and impressive. Images have been manipulated by computer technologies to appear closer to reality. Through the addition of figures and objects within space the student can successfully communicate the scale, size, volume and use of a space in a realistic and functional manner. These skills allow the students to successfully communicate his or her ideas with the lecturer which are vital tools for communication in their later careers.



Figure 7.1

Figure 7.2

Figure 7.3

## Conclusion

Once students have understood the basic principles of physical model making as a tool for visualization of the built environment, they will have gained sufficient knowledge to continue on to the technological environment of the recent decades. In today's technological world students at an advanced level can experience interplay between the two – dimensions of computers and “three dimensional plotters for new possibilities of visualization.” (Krasny, 2008, pp 174) Our argument is, that without the initial understanding and hand crafted models the majority of students will not have gained the sufficient experience in the understanding of 3D space and visualization. Many designers and students believe that now computer software is readily available we can forget the design processes of the past. Many believe that we can save time and money through going directly to computer programs but its important to remember that when we don't use physical model making we can easily loose a sense of composition, layout, materials and volume, elements which results in stronger designs. Elizabeth Diller one third of the architectural firm Diller Scofidio and Renfro firmly believes that “when one goes directly to computing then you are actually not thinking.” (Krasny, 2008, pp 43)

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Figures 4.1 – 4.2: CHARALAMBOUS, C. (2009) The Architects Cube [3D Model] Frederick University, Nicosia : Cyprus

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Figure 6.1: CHARALAMBOUS, C. (2010) Designer Space [3D Model] Frederick University, Nicosia : Cyprus

Figure 7.1: CHARALAMBOUS, C. (2011) Bus Station [3D Model] Frederick University, Nicosia : Cyprus

Figure 7.2 – 7.3: CHARALAMBOUS, C. (2011) Bus Stop [3D Model] Frederick University, Nicosia : Cyprus



## The expression of scientific knowledge / information through art

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### Abstract

This paper is about the collaboration between an art teacher and a biology teacher in order to explore interdisciplinary learning. Methods and language from more than one academic discipline were applied in order to examine a theme. Thus connections were created between traditionally discrete disciplines such as biology and art. The two teachers have been collaborating for a number of years and they have observed that the students enjoy this interdisciplinary approach. The theme this year was, Making sense of mental illness: biology, medicine and society. The students were very excited by this topic and they created, in their different disciplines, a number of exciting works in response to the theme.

### Keywords

Creative collaboration, interdisciplinary learning, science and art.

### Introduction

An art lesson which was based on the collaboration of a biology teacher (Freda Terzian) and an art teacher (myself) has provided the point of departure for this investigation. Ms Terzian and I teach at Laniteion Lyceum A' in Limassol and we have been collaborating for a number of years thus exploring an interdisciplinary approach to teaching / learning which involves biology and art. The term interdisciplinary will be used in the context of this research to refer to teaching in which educators apply methods and language from more than one academic discipline to examine a theme. It therefore "enables students to see the connectedness of separate fields of study. Students begin by carrying over ideas from one subject area to another" (Pitts, McAllister, Finney, Graves, Eichenberg, 1994, p.xi). In the collaboration referred to above a common theme was used which provided the basis for both the art and the biology investigations even though no specific connections were made between the two disciplines.

In this paper I will examine some issues in the art – science interaction which are relevant to education such as, the cross- fertilization between art and science as it appeared in different historical periods, the work of contemporary artists, the interest in an interdisciplinary approach as shown in many institutions. It seems that the paths of science and art, far from being separate, have crossed many times to their mutual enrichment. Moreover there appears to be a resurgence of this interest in the work of contemporary artists who have created powerful and innovatory works as a result. This interest has also been revived in education and many institutions encourage an interdisciplinary approach. I will examine the extent to which the interaction of art and science when used in education can expand the students' knowledge of the world. The interdisciplinary approach will be explored in the secondary school context and the lesson which became the point of departure for this research will be discussed. The objective will be to establish whether and in which ways this approach is advantageous to learning.



### Approaches to the art and science interaction

A topic dealing with the common ground between science and art is a contentious one. This, however, has not always been so. Throughout the Middle Ages and The Renaissance the interpretation of nature was generally perceived as one element in an all – embracing enterprise of philosophy. Similarly during the Enlightenment human knowledge was not structured around a division corresponding to the later divide between the sciences and the humanities. It appears that a cultural anxiety as concerns the “ two cultures ” of the sciences and the humanities dates from the Romantic period at the end of the eighteenth and the beginning of the nineteenth century (Snow, 1998, pp. ix –x).

These two opposing approaches, the one approach conceiving of a dichotomy between the two disciplines whereas the other seeing them as complementing one another are prevalent even at the present time. J. Bronowski in his *The Common Sense of Science* (1951) views the relationship of the sciences and the arts as creative experiences. Even though his book was written in 1951 it remains as pertinent today as it was when it first appeared. It articulates and develops Bronowski's provocative idea that the sciences and the arts fundamentally share the same imaginative vision. He claims, “ ... it has been one of the most destructive modern prejudices that art and science are different and somehow incompatible interests. We have fallen into the habit of opposing the artistic to the scientific temper ... ” (Bronowski, 1951, p. 5). And, “ ... Science and the arts today are not as discordant as many people think. The difficulties which we all have ... in following modern literature and music and painting are not unimportant. They are one sign of the lack of a broad and general language in our culture. The difficulties which we have in understanding the basic ideas of modern science are signs of the same lack ” (Bronowski, 1951, p. 13). In 1959, however, the physicist-turned-novelist C. P. Snow delivered his famous Rede Lecture “ The Two Cultures ” at the University of Cambridge, in which he noted the “ lack of understanding ” that divided what he calls the world's “ natural scientists ” from its “ literary intellectuals ” (Snow, 1998, p. 4). He contends, “ I believe the intellectual life of the whole of western society is increasingly being split into two polar groups ” . And he continues, “ ... at one pole we have the literary intellectuals ... ” and “ ... at the other scientists ... between the two a gulf of mutual incomprehension ... ” (1998, p. 4). The humanist biologist E. O. Wilson in his 1998 book *Consilience : The Unity of Knowledge* attempts to bridge the culture gap between the sciences and the humanities that was the subject of Snow's lecture. Wilson contended that with the rise of the modern sciences, the sense of unity was gradually lost in the increasing fragmentation and specialization of knowledge (Wilson, 1998). Similarly P. Galison and C. A. Jones contend, “ what much of this focus on ‘ art ’ and ‘ science ’ as discrete products ignores are the commonalities in the practices that produced them. Both are regimes of knowledge, embedded in, but also constitutive of, the broader cultures they inhabit ” (Galison, Jones, 1988). These perspectives unavoidably impact education as well. In most secondary schools in Cyprus, for example, the point of view which considers the sciences and the arts as polar opposites is predominant. Moreover there appears to be a hierarchy of subjects and science and art occupy different positions in this hierarchy, with art being considered as less important. It is therefore necessary to implement the kind of teaching that transcends these prejudices and makes connections amongst equally respected subjects. The interdisciplinary approach seems to provide this more balanced alternative. This is evidenced in more recent developments which illustrate the tendency to bridge the gap between the two disciplines rather than to polarize them.



### The interaction of art and science as expressed in artworks

Science and art as expressed in artworks have been following intertwining paths for many years. Probably the best known example of an artist whose work exemplifies this interaction is Leonardo da Vinci. Leonardo was the type and symbol of Renaissance man: painter, sculptor, mathematician, and engineer. It seems that no other man has shown more strikingly the unity and the universality of the intellect. Leonardo's methods of observation concerned (a) physiological optics and visual perception and (b) anatomy, which he approached as a scientist and was only peripheral as a means of helping his art (Ackerman, 1998, p. 213). As a result of the interaction between the two disciplines, however, something new and extraordinary was created which transcended and enriched both of them.

In Leonardo's drawings of the heart, for instance, the rendition of the heart is impressive not just as a record of significant advances in empirical observation but also for the exceptional draughtsmanship that reveals the object in its natural ambience of light and atmosphere. According to J. S. Ackerman, "... the very viscousness of the flesh is rendered in such a way that has never since been matched in anatomical illustration" (1998, p. 221). And he continues, "... Leonardo was not simply an artist skilled in achieving verisimilitude; ... it is that his unbounded curiosity led him to pursue a vast range of natural effects and physiological responses, so he could bring to the recording of an animal heart an understanding of light, atmosphere, texture and vision ... " (1998, p. 222).

Leonardo, however, was not the only artist who transcended the barriers between art and science. Cave painters were also researchers in the areas of zoology, anatomy and physiology. We see signs of this transcendence in the prehistoric examples of works of art. The cave paintings, such as Hall of Bulls, Lascaux, France, 28,000 - 10,000 BCE, are both an accurate observation of the animal species, their anatomy and physiology as well as an expression of their spiritual energy. They may be considered therefore as landmarks in the histories of both science and art (Wilson, 2010, p. 6).

In the nineteenth century an important interaction between science and art may be seen with the introduction of photography. According to art historians the sensational advent of photographic technology in the 1800s contributed to the rise of non-representational art even in the cases of artists who had not explicitly thought about the new medium (Wilson 2010, p. 13). La Gazette de France, in 1839, declared the invention of the photograph to be so significant that it "upsets all scientific theories on light and optics, and it will revolutionise the art of drawing" (Clarke, 1997, p. 13). This dual aspect of photography, the scientific and the artistic is basic to its mode of representation.

In contemporary experimentation a number of artists and scientists seek liberation from the compartmentalization of knowledge and explore hybrid areas that are neither strictly art nor strictly science. According to S. Wilson, "... the scientists have been willing to undertake inquiries outside the arena of traditional research. The artists have been eager to move into areas of scientific and technological research usually pursued by technical specialists ... " (2010, p. 6).

In his Protein 224 (2003) Steve Miller collaborated with Nobel Prize winner, biophysicist Rod MacKinnon. He used spray enamel and silkscreen to create his image of the proteins as they twist and fold in order to represent their structure. For scientists trying to understand their structure, proteins present a major challenge as they are too small to be seen with the naked eye. Miller used a novel technique of surface- and ribbon- modelling to show this structure (Wilson, 2010, pp. 18-19). In this sense his work may be linked to Leonardo's



drawing of the heart in which Leonardo used light and atmosphere to represent “ a pulsating organ of flesh and moisture ” (Ackerman, 1998, p. 221).

S.Wilson claims, “ ... biology promises to be a major focus of discovery in the twenty – first century ... the optimism and resources being devoted to biological research today promise to have a profound impact on everyday life as well as on philosophical notions about life itself. Whenever artists notice so much concentration of cultural energy and focus, they feel summoned to investigate and respond ” (2010, p. 20). In Alexis Rockman’s work *The Farm*, (2000), for example, the images are of familiar farm animals, and of their possible future mutations as a result of bioengineering. Vegetables grow into geometric shapes which are probably more useful for packing and shipping but of catastrophic implications as concerns life as we know it (Wilson, 2010, pp. 30-31).

Andrew Carnie’s work *Magic Forest*, (2004) is another example of an artist creating in response to scientific information. This work is a slide-dissolve installation comprised of nine stills which show the growth of neurons in the brain. These are derived from work by the neuroscientist Richard Wingate. The data was collected from microscope inspection of brain slices. The head fills with neurons which become increasingly more developed and interconnected until eventually they recede into dissolution (Wilson, 2010, p. 68).

All the above works illustrate the kind of thinking which transcends barriers and compartmentalization of knowledge and result in enriching our world view. According to S. Wilson, “ ... today the fruits of research provide rich new materials and techniques that artists can use ... perhaps more importantly, knowledge about frontier areas of research enables artists to serve their historical function of offering commentary and different perspectives on contemporary developments” (2010, p. 16). Exposing secondary school students to these innovatory artists would not only acquaint them with the latest developments in art but it would also help them think outside the box. The work of these artists would probably stimulate the students and lead them to projects that may not even lead to art –making as it is traditionally understood. Irrespective of what the artistic outcome might be, however, it seems that the cross-fertilization between art and science would expand the students’ awareness of the world.

### Art and science in education

It seems that the exciting experiments which are undertaken by artists venturing into the world of science also have significant implications for the field of education. Many institutions and organizations have developed to support and develop this experimentation. Museums, festivals, university programs, publications, websites, art- science collaborations and funding structures have recently appeared.

New ventures such as the University of Washington’s DXARTS introduce their programme as follows : “ Welcome to the Center for Digital Arts and Experimental Media (DXARTS), an interdisciplinary degree-granting center designed to support the emergence of a new generation of hybrid artists ... embracing an expansive range of arts practice, theory, and research across multiple disciplines, DXARTS creates opportunities for artists to discover and document new knowledge and expertise in an evolving field of media arts” (<http://www.dxarts.washington.edu/>). Students come to this particular program with backgrounds in art and in technical disciplines such as computer science and biology. Science & the Arts presents programs in theatre, art, music, dance and film that bridge the worlds of art and science. Since 2001 they have presented public events ranging from conferences and concerts to science demonstrations on the streets of New York. Most of the





events are held at the Graduate Center of the City University of New York (<http://web.gc.cuny.edu/sciart/aboutUs.htm>). Journals, such as Leonardo published by MIT Press in America, postulates as its vision statement : “ Leonardo creates opportunities for the powerful exchange of ideas between practitioners in art, science and technology. Through publications, initiatives and public forums, Leonardo/ISAST facilitates cross-disciplinary research in these fields, seeking to catalyze fruitful solutions for the challenges of the 21st century. Among the challenges requiring cross- disciplinary approaches are spreading global scientific and artistic literacy and encouraging freedom of thought and imagination. By enhancing communication between scientists, artists, and engineers, Leonardo supports experimental projects and interacts with established institutions of art and science to transform their research and educational practices (<http://www.leonardo.info/isast/isastinfo.html>). The International Society for Arts, Science and Technology organization ( ISAST), which produces Leonardo also sponsors websites, a book series and collaborates with other groups in presenting conferences (Wilson, 2010, p. 9).

Another important area of support consists of specialized research centres and funding sources. SymbioticA is sponsored by the School of Anatomy and Human Biology at the University of Western Australia and, according to Oron Catts and Dr. Stuart Bunt it “ ... is a research laboratory dedicated to the exploration of scientific knowledge in general, and biological technologies in particular, from an artistic and humanistic perspective ... ”. SymbioticA is the first research laboratory of its kind, in that it enables artists to engage in wet biology practices in a biological science department. Developments in science and technology, are having a profound effect on society, its values, belief systems and treatment of individuals, groups and the environment. The interaction of art, science, industry and society appear to be an essential avenue for innovation and invention. Science and art may therefore be considered as attempts to explain the world around us in ways that can be complementary to each other. Artists can act as important catalysts for creative and innovative processes and outcomes (<http://www.tea.uwa.edu.au/publication/SymbioticA.pdf>).

New work is also presented to the public through museums, exhibitions, festivals and competitions. The yearly Prix competition added a new category called hybrid art, which focuses on trans-disciplinary approaches and the “ process of fusing different media and genres into new forms of artistic expression as well as the act of transcending the boundaries between art and research ” ( Wilson, 2010, p. 10).

The above are only some of the art-science collaborations in university programs, publications, festivals, and competitions. There are many more educational programs as well as festivals, shows and conferences supporting hybrid and cross- disciplinary arts.

### Interdisciplinary teaching in secondary school education

The latest developments in the art- science interaction are also very significant to secondary school education and they can be implemented through interdisciplinary teaching. Interdisciplinary teaching as concerns art implies that the study and making extends beyond the walls of the art room. Observation and inventive problem solving are as integral to the study of art as they are to the study of science and other disciplines. The authors of *Interdisciplinary Approaches to Teaching Art in High School* say in their introduction, “ We contend that teaching and learning in the visual arts is fundamentally interdisciplinary and integrated. Therefore, much of what we do as high school art teachers is intricately connected to other realms of knowledge and experience ” ( Taylor, Stephen Carpenter, II, Ballengee-Morris, Sessions, 2006, p. 3). The fragmentation of the curriculum, however, has been the



main educational model for many years and this is evident in most schools in Cyprus. As a result teachers and pupils feel that their courses are isolated and fragmented from other disciplines. This is especially obvious in the art/ humanities – science divide. It appears that an interdisciplinary approach to teaching would combat this compartmentalization of knowledge. Education Scotland stipulates the following as concerns interdisciplinary teaching : “ The curriculum should include space for learning beyond subject boundaries, so that children and young people can make connections between different areas of learning ” and, “ revisiting a concept or skill from different perspectives deepens understanding, and can also make the curriculum more coherent and meaningful from the learner's point of view ” (<http://www.educationscotland.gov.uk/thecurriculum/howisthecurriculumorganised/interdisciplinarylearning/index.asp>).

My own students have also expressed the view that their subjects are too separate and they would have much preferred to have connections established between the different disciplines. So when the opportunity arose to work on a theme proposed by the biology teacher they responded very favourably. Ms Terzian and I have been collaborating for a number of years and we have observed that the students have enjoyed this interdisciplinary approach. The Biology conference in Heidelberg, Germany which took place between 4-5 November, 2011 had as its theme this year, Making Sense of Mental Illness : Biology, Medicine and Society. The biology students some of who attended the conference did research exploring different concepts relating to mental illness. They examined how mental illness was approached during different historical periods, in different countries, and how mental illness can be defined. They wrote essays on the subject and they created powerpoint presentations. Those who attended the biology conference in Heidelberg presented a poster on the theme : Mental Illness in Ancient Greece.

The art students were presented with the same theme and they had to creatively respond to it through the production of artworks. Two different classes of art students, comprised of seventeen and fifteen participants respectively and aged seventeen to nineteen years of age, were presented with the theme and challenged to provide their own responses to mental illness. Unlike the biology students who had to express their research in writing the art students had to express the given theme in visual imagery. The lesson worked out as follows:

- The students were informed on the theme of mental illness as being the subject of the biology conference in Heidelberg. They were exposed to visual information on the subject and were asked to creatively explore this theme.
- They were asked to work individually at first and they could work in groups at a later stage if they so wished.
- This was followed by a brainstorming session in which students expressed different ideas and how they wanted to approach the subject.
- The students then got involved in research using different sources such as books , magazines, the Internet and generally whatever inspired them to proceed with their own work.
- They were encouraged to think of the importance of media and techniques as instrumental to expressing their ideas.
- They would creatively explore these ideas visually in their individual sketchbooks and experiment with media and techniques that would best express what they were trying to communicate.



- They would then create a final piece which would either be a painting on canvas or a three dimensional work.
- Some of the final works would be taken to the conference in Heidelberg as examples of visual work on the subject.

This particular lesson proved to be extremely successful. Each student did a number of works in their sketchbooks experimenting with different ideas, techniques and materials and they were keen to do their own research. Most of them did paintings on canvas as their final work whereas some used different media such as Plaster of Paris, polystyrene, glass, chains. It seems that this particular lesson gave them the space to explore creatively. What was very exhilarating when presented with the students' works was how varied they were and how unpredictable even though they all dealt with the same theme. It is possible that the students enjoyed this lesson because it gave them the opportunity to expand into another area of knowledge and they could connect art to life and the human condition. It seems that through an issue, question or problem – based approach, students learn to resolve problems creatively and they also learn the skills and processes that are necessary to create works of art. They learn how to use the techniques and media which will best express their ideas. By using this approach they are also connected to contemporary artists who create works that examine and question the contemporary human condition through a combination of media.

I believe that some of the reasons that are responsible for the success of this lesson and which are based on an interdisciplinary teaching approach are the following:

- Methods of instruction centered on ideas and themes that relate to human experiences enable students to get personally involved and thus capture their attention. In order for meaning to be relevant to them it is important to connect it with other realms of experience.
- It seems that through an issue, question or problem, students learn to resolve problems creatively and they also learn the skills and processes that are necessary to create artworks. They learn how to use the techniques and media which will best express their ideas. By using this approach they are also connected to contemporary artists who create works that examine and question the contemporary human condition through a combination of media.
- Teaching that initiates student –learning. If students are allowed to think for themselves and feel that they have a voice then they will be more eager to participate in a given project. Teaching that encourages students to initiate learning opportunities and interdisciplinary possibilities makes feasible exciting and effective learning situations.
- Teaching that incorporates visual culture. Secondary school students are continuously bombarded with visual images. They are exposed, on a daily basis, to the World Wide Web, video games, sharing of pictures through their mobile phones, watching television. This visual culture is part of their daily experience so teaching should help them draw upon knowledge derived from this experience. Computer technologies in particular challenge and provoke new and exciting interdisciplinary possibilities.



## Conclusion

In examining the art-science interaction I feel that it is safe to conclude that it presents students with greatly exciting possibilities. The innovatory nature of contemporary artworks dealing with this interaction may also introduce inventive methods in teaching. Interdisciplinary learning offers the students opportunities for growth and an understanding of the connectedness between our diverse experiences. The compartmentalization of knowledge which separates the different disciplines is not necessarily conducive to better learning. Stefan Collini, in his introduction to C.P. Snow's *The Two Cultures* contends, "... what is wanted is not to force potential physicists to read a bit of Dickens and potential literary critics to mug up some basic theorems. Rather, we need to encourage the growth of the intellectual equivalent of bilingualism, a capacity not only to exercise the language of our respective specialisms, but also to attend to, learn from, and eventually contribute to, wider cultural conversations" (Snow, 1998, p. lvii). As human beings, whether teachers or students we all have overlapping identities. So it may be beneficial for our learning too to express these overlapping identities. By breaking down the rigid divisions between the disciplines, we open up learning to the human experience and all the excitement that this may entail.

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## Severance - Class displacement for alternative paths of learning in a vocational graphic design course

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### Abstract

This paper intends to reflect on two projects of teaching art and design implemented in a vocational course of graphic design at Escola Artística e Profissional Árvore [Artistic and Vocational School “Árvore”] in Porto, Portugal. Those projects took place outside the regular class of graphic design: the first one was an interchange project between a German high-school in Zülpich; the second, named Tecer Outras Coisas [Weave Other Things] is an art and design ongoing project with unemployed (volunteers), teachers, students and artists in a textile factory (Coelima) in Pevidém (Guimarães, Portugal).

The class displacement took place with the starting point established from the conviction that there is another way of teaching, which does not assume the border positions between subjects and pedagogy, teacher and student: a performative space of construction where students decide and build their own thinking and therefore their project.

We consider two ways of reflexion:

- a) What means a 21st century school? What ideas, concepts, practices, pedagogy's? Who are the professionals, what relations between school and “out of school”?
- b) The case study projects; based on action, how the theoretical research in art education establishes connections to the will and the possibility of change?

### Key words

Artistic education, social sustainability, problem based learning, learn by doing, action-investigation in art and design

### Introduction

The ocular-centrism, the visual culture, or the mediated world are not exclusive phenomena nowadays. However, it becomes increasingly important to understand the paths in which today students are stimulated by multiple devices and interfaces, that operate directly in the modes of subjectivation and construction of knowledge. The projects presented here share this idea and assume themselves as learning experiences through visual projects where the design process is mobilized as a strategy for teaching and learning.

In a school three decades old, born at late 20th century, grounded on a modernist tradition from Bauhaus school, there are signs of willingness shifting to a school of the 21st century, in a will to connect to the breathing of contemporaneity.

Art and Design are eternal candidates to an experimental teaching, becoming a vast territory of essay where learn by doing can be applied. The proposed methodology is an investigation based on action and practice of a communication design project, inside a national curriculum and class program, which is being developed in Árvore School in the last years. This change



and knowledge mobility are the result of mandatory interdisciplinary and the will of the artist-teacher that looks upon reality in a critical way and wishes to build a laboratory space and change its teaching practices. These projects aren't limited in time, they are on-going projects in a school and course that started five years ago.

Today students are stimulated by multiple devices and interfaces and live in a mediated world where knowledge isn't necessarily built in a classroom. The classical confinement of the classroom and school as a protecting entity and a *per se* change of the individual, is something far from today's life. The attractive "outside world" is always coming in the classroom through various interfaces and mechanisms. At the same time Design teaching in particular isn't an accomplished outside reality. Design is an exercise of projecting for the other one, for the needs detected in this world. The teacher is in this mediation of forces with an established program and a mandatory list of goals and competences. The complexity, diversity, interaction and multiplicity of supports are concepts out of the curricular normative structure. But the reality lived in the classroom asks for the need and pressure for change.

When we perspective the teaching-learning process, we are talking about not only knowledge but also, what is still more important, the meaningful result of it. In this process there are three primordial and relational characters: the contents, the context and the personal relationships. The result will thus be the **meaning of the learning**, which is relevant in comparison to the student and to his future career.

Teaching through visual projects that use the the design process as one of the strategies is already widely accepted by the research community in artistic education. The way we are trying to implement and test some of those methods in concrete projects at Artistic and Vocational School Árvore is what we are going to describe here: the dynamic exchange of experiences, the role of the teacher and of the artist, the role of the student and his future career, the gains that can result or not from the teaching-learning process.

## The projects

These projects have in common the change of the normal space of the classroom, its displacement and consequent lesson structure, the subject matters, patterns of work and the interaction with schoolmates and teachers. The projects presented here have different features: the first one (called Zülpich) was developed on the basis of international interchange between EAPA and a high general school where the German students have an integrated component of Art and History of Art. The second project "Tecer Outras Coisas" (Weave Other Things) is a space of dialogue and construction among students, teachers, artists, designers and ex-workers of the textile area as volunteers.

## Zülpich

International interchange projects are implemented to try to connect school to a mediated reality closer to the students in which the English language is a priority. This interchange is part of European School Network (ESN-European School Network <http://www.esnetwork.eu>), which includes several high-schools from various countries: Portugal, Spain, Italy, the Netherlands, Finland, Germany, Poland and Hungary. After putting general and technical matters together, the students are invited to involve themselves in a series of workshop shaped lessons to be taken with colleagues and teachers of other countries.



This project had two meetings, the first one in Portugal (from May 1<sup>st</sup> to 6<sup>th</sup>. 2011) and the second in Germany (from October 1<sup>st</sup> to 8<sup>th</sup>. 2011). Both in Portugal and in Germany the students lived during a week at the host families homes of their mates, which resulted in strengthening links and comparison with other typical family habits and living.

The main goal of this type of activity is to acquire competences at the English language level, the comparison with different teaching systems, to know alternative ways of teaching matters relating to art and design, all of this among other more general goals linked to communication, sociability and knowledge of other realities. The main theme of this interchange was the Art or the Artists of each country. In the Porto workshops the Bauhaus school was the mote to develop a series of typographical monograms with an auto-reflexive feature. The scheme of lessons, contents and times, was previously established by the German teachers by e-mail with the Portuguese teachers. During the Zülpich workshops, poems by Eugénio de Andrade and Porto city pictures were the basis for a composition exercise finalised with an illustration. Every lesson was given in English and brought together in the same classroom students and teachers of both countries and different learning processes.

At the very beginning of the lessons scheme confrontation of opinions took place between teachers and the matters to be developed. In Germany, the History of Art and Design is taught not in a chronological way but in a thematic one. On the contrary, in Portugal we see and teach History of Art through a chronological way of a dialectic and linear analysis of events. The first problem was to organise the Portuguese teachers in order to prepare the students for this different way of approaching matters. The issue of the design of a letter, of the type of letters could thus be the common basis to explain the evolution of the alphabet design, the introduction of modernity and post-modernity in design and composition following the Bauhaus principles. Consequently, matters concerning Drawing, History of Art, Graphic Design, Graphic Workshop and English could work together by interchanging knowledge and devices in the same working place. Gathering in the same workspace several teachers of different origins, learning experience and qualifications, promotes a transforming and knowledge exchange energy. The teacher doesn't know just about his/her working area, he/she must meaningfully develop the knowledge of other matters and exercise continuous updating, either at the technical level of technological use or facing the contents of other matters and new themes of common interest. In Portugal, before the arrival of German students and teachers, there were several meetings to prepare teachers in which the ongoing matters were "taught" in order that everybody could get the same information level. In spite of the whole process being monitored by the teachers involved, the students had the freedom of choosing the paths of their investigation and production, whether or not working alone, defining the final target and the production procedures.

In Germany, poetry of Eugénio de Andrade was the starting point for a workshop about illustration. Posters about the city of Porto, about the poems and the work of some illustrators were the tools for lessons and workshop. Once again, students had the freedom of choosing the paths of their investigation and production, whether or not working alone, defining the final target and the production procedures. They searched about fruits and dance (as it was the poems theme), experience textures, smells and movements. They could use any type of materials within the following structure: first they search, second they choose, finally they do and explain why.

It is not simple to show the practical results of these workshops as they are just artifacts, a number of illustrations and compositions. Though the work proposals included the construction of objects, this is was not the main goal. In Art the deepest results are not always the most noticeable.



Back to the main theme, the “out-of-place” classroom, the main question placed by this project is the learning made not exclusively inside the school but in a different educational and cultural environments, where similarities and differences are countable. The self-reflexive process of students and teachers involved in this experience is the most important conclusion. “After all, they are not so different from us”, it was commonly said. To play our practices down and give room to students to build and show their projects as an individual affirmation and a contribution from and to the collective was the goal. This project showed how an artistic project can be the motor and partner of cooperation, of the cultural, communicational and personal development of everyone concerned, students and teachers. It promoted the cultural diversity, the respect for the other, citizenship, and also developed enjoyment for diversity of artistic and cultural expressions.

### Weave Other Things

The project “Weave Other Things” is located in a room of the textile factory Coelima, in a small town named Pevidém, near Guimarães in the north of Portugal. It has resulted from the will of an artist and also teacher at EAPA, Max Fernandes, to make a clearly artistic project which would be self-sustainable supported by the Borough and Town Councils, and that could bring together the *Árvore* school (teachers and students), volunteers (ex-workers of the textile industry and living in the borough) and artists or designers. It is a passionate project to its creator and all participants. Everyone is there by personal will and with a big wish of learning-teaching. The students take part in this project inside the curricular training and internship, in full-time during four weeks, 8 hours a day. They are requested to talk, interact and build together with the volunteers and artists, accordingly to their needs. First, students search for a “problem”, something that the village may need. Afterwards, they define the methodology and concept they will implement to attain the outlined target. Volunteers also help defining strategies and methodologies within their area of expertise or just by giving their opinion. Volunteers have an active and assumed role, sometimes very technical, “mechanical” and repetitive as they did in the past when worked in the factory, as well as they became actors in the “action”, determining the thrust of design projects.

The teacher’s traditional role gets another dimension. He/her becomes a “guide” in the search and project, someone who follows the student project, guides him/her and leads him/her to make decisions based on individual responsibility and ethics. There are relations built and changed, not by teacher’s imposition but by discoveries and the will of walking a common path, that of the student with the teacher. To the teacher there is also a change concerning the knowledge issues and the control of his/her matter, once there is no longer the normal domination ground but the possibility of reaching distant territories. Without a defined object or target, the volunteers and students must decide, make choices and turn an idea into a concept. Students and volunteers sometimes become teachers, when they share experiences and knowledge by exchanging the information they know. Everything, decisions and creations, is made in group. “Non-formality is a fragility”, says Max Fernandes. I believe this fragility can be transformed into a quality once it opens creation to the unexpected, to the casual, even to the mistake, thus creating a huge open ground of possibilities. In a non-strict environment, not controlled by an entity nor author dependent, the presence of the collective is permanent and gives place to a healthy creative energy without leadership, subordinates or hierarchy, promoting the common will to create, do and learn. It promotes an affective relationship between all without formal commitments, provides a common environment will and the exchange of experiences not only in the professional field, as life stories are told, dramatized and explored. Without the logic of productivity and reproduction in series like a



traditional textile factory does, fashion collections for children and adults, publications and artworks were produced for the town.

The main feature of this very original project is the premise of social sustainability, of communitarian project bringing together generations and individuals with complementary knowledge from different areas and levels. It is clearly an artistic and design project with a real connection to community and school: people learn and teach each other; an unique relation among volunteers, students and teachers/artists or designers arises; a place of experiences and independence through everyone's action bearing in mind the collective as first objective is born.

### Conclusion

The questions mentioned at the beginning – a) what is the meaning of the “21st century school” concept?; b) based on action, how should the theoretical research in art education connect to the will and the possibility of change? – didn't get direct and clear answers, but they can point out paths and clues. In a first analysis, these projects are valuable in terms of communicational, generational and cultural identity issues. However, in a deeper analysis, one of the main paths will be the universal access to the artistic matters based on an ethical, critical and self-reflexive sense, in a multi-subject route and in the construction of a multi-task project. The graphic design class should be a constant reflection about the process, the conscience about the world around us and the concern about the individual in relation to the community, never forgetting the tradition and the past as learning tools for the unpredictable future. The built artifact becomes secondary and is just a pretext of interconnection and construction of affective group relations. It is no longer tied to authorial and individualist issues so common in a certain time of modernity. Concern for shape gives room to the importance and clarity of the process. The result shows the chosen route, firstly of study and approach and developing methodologies and open techniques out of the restrict borders of art or of design. Visual intelligence, the sense of criticism and self-criticism, ethic sensibility and aesthetics intuition will grow in face of images and visuality.

In relation to teachers, artists and designers, the changing agents, it is necessary to reformulate a more flexible and comprehensive curriculum with the matters concerning the work by and with all professionals, by opposition to the usual individualization of teaching and practice. This attitude implies a constant updating, reflection and self-criticism, as well as more responsibility and sensibility for art, community and citizenship issues. It is very important to understand the environment where the school is located or where it may operate, to act on it without forgetting local traditions and culture and looking at the future with technological, aesthetics and social change as the goal to be attained.

The school and design workshop leave their usual space and explore the whole world around. A design project implies that the creator should search and know his/her target-public, as well as the social and cultural features where it is implemented, and its ethical and conceptual issues.

Art is contextualised, domain borders are scarcely defined, and focus is given to contents over shape or aspect. The integration of art with other matters happens accordingly to this way of thinking. In art the relationship of ideas with shapes attains the doing. The construction of a project must be based on the crossing of concepts, ideas and experimentation.





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## An aesthetic approach to new technology

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### Abstract

Is digital creativity affected by gender norms? This paper aims to investigate girls as creative developers of the Internet and new technology. Information has been collected through interviews with female students, artists, project managers and entrepreneurs. As the investigation of digital creativity and gender has progressed, a hypothesis has emerged, namely that girls frequently have an aesthetic approach to new technology. Girls choose to learn some new technology because they want to use the technology in order to achieve something else, and their goal often have aesthetic preferences. The issue of girls learning technology, becoming technical, is clearly more complicated than one might first think in relation to gender norms. Expressions of technical knowhow or innovation that are not in line with the predominant male norm easily become invisible. Creative girls who undergo education within the digital field can easily end up in a situation where they must first work with equality and become entrepreneurs in order to have a chance to practice their profession.

### Keywords

Gender, ICT, learning

### Digital gender

Fashion blogs or forums for game development on the internet – which shall I choose? The question may appear to be superfluous – of course I will choose the sites that contain information and discussions about the topic I am most interested in, whether it is fashion or games development. But what happens if I, as a female, am interested in game development and there are basically only males on the game development sites? Will I be accepted by the boys? Do we have something in common through our interest in game development? Do we share a common view of what constitutes a good game or what would be an even better game? Are we going to understand each other?

The questions that arise are not a unique feature of the Internet; the same pattern or problem is also found in homosocial contexts in real life (IRL). The problem is seen distinctly on the Internet because the net is supposed to be a disembodied social meeting place (Hayles, 1999) and therefore it ought to be easier for us to put our gender, age and cultural identity to one side in order to treat each other more equally. During the early days of Internet's development, such utopian hopes were expressed by e.g. Sherry Turkle (1995) and Donna Haraway (1991). However, studies have shown that our behaviour on the Internet is not very different from our behaviour IRL (Sveningsson Elm 2007; A. Hirdman, 2006; 2007).

The way we behave when communicating on the net though, even when we are not physically visible or audible, can reveal more about our identity than we ourselves can imagine (Suler, 2005; Dunkels, 2009). Social codes that we are not even aware of can expose us. The symbolic or cultural capital, habitus, which, according to the French sociologist Pierre



Bourdieu (1979), we always carry with us, affects our possibilities to choose which roles we are able to take on in a convincing way both on the Internet and in a physical setting. The question of which places on the Internet we can conquer and make our own is therefore more complicated than simply being a matter of our interests; different social norms, like for instance gender norms, are of significance for our freedom of choice.

As a researcher, it may be difficult to see anything other than the patterns or pictures one expects to see, so in order to make the invisible visible one must perhaps also make the actual seeing visible (Haraway, 1991). This is why norm critical theories and postmodern feminist analysis (Lykke, 2010) have become so important for the analysis and problematizing of this work. According to postmodern feminist theory, one of the fundamental thoughts behind the term **gender** (the term often used nowadays instead of “sex role”) is that identity is negotiable and is formed and created through everyday actions that are continually repeated (Butler, 1990). In Swedish it can be expressed as **doing gender** (Ambjörnsson, 2004). When someone breaches gender norms, we often find it provocative. In particular, men who deviate from male gender stereotype patterns are often subjected to comments about a presumed non-heterosexual orientation (Connell, 2002). This is how our culture’s heteronormativity affects our freedom of choice when it comes to interests or professions through the identity-forming process (Ambjörnsson, 2010).

It may seem strange that e.g. an interest in fashion or technology could be linked to sexuality but when we **do gender** we use the principle of **keeping apart** in order to set up a **gender order**. Another fundamental idea within contemporary gender theory is that we create differences between the sexes by categorizing male and female characteristics in a state of opposition to each other (Harding 1986, Y. Hirdman, 1990; 2007). For example, according to **gender order logic**, being **technical** is a male trait as long as it is not a female trait. If more women would become technical, there is a risk that the **dichotomist order** that is based on male and female traits being each other’s opposites, will begin to break up. The consequence being that **technical** could no longer be regarded as a male trait. By the same logic, a prerequisite of masculinity is that a **man is not a woman**. Distancing oneself from anything that can be associated with femininity is a way of **doing male gender** (Lykke, 2010).

According to the Media Council (2010), girls who use the Internet are more focused on **communication** although this is a conclusion that could be challenged. Being active on blogs and in social forums is a way of communicating but playing online is also a form of communication (Linderöth & Olsson, 2010).

Why are girls and boys attracted by these seemingly different forms of socializing and communication on the Internet? Socializing through online gaming is generally done in real time; communication is direct; it is created and then disappears again instantly. However, the words or pictures that make up the communication in a blog live on and this requires more consideration by the person who is communicating. It would appear that it is more common for girls than boys to consider in advance how the things one says and does will be perceived by others (A. Hirdman 2006; Sveningsson Elm, 2009). Perhaps it is a reflection of gender norms that, generally speaking, more females than males write blogs while more boys than girls prefer to play or develop games on the Internet, which has been shown through the statistical investigations of what young people do on the Internet, conducted regularly by the Swedish Media Council (Findahl & Zimic, 2008).

In order to find out more about digital gender norms and how young women view themselves as the producers of pictures on the net, in the spring of 2010, I began to interview girls studying the aesthetic upper secondary school programmes which resulted in a paper called **Blog pictures** (Morén, 2010). In order to gain a deeper and wider perspective of the



significance of gender as regards creative girls' entry into the field of digital technology, in the autumn of 2010 I began doing interviews with two university college students and with five women who were gainfully employed. They all worked with the Internet and digital technology. Two of the informants were studying at art college; another was a game designer and researcher; one worked as a photographer and pedagogue; one of the interviewees was a sound artist; two worked as project managers within digital culture and media.

### Blog norms

According to the upper secondary girls I interviewed, fashion bloggers are young girls who can earn money on their blogs because many people follow them. The girls I interviewed expressed respect for certain fashion bloggers, for instance, those who blogged about design rather than just about fashion, and who expressed themselves in a personal way. Other fashion bloggers were described with some contempt because they were superficial, self-centred and provocative. There seems to be links to the **normative feminine ideals**, identified by the English anthropologist Beverly Skeggs (1997) in her studies of how young girls behave in order to become **respectable**. Some of these female ideals are moderation, control, empathy and caution. Some of the bloggers seem to live up to these ideals while other bloggers appear to provoke them in a challenging way which can bring on different kinds of attention from their readers. Generally speaking, it seems that fashion bloggers receive more positive comments and are more respected the closer they stay to the normative feminine ideals, but if they deviate from that norm, they may sometimes attract a larger number of readers.

Commenting is an important part of the blog culture. The upper secondary school girls I interviewed said that they regularly comment on other people's pictures and blogs, not just those belonging to their closest friends. One of the girls described to me how **the commenting** itself can be used as a creative tool for building up networks where one's own blog is strategically woven into part of a larger social network.

Upper secondary pupil: "I often comment on blogs so that people will look at my blog (...) the whole point is for me to become known (laughs). On blogs I want to, well, the whole point is for me to get comments, not for me to make comments, and so I look at someone's blog and make a comment. In order for them to see that I have been there and read it, I'll write: "Good blog, point, good contribution" and then if I see a phrase "Kent is great", then I'll write "Oh, yes, Kent is really great" as a comment. I don't need to comment on the Picture Diary because there you can see that I have looked at the picture."

The strategy of commenting works by a person attracting new readers to his or her own blog; it's a way of building up and extending one's own network.

According to the Swedish gender researcher, Fanny Ambjörnsson (2004), the **homosocial** reflecting of one's self, the need to be compared, assessed and appreciated by other girls, is a typical feature of young women's forming of identity. In fashion blogs, identity is often manifested through fashion, culinary culture or an interest in design (Saxbo, 2010). Girls mostly read other girls' blogs and the upper secondary school pupils I interviewed mentioned this phenomenon more or less in the passing, as if they had not really reflected much about why this was so; it was simply the case that girls in general are more interested in other girls' pictures and narratives. Even though the Internet is a completely new social field that is characterized by irrationality, fragmentation and the breaking up of traditional hierarchies (Lindgren, 2009), it would nevertheless seem that most of the youngsters who present themselves on the net endeavour to appear to be as normal as possible in relation to prevailing



gender norms (Sveningsson Elm, 2009).

The feminine gender norm appears to encompass certain human traits but exclude others that do not seem to fit, for instance, outgoing self-confidence or physical aggression. The traits that do not fit in with femininity must be either concealed or be expressed in a different way. Girls have special **code words** which are used to set up behaviour norms among themselves in a homosocial female network. When girls say that other girls “think that they are somebody”, this is an example of that type of coded message (Simmons, 2002). According to Simmons, girls can contribute to the maintaining of the gender order by actively repressing each other’s self-assertion with the help of various behaviour norms, which results in girls often being forced to conceal the very behaviour they need in order to be successful. Female fashion bloggers risk being subjected to double punishment: partly sexist oppression from males in the form of negative comments, partly contemptuous **coded messages** from other girls. This is perhaps because as female entrepreneurs they are self-assured, outgoing and self-assertive and these are traits that do not fit into the feminine norm.

### Identity Online

But why do girls and boys choose different forms of socialising on the net? Why do these homosocial environments arise and why is it so hard to enter the other party’s social room? One banal explanation why so few girls take part in multi-player online games could be that the games do not have many characters with whom the girls can or want to identify themselves, something a project manager whom I interviewed pointed out to me.

Project manager: ”But when it comes to how one creates, attitudes to gender roles, and how beauty ideals are maintained or that type of thing, I believe we must look more carefully at the games that are consumed today, what most of them are like, because they help to maintain ideals that people in other contexts are trying to break down. If one is always going to portray female game characters as “busty dames”, then we are not going to get very far in our discussions about the equal worth of men and women generally and how we are going to overcome objectification and other such matters. This is going to be difficult if one of the most popular forms of entertainment is still in the 1800s when it comes to outlook on people.”

Even if girls can ignore the fact that there is no character with whom they can identify themselves in the gaming world, there still remain some other problems for the girls who choose to take part in multi-player games, above all different forms of discrimination and sexualisation on the grounds of assumed gender (Linderoth & Olsson, 2010). Gender related discrimination appears to be a common occurrence when females are in a male dominated setting (Faulkner, 2001; Hedlin, 2009), no matter whether it’s on the net or IRL.

Changing one’s gender identity is a strategy sometimes used by girls playing multi-player games online in order to avoid discrimination. Endeavouring to be **one of the boys** is a relatively common strategy used by women in male-dominated environments IRL (Wajcman, 1999; Salminen Karlsson, 2003). Although research in recent times has shown that the net is a rather normative place (Sveningsson Elm 2009; A. Hirdman 2010) there may be much to be discovered and learnt about precisely norms and gender by experimenting with different identities online. Several of my informants have devoted themselves to the artistic examination of the making of gender and the creating of identity on the net. One of the upper secondary school girls I interviewed told how she had spent several years studying gender-crossing digital identities in different social forums on the Internet. She described how she was treated completely differently depending on whether her **fake user** was as a girl or a boy.





My informant also described how her experiences as different fictive characters had given her new insights into human relationships and inspiration to create characters in her manuscript writing.

Upper secondary school pupil: "I suppose that is why you develop so much on the Internet too, because you learn how people react, and how people develop, and how people behave as well. So then you perhaps start to think about that more and in that way you yourself change in the way you write and show pictures and so on."

Even if a digital change of identity only works in certain ways, it is still a strategy that can give new insights into how identity is created and how normative prejudices work. One of the art students I interviewed told me about an artistic project that she had worked on for some years where she created a persona on the Internet that was partly fictive. During that period of her life, her artistic work was made visible solely on the net. With the help of pictures and narratives, she explored the field in order to create identity and myths about the persona.

Art college student: "The whole point of this project is that it is just me, but "just me" must also encompass the person that "I could be or could become".

However, some experience of life is needed in order to successfully change gender or identity digitally. It is difficult for young people playing multi-player games online to fool older friends on the net that they are the same age as them. They rapidly expose themselves because of their lack of social competence. However it does seem possible for a female player in her late teens or older to play under a false male identity without being exposed. The reason why girls choose to do a digital gender swap is because otherwise, as a minority group in online game environments, they will be discriminated against (Linderoth & Olsson, 2009) One disadvantage of concealing their female identity could be the risk that playing and socializing will then be on entirely male normative terms.

### Aesthetic Technology

In contemporary Swedish online education it seems fairly to be easy to attract female students to courses in digital image processing. Perhaps because they are able to use this technology when they photo blog? However, fewer female students apply for courses in multimedia or programming. According to several of my informants, girls prefer a planned route of learning with a set objective in sight.

Photographer: "I like to think that I myself am quite representative of my sex (gender). I think that boys/men are better at experimenting their way forward and testing things out while girls/women tend to want to know what to do before they start."

Girls seem to need a goal in order to feel that learning technology is meaningful. When it comes to digital technology, it would appear that the goal is often artistic and the technology is a way of achieving aesthetic expression rather than being a goal in itself. Seen from a norm critical perspective, one might assume that there is no gender normative advantage of learning technology only for its own sake, within the stereotype feminine norm. For boys however, it may be worthwhile learning the technology without asking why or wondering what use they will have of the technology. In the male hegemonic (dominating) gender norm, technological knowhow is an important trait (Connell, 1995). Boys are expected to understand all kinds of technological equipment simply because it is part of being masculine. That is why many boys, on their own initiative, read through camera manuals or books about programming (Nissen, 1993). It is also common for people to expect that men will spontaneously be able to explore



technically advanced equipment without supervision and understand it, as if technical know-how is a natural male trait (Mellström, 1999).

When girls write, take photographs and process their pictures in order to put them on the net, they often present a picture of their life that has been adapted and put right (Sveningsson Elm, 2009). Girls seem to make gender by communicating and confirming cultural similarity thereby creating the networks that are an important part of the process of forming a feminine identity (Ambjörnsson, 2004). Feminine identity is formed on the net in relation to other users, through texts and images, where expression of style and taste are continually commented on, reflected and approved by, in the first instance, other girls. During the first half of the 19th century, femininity was linked to **beauty** and different forms of aesthetic expression by an emphasis on appearance and a demand for gracefulness (Skeggs, 1997). The homosocial network seems to be confirmed by young girls showing each other that they are well informed about what the German 19th century philosopher Immanuel Kant called “beauty”. According to Kant, **beauty** is beautiful in more or less the same way as an object that is suited to its purpose; it possesses a **necessary** delight. However that which is beautiful lacks purpose since it is not intended to be of any **use**. According to Kant, beauty is founded on an **aesthetic** judgement that is not logical (Kant, 1792).

Aesthetic preferences or an interest in beauty seems to be an important part of the feminine making of gender. If one uses the dichotomist model for how gender is constructed, where gender is made through differences and opposites, then a lack of interest in beauty, not caring about something’s appearance, or holding the opinion that functionality is the most important aspect, could be linked to masculinity. But perhaps beauty and function are dependent on each other? Such ideas were expressed back in the 19th century by designer and utopian William Morris in the English Art and Crafts movement. Could it perhaps even be the case that some people find it difficult to use a digital tool that is **not beautiful**, that has been created without considering aesthetic preferences, or where too much attention has been paid to function instead of form? Some of my informants described how they had chosen not to use functional technology precisely because it was ugly or boring.

Art college student I: “But I really wasn’t that interested either; I think it was mostly a question of – aesthetic resistance, everything in the computer was so ugly, it was a laptop, I think it had a lot to do with the fact that I thought everything was so incredibly ugly!” (laughs)

Art college student I: “It was so incredibly ugly and I couldn’t hide it away and there were not very many choice options either”.

Art college student II: “No, exactly.”

Art college student I: “What it should look like and so on.”

Art college student II: “Exactly.”

Art college student I: “Yuk!” (laughs)

Art college student II: “Yeah, yuk! (laughs).

I call my hypothesis **aesthetic technology** a term inspired by the American psychologist Sherry Turkle. In the 1980s, when Turkle studied children who did programming, she discovered differences in how boys and girls thought and related to the computer. It emerged that the girls had a different approach to the machines: they attached greater value to any personal features of the program which meant they made use of bugs or allowed errors to remain since they made the program and the computer more alive. According to Turkle (1984), the girls used an **aesthetic style of programming**; they thought more like artists and



created programs where the code was just as sophisticated as the boys' code but with completely different solutions. As an intellectual experiment, if we try not to either belittle or idealise the traits or interests that are associated with normative femininity, perhaps we can instead find new approaches to how girls do in fact handle technology, how they assess, develop and try to improve existing technology, for example by using it in new ways, in ways that the technology was not intended for initially.

### How do girls learn new technology?

With some prejudice, it can be said that girls learn new technology by asking for help while boys look for the answers themselves on the net. In a learning situation, it is sometimes apparent that boys and girls use different strategies when it comes to learning new technology. Males tend to spend more time *thinking*, playfully investigating new interfaces on their own (Burnett et al. 2011). Girls are more focused on learning through a dialogue than boys are (Staberg, 1992). Several of the women I interviewed, who themselves have experience from running courses, describe this phenomenon of different learning strategies.

Project manager: "What I said earlier, that girls are more quick to ask for help, they want a dialogue-discussion, but if I do this, what happens then? While at the same course there may be a boy who searches for and finds four tutorials and goes through them so as not to have to ask the teacher, so he can find his own way so to speak."

For some reason, it seems to be more difficult for girls to take the initiative to search themselves for answers on the net. However, several of the girls I talked to described how liberating it was to suddenly realize that all the information they need is in fact available on the net without having to ask someone for help. Perhaps it is a matter of habit, insight or being informed; perhaps it is a matter of changing gender-linked stereotype patterns of learning.

Art college student: "But it was a vital moment for me, that he actually explained some things to me so I could understand, that there is so much information out there on the Internet and, well, just to have a go and keep at it."

Sol: "Did he teach you to search for tutorials or the like or in a forum?"

Art college student: "Yes, that sort of thing. For instance he said something, although I often forget this, but he said that if you Google a question, someone has usually already asked the same question and someone else has answered it, yeah, that's right, that's how it can be. Another example, it's not a matter of being good at it and knowing everything all at once, which is how I think I perceived it all, and then sort of realizing that everything is out there, waiting to be learnt."

The girls who were interviewed also described how they were often recommended to search for answers themselves on the net instead of asking for help by male partners or close friends, but they also received support from other women. One of the art students described how she was allowed to borrow a studio with technical equipment such as cameras, computers and printers from an older female artist colleague. The student described how much it meant to her that someone showed confidence in her when she was going to use the technology. She described how she had asked her older colleague for help in order to learn the program but she was given an encouraging answer which amounted to "you'll manage that yourself".

Art college student: "I got really scared but it was so cool that she said that because it was as if she really believed that I would be able to do it and it really took a lot for me to dare to try it out, that I wasn't useless."

However, getting stuck and having technical problems seems to be a rather common occurrence when people try to teach themselves and do not have support, and the gender-



related expectations that girls are not able to learn new technology take over. The female game designer whom I interviewed told me that it is very common for girls to drop out of the game design study programmes before graduating and very few girls apply for and get a job within the field after completing their studies. She also told me about her experiences from her time as a game design student. The study programme included a course in programming. When it emerged that she, a female student, did not get going with the programming as fast as the boys did (many of them had previous experience of the field), she was not given any extra pedagogical help. She told me that she decided to drop out of the programming course because it felt meaningless to sit through lessons where the level of teaching was way above the level she was at. When she told the course leaders that she was considering dropping out of the course, they supported her in her decision and explained that even if she did not do that course, she would still pass the study programme as a whole.

There are studies that show that expectations from teachers and other pupils influence to a high degree how pupils perform (Skolinspektionen, 2010). In this case, we must consider what expectations we have as regards women's technical knowhow and how that affects girls doing game design study programmes. Another informant described her experiences from a study programme in stage technology. Every time she had a technical problem and asked for help, she had to point out that she wanted to be taught how to solve the problem; otherwise the teachers just quickly solved the technical problem for her without telling her how it was done. With that sort of pedagogy, asking for help does not result in any learning process, and if boys are used to being treated like that by their technology teacher, it is not surprising that they prefer to search for answers to problems themselves.

### Digital Gender order

One of the problems with digital technology equality is that women perhaps view technology in a different way from men and women's views and ideas about technology are often ignored. But it is not only men who maintain the gender order; much of the resistance to change lies with the women's own view of themselves (Bourdieu, 1998). Reducing or belittling one's own competence is a common expression of female subordination and this happens at a subconscious level. When I asked my female informants to describe their technical knowhow, the answers I received indicated that they themselves do not rate their knowledge very highly. This is something that is apparent in both students' and professionals' descriptions of their own technical knowhow.

Sound artist: "I have tried now and again to make time to learn, well, a little more CSS style sheets (...) I also use Max MSP quite a lot."

Sol: "Yes but that's programming, isn't it?"

Sound artist: "Yes, but, yes, it is, but I mean it's a visual, yes, it is, yes, yes but it is programming."

Sol: - "Visual programming. Was that difficult to learn?"

Sound artist: "Yes, I only know a little, but you do learn, there are many, many examples, you look at examples and so on."

Women in our society handle and use technology daily but, generally speaking, women do not describe their own competence as being particularly technical (Hedlin, 2009), perhaps precisely because technology has such a strong link to masculinity (Mellström, 1999). Masculine and feminine traits are rated differently and a hierarchical gender order often means female competence and female-dominated fields are belittled (Y. Hirdman, 1990;



2007). There have been some pedagogical attempts to teach female students technology by letting them spend some time in special women classes. But although girls studying technology learn more and perform better in a homosocial learning environment, they nevertheless choose not to continue because the study programme has lower status and there is a risk that employers will view it as being inferior (Salminen Karlsson, 2003; Olofsdotter Bergström, 2009). One of the girls I interviewed expressed similar anxiety that the hierarchical gender order could lead to courses intended only for girls being marked as inferior to courses that are aimed at both girls and boys.

Project manager: "Perhaps it is more a case of us talking about the difficulties and thereby creating them by talking about them than it is the problems actually existing; if we were to say that, that it is done, that it feels like, that in my work it has been important to, to support people without excluding them, I guess I can say, well, do you understand what I mean? Sometimes when we use special measures aimed at girls, the only thing we achieve is to create a group (...) it's not always that good..."

Sol: "Can you give an example of such a special measure?"

Project manager: "Well, if we do, like, if we do Photoshop for Girls, well, just as an example, I'm not saying anyone has done this but sometimes it can be worded in such a strange way, these courses. Photoshop for Girls – come and learn and see how it's done and we run the course at a really basic level, then you have created, well then you've sort of made it clear that the pupils are not going to learn much, we going to do things really slowly, and there will not be much opportunity to advance, well, then, in some way you've marked the whole group or sort of stigmatized the entire group, even though the aim was to help them, do you see what I mean?"

Generally speaking, girls are not prepared to attend technology schools for girls even though they would actually learn more (Salminen Karlsson, 2003; Hedlin, 2009). The problem is probably a structural dilemma where female-dominated areas are awarded lower status in accordance with the principle of hierarchical gender order. Male gender coding also constitutes a hierarchical symbolic order. This means that a masculine coded field is rated higher than a feminine coded field and there is a risk that a field will be weakened and lose status when women begin to encroach on it (Hedlin, 2009). Men who work within a masculine coded field easily end up in a situation where they join forces to defend their field from intruders, and this defence is often at a subconscious level without them even having to think or talk about it; it is almost instinctive (Cockburn, 1983).

Computers are nice, clean machines that do not make a noise and you do not have to be strong in order to hack codes. Even so, most of the computer gaming industry is populated by men; in 2009, 90 % of the employees in the Swedish industry were males (Lindell, 2010). Because the gaming industry is a field that is advancing very strongly financially, there are different groups of people who are keen to see more girls consuming and producing games. Some of the girls I interviewed played, developed or did research on digital games. One topic that came up during our discussions was the strong masculine gender code that prevails in the field, both in the design and concept of the games and in the digital gaming industry's corporate culture.

The gaming industry can be viewed as part of the larger field of technology, which has traditionally been regarded as a masculine field, just like the field of natural sciences (Berner, 1997; 2003). One way of studying male-dominated fields is to see them as **power fields**, an approach adopted by the French sociologist Michael Foucault (1977). Power fields are constructed and preserved by a certain group of people marking out a field in various ways as being their territory, in relation to **the others** who do not fit in. There are many different factors that make it hard for girls to penetrate a male-dominated area. Even though young





girls are often just as interested in technology as young boys are (Staberg, 2002), it is more difficult for them to retain and fit their interest in technology into the normative femininity that they are expected to adapt to as they go through puberty and enter the adult world.

Through my interviews I have met several women who have been very interested in working within the field of creative digital technology. When their childhood and adolescence were mentioned, it was apparent that they had had committed parents who had supported and encouraged their interest in technology. These women have had a lot of self-confidence and have completed technical study programmes. After finishing their education, they have applied for jobs in the field but then they have been treated with polite scepticism and, after many interviews and some project work, they have not been able to establish themselves in the field with the help of any existing companies. In order to be able to do any kind of work at all connected to their studies, these women have instead been forced to set up their own organisation, often with the help of other women in a similar situation. Several of the girls I have talked to have ended up in the role of project manager. Instead of working in the field of creative, new technology which is what they had studied to do, they had to start off by trying to create the necessary prerequisites for women to be able to enter the labour market. It would appear that having personal experience of gender discrimination can at best be a starting point for women to initiate equality projects and act as entrepreneurs.

## Conclusion

The gender norms that prevail in society appear to be reflected in the net cultures of young people. The communication of girls and boys on the Internet is manifested in different forms of socializing, linked to homosocial gender norms, even though the net is a meeting place that is disembodied. Boys dominate online gaming environments where there is a risk that male heteronormative values will exclude girls on sexist grounds.

Girls dominate the blogosphere where blogging could be viewed as a new type of female entrepreneurship with users who continually develop new creative strategies for network communication. As work with *Can you see me now?* has progressed, a hypothesis has developed, namely that girls often have an aesthetic approach to technology. Girls choose to learn technology because they want to use the technology to do something else and their goal is often based on aesthetic preferences. One example is digital photos within the blog culture where young girls learn how to edit their digital images in order to make the pictures more attractive. It has proven to be more difficult than one might first imagine for women to learn about technology and become technical. The problems are linked to the crossing of gender norms and are manifested in a number of ways. When it comes to technical knowhow, there are normative expectations regarding how such knowhow is to be expressed and therefore when knowledge or innovations are expressed in a way that is not in line with the dominant norm, they are frequently made invisible. The female creators whom I have interviewed have all had a lot of experience of working in masculine gender coded fields such as digital technology, web development and the gaming industry but even so they do not describe themselves as being particularly technical. Girls who study within the field of creative digital technology are often forced to begin by working with equality instead of being able to practice their profession since it is hard for them to establish themselves in the existing male-dominated corporate culture. At best they become entrepreneurs who, together with other female creators, run innovative projects which expand the field. My hope is that the result of this work will contribute to this new growing field of research where questions concerning gender and creative digital technology will be problematized.



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## Learning outside of school, developing a creative collaboration and the use of film in the project “Adriatic fish and sailing ships”

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### Abstract

The author presents the project “Adriatic fish”, in which 220 children, aged between 11 and 14, from a primary school Jesenice Dugi Rat near Split took part. The aim of this project was to show that children can learn and creatively collaborate outside of school, in their surroundings, by finding natural forms (of stones) on the beach. Learning how to observe and recognize the shapes around them, they acquire the skills of research and creating by combining materials (stones and wire). Throughout this project students learned about the species of Adriatic fish. This project helped to develop children’s observation skills and also encouraged creative collaboration between students. A short animated film used in this project to show their work will be presented. The film is accompanied by music and the sounds of the sea, waves, seagulls and children’s voices. This research confirms that children’s creativity is boundless and that it can be further developed by the use of combined materials. Some children’s work was so successful that one cannot tell the difference between their work and the work of the teacher/artist who used the same technique. (Times New Roman, Fond size 11, Italics)

### Key words

Film, learning outside of school, combined materials, creativity

### Introduction

This project is an example of how art pedagogue creative management and staying outdoors can yield some great results with students aged 11 – 14. The objective was to encourage students to search for different kind of stones shaped like fish and sailing boats and then model them with wire and pliers. We consider that the objective had been entirely accomplished because through this project student successfully learned about art observation and developed their creativity. The success of the project is additionally confirmed by acknowledgments granted to children for their work. Also, four exhibitions were successfully realized in Dugi Rat, Split, Podstrana and Zagreb. These exhibitions were the best indicator of children's limitless imagination.

**The creative work process on Adriatic fish and sailing ships in elementary school**  
(All subtitles: Times New Roman, Fond size 12, Bold)

I had a chance to work with children from 5th to 8th grade in Jesenice primary school, Dugi Rat, in 1999-2000. The school is situated between the towns of Omiš and Split, in North Dalmatia. In art classes, I started to practice out-of-classroom teaching in natural surroundings, which proved to be very stimulating. At the same school in autumn 1999, I



launched a project Adriatic fish with fifth graders, and eventually children from other grades (6th to 8th grade) also joined in. A total of 220 children participated in this project.



Images 1 and 2: Sixth grade students from Primary school Jesenice Dugi Rat with their fish and sailing ships for which they received Acknowledge for creativity at Literary/Art Contest Sea is my mirror in municipality Podstrana

Considering that school was a 5-minute walking distance from the sea shore, this encouraged me to replace the school benches with learning outdoors. On the beach, pupils were searching for stones that looked like fish from our sea. Stones in the shape of a groper, a white fish, a goat fish, cipla fish, pilchard and other fish became a new incentive for learning about types of fish and art shaping. After returning to their classrooms, the pupils made their own creative fish simply with a selected stone from the beach, combining it with copper wire of different thickness and pliers, using the technique of bending the wire, without the use of any kind of glue. Over 200 pebbles were collected from the local beaches and formed with the use of wire and imagination.



Images 3 and 4: Fish – works of seventh grade students from Primary school Jesenice Dugi rat

#### Four exhibitions of student works - fish and sailing ships

The first exhibition of these art pieces made outside the school walls, called *Hand that holds the world*, was held for the Independence Day in 1999 in St. Joseph Gallery. Among various art pieces, fish and sailing ships made from wire and stones were predominant. The exhibition was organized under the sponsorship of Municipality Dugi Rat. The exhibition was officially opened by Mayor Sijetlana Ećim, and presented by Ivka Žilić, a teacher and mentor of arts culture.



Image 5: Students with their works in school cabinet

To the question ‘What is art?’, pupils gave answers like ‘...nicer perception of reality’ (Ivan Galonja, 7th grade); ‘...a pattern on paper’ (Marina Zeljković, 5th grade); ‘...hand that holds the world’ (Marija Šušić, 5th grade), ‘...a gift from God’ (Andreja Petrić, 8th grade), ‘...life’ (Grgo Zečić, 6th grade), ‘...the beauty of the world’ (Frane Kalebić, 5th grade).



Image 6: Prefect of municipality Dugi Rat Svjetlana Ećim opened the students' exhibition at St. Joseph's Gallery

In smaller places like this one, children do not have a chance to visit a museum or gallery as part of their art class because school is far from a town, but children’s creativity can be developed outside classrooms, adapting to the environment. Jesenice primary school is situated in Oriž, Primorska Poljica, near a village Krilo, specific for its gradual development and expansion of a specific fleet of wooden sailing ships and ships for transportation of market goods and sand for building Split and surrounding areas on the coast and the islands. Today, Krilo is the head harbour with the largest number of wooden sailing ships in Croatia. Considering that, it is obvious why the project had such good response among the children and why they were glad to get involved in this creative process. They showed a great deal of imagination and creativity in their works. Their works were pieces of sun, the sand and the sea, pieces of the world grown on the living tradition of our homeland: fisherman, manual workers, seamen and sailors. Eventually this technique (with wire and stones) was applied in building sailing ships and sand transportation ships, typical for this area. Some pupils worked independently, while some worked in groups of four students, encouraging creative cooperation. Some of their works were 70 centimetres long and weighed 70 kilograms. Art pieces of fish and little ships received a special award for creativity at literary and art competition The sea is my mirror of Podstrana Municipality in 2000.



Images 7 and 8: Awarded sailing ships made from stone and wire, work of eight grade students

The idea is the core of everything so the process of creation had already started on the beach, while the pupils were searching for stones, selecting their shapes. Artists consciously create their works, driven by their need for expressing the richness of the inner world. Guided by the magic of complete freedom, children create unconsciously, so they can easily present original, expressive works in their quest for personal answers about art, thus becoming an inspiration for artists themselves.



Images 9 and 10: Sailing ship and fish made of stone and wire, work of seventh grade students, packed as a gift of Doctors assembly from Split for the Hungarian ambassador

The second exhibition, Crazy fish and sandships, was held in November 1999 as an activity of the UNICEF project Education for development, cooperation and tolerance in children's and school libraries at City library Marko Marulić in Split. The motive for the exhibition was the Universal Children's Day, the 40th anniversary of the Declaration of the Rights of the Child, and 10th anniversary of the Convention of the Rights of the Child. The exhibition included about two hundred children's works, sculptures - objects made from pebbles and ten meters of copper wire. This was the first exhibition outside the Municipality borders. Principal of the school Mr. Ante Nazor had the honour to open the exhibition.





Images 11 and 12: Principal of Primary school Jesenice professor Ante Nazor, opening the exhibition in Marko Marulić Library in Split



Images 13 and 14: Fish – works of sixth grade students made from knitting copper wire and works made from coloured wire

In exhibition catalogue 1999, profesor Margareta Kelava gave comments on the art pieces of fish and sailing ships: “surrounded by symbols of modern life, urban children play with ready-made products that do not stimulate their imagination, and imagination is a reflection of the freshness of spirit, which is mostly set free and regenerated while playing. Objects that can be used to play with are all objects that can put imagination into motion and transfer it into the amazing world of creation. Pebbles, these stone shapes formed by water, emerged from the geological layer of time, are a present living element of eternal matter. They carry messages of time and life in traces of archetypal ripening. Taken from the beach, salty and smelling like the sea, with their different shapes, they inspire a game that will give them a new meaning. Spontaneous joyful children playing on the beach encourage direct sensory, visual and tactile experience. The feeling of stone matter in your palm, enhanced by following visually its curves and outlines, colours and linear movements, nurture the perception ability. But the power of perception is individual; every person has different detachment from reality, different way of seeing and perceiving things. (...). Preparation precedes every creative process (in this case, the preparation is playing), which was implemented by Dijana Nazor, with the use of her remarkable sensibility of an art pedagogue. With harmonization of thoughts and feelings, she managed to mobilize children’s motivation and energy that led to creative acts; and creative playing, if initiated with life energy, is always optimistic in its originality and thus – promising in the creative quest.



Images 15 and 16: Selected stones and fifth grade students works

After the exhibition, the works of the pupils from Jesenice primary school, Dugi Rat were presented as Croatian souvenirs for the year 1999 at the presentation of Europe in the United Nation's building in New York. Thirty talented artists from Jesenice primary school aged 9 to 14 had a chance to present their work at the third exhibition named *In the happy town* in the scope of art-creative workshop *Fish* in St. Joseph Gallery in Dugi Rat in 2000. There were more than a hundred works; fish and sailing ships and illustrations inspired by rhymes and jokes of poet Nikša Krpetić.



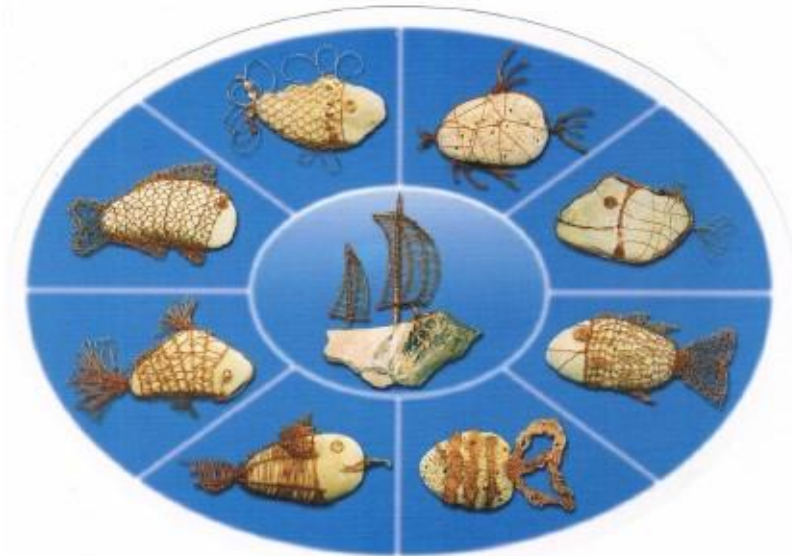
Images 17  
and 18:  
Gifted  
students  
with the  
poet  
Nikša  
Krpetić  
professor  
Dijana  
Nazor and  
collection

of Primary school Jesenice for the exhibition „In the happy town“ in St. Joseph's Gallery in Dugi Rat in 2000



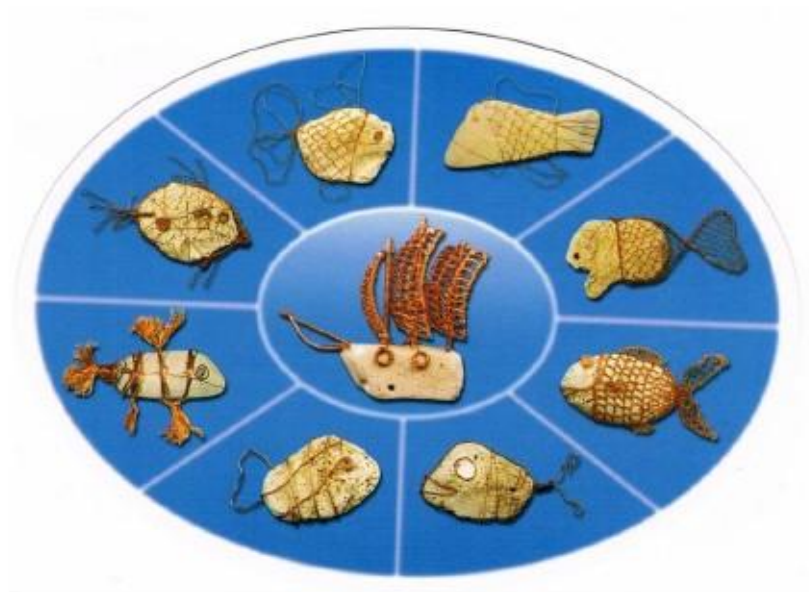
The exhibition was formally opened by the president of Municipality Council Dr. Vera Čudina. In the same year, the Municipality printed the postcards made by the children who won the first three places with the purpose of promoting children's creative work.





In the introduction, historian Tamara Visković stated:

“Children always talk about the world as they see it, trying to make contact with it, declare the simple fact of their existence. The efficiency of this communication and expression, not the fidelity of depiction, are the basics of successful art display.”



Images 19 and 20: First children postcards of Primary school Jesenice, published by Municipality Dugi Rat in 2000

Remarkably successful was the fourth exhibition, **Stone pebbles and imagination**, held in the Gallery of Humanitarian Foundation for the Children of Croatia at Ban Jelačić Square in 2000.



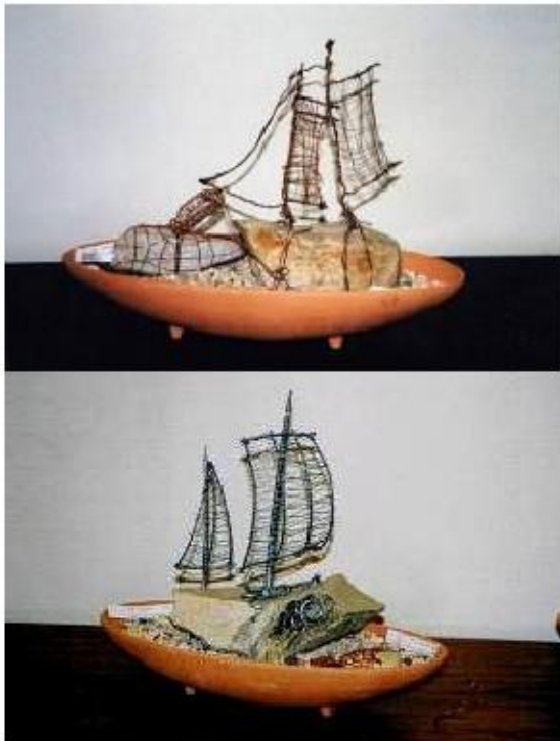
Images 21 and 22: 5 – 8 grade students' of Primary school Jesenice in Dugi Rat exhibition called Stone pebbles and students' imagination, organized in Gallery of Humanitarian Foundation For the Children of Croatia

The exhibition, where 111 pupils' works were creatively presented on a 3-metre high cliff, was officially opened by Mrs Ankica Tuđman, president of the Foundation and the wife of the first president of the Republic of Croatia, Mr Franjo Tuđman. This collaboration was arranged with the help and initiative of a popular gallerist and member of the Foundation Board from Zagreb, Ms Mirna Hromadko Reiser.



Image 23: Mirna Hromadko-Rajzer, gallerist; Ana Utrobičić, professor; Petar Čulić, student; Ankica Tuđman, president of the Humanitarian Foundation For the Children of Croatia; professor Renata Kovačić and professor Dijana Nazor at the opening of the exhibition in Foundation Gallery

Since that was a selling exhibition, children donated all of the income from selling the exhibits to the Foundation. Mirna Hromadko Reiser emphasized that wired stone fish could become authentic souvenir of the Republic of Croatia. The exhibition was presented in HRT shows Good morning, Croatia and Regional panorama.



Images 24 and 25: Stone sailing ships at the exhibition in the Foundation Galley in Zagreb, set in ceramic vessels

As continuation of this creative project, I held several creative arts workshops in 2011 during the Day of Croatian culture in Holy Family primary school in Bell Par, Geelong in Australia. The pupils of the Holy Family School spent a day dedicated to Croatian tradition, culture and customs. Each year, this school organizes Croatian/Italian Day (Multicultural Day) for all pupils.

#### Adriatic fish workshop in Geelong, Australia

The theme of this Croatian day was old Croatian customs, so children and their parents had a chance to learn something new with the help of Croatian community members. Within this manifestation, I held a total of nine workshops for about 300 children. One of them was thematically connected with the project Adriatic fish. Children got involved in workshops with great interest; after the introduction, they started to choose stones and wires of appropriate thickness, and then made Adriatic fish and in doing so, learned about types of fish in the Adriatic.







Images 26 and 27: Art workshop Adriatic fish for sixth grade students from Primary school Geelong in Australia

A short animated film was created as a summary of the entire project, which presented children's animated works, besides the art works. Some of the children's accomplishments were so exceptional that could not be distinguished from the work of a real artist. It is known that artists often reach for aesthetics and discourse of children's work.





Images 28 and 29: Stone fish and sailing boat made from copper wire, works of fifth and sixth grade students

Each paper will have sections based on the type of work that is presented. This template should be used for oral presentations, poster presentations and workshops. Authors should use subtitles that best reflect their work. Some suggestions for the subtitles are the following: introduction, literature review, methodology, results, and discussion.

### Learning to see

A simple form of a stone holds the imaginary world which is transformed, with minimal intervention into the perception, into the world of imaginative creation. Linear soft wire transposition and lines of the matter corresponding to the matter of the stone are breathing life into a new form and meaning. (...) Through play and creative imagination, formed into new meanings, subrelations of synergic activity are being established. With this intention, a new step towards new perspectives was made. A breach into the unknown moves the frames of the aspirations for a dialogue which requires the sensibility of the observer.

This project confirms that in artistic creation, it is necessary to teach children how to look and observe their environment, surroundings and nature in order to initiate the development of perception which stimulates children's creativity.

Image 30 Detail from the exhibition in Split, students of seventh and eighth grade







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Effect of Kolb's Experiential Learning Theory and Model  
(KELT&M) on Learning of Fine Art and Praxis in Uyo Secondary  
Schools, Nigeria.

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#### Abstract

The prevalent rate of poor academic performance of secondary school students in Fine Art subject in Uyo, within the context of empirical evidence and government official records, is very high. This has become great concern to Art Educators. The reason for this poor performance has been attributed to lack of specific learning theories and models for Fine Art instructions and the ineffectiveness of conventional expository instructional strategy among other variables. Against this background, this paper examines the academic relevance of the concrete-abstract-continuum concept of Kolb's Experiential Learning Theory and Model (KELT&M) to learning and praxis of Fine Art at secondary level of education. Based on the assumption that by integrating Kolb's theory into the artistic process, a new paradigm in Art Education might evolve, having potency of stimulating greater cognitive, psychomotive and emotive development among students, the study adopts a non-randomized pre-test, post-test, control group quasi- experimental design. In order to test the efficacy of Kolb's theory and model on learning and praxis of Fine Art in secondary schools, two groups; experimental and control, are exposed to the same instructional treatment. The study reveals that students in the experimental group performed better than those in the control group.

#### Keyword;

Experiential, Concrete-abstract-continuum, Manipulatives

#### Introduction

The prevalent rate of poor academic performance in Fine Art subject amongst secondary school students in Uyo, makes it expedient to seek effective learning intervention. This phenomenal adverse experience at secondary level seems to have negative spillover effect at the tertiary level of Art education and practice. Thus, empirical evidence seems to indicate



fewer and fewer number of students who passed and are admitted to study Fine and Industrial Arts as careers.

Several reasons have been posited for the poor performance among other variables. Of relevance, are lack of specific learning theories and models for Fine Art instructions and the predominantly ineffectiveness of conventional expository instructional strategy. Fundamentally, lack of specific learning theories and models for Fine Art instructions appear to be the crux of the problems responsible for poor performance. In view of this, Kolb's experiential learning theory and model (KELT&M) specifically, the 4 – stage process appears very appropriate support for the management of learning experience for Fine Art. Experiential learning circles are commonly used to help structure experience-based training and educational program. A good model can greatly aid research and praxis, while a poor model, either one which is wrong or misinterpreted can create more problems than it solves. Neill (2004).

### The Experiential Learning Theory and Model

Experiential learning theory connotes knowledge acquired from actual contact with real life situation. The underlying theory is the idea that people can learn very effectively through direct, hands-on experiences, as long as these experiences are well designed and facilitated. Kolb, Boyatzis and Mainemelis (2000), described Experiential learning theory as the process whereby knowledge is created through the transformation of experience. They claimed that knowledge results from the combination of grasping and transforming experience. Kolb, et al. (2000) further observed that, in Experiential learning, this process occurs within a four stage framework which includes concrete experience, reflective observation, abstract conceptualization and active experimentation.

The first stage frame work would require the creation of conducive social learning environment where students can interact with teacher and concrete or abstract instructional materials and among themselves to construct knowledge. Thus, the attributes of social learning theory and constructivism are implied in the Experiential learning theories.

Within the context of Experiential learning which posits that knowledge results from the combination of grasping and transforming experience. The Kolb Experiential Learning Cycle (KELC) illustrates the “grasping and transforming” of experience from two continuums (Atkinson & Murrell, 1988). The concrete-abstract continuum, portrayed in the model presented in figure 1, has the vertical line running between Concrete Experience and Abstract Conceptualization, representing how learner gathers or grasps new information (Atkinson & Murrell,1988). The horizontal line running between Active Experimentation and Reflective Observation portrays the reflective-active continuum which represents how the learner processes or transforms the new information that has been gathered (Atkinson & Murrell, 1988).

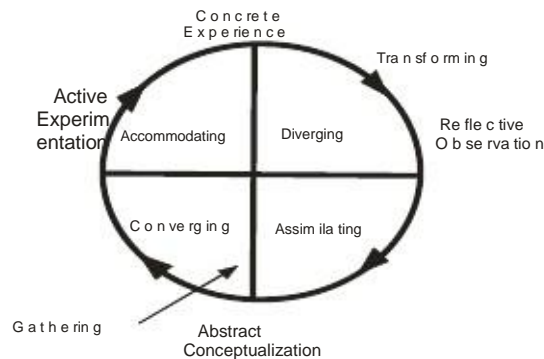


Fig.1 Kolb Experiential Learning Cycle

(Kolb & Kolb, 2008)

The way the continuums vertically and horizontally intersect the Experiential Learning Cycle (ELC), suggests that within the cycle the learner alternately passes through periods of grasping new knowledge, followed by periods where that new knowledge is processed and transformed.

Moreover, the alternate processes of gathering and transforming, further alternately occur at opposite ends of the two continuums, which Kolb suggests require learning abilities that are polar opposites (Kolb, et. al, 2000). This concept is important to this present study as it influences how learning of Fine Art as a teaching subject fits into the Experiential Learning Cycle.

The researcher's instructional communication model design integrates Kolb's Experiential Learning Theory and Model (KELT&M) into artistic process by, firstly exposing students to a prototype 2-Dimensional manipulative fish sculptures mounted on display board as instructional material. This is in line with the concept of Experiential Learning Cycle model which suggests that learning starts with concrete experiences, forming the bases for reflective observation.

Similarly, the 2-dimensional manipulative fish sculptures used in the experimental group of this study allow the students to see, touch and interact with abstract concepts, such as line, shape, texture, dominance, rhythm and unity, thus, facilitating abstract conceptualization in a vertical continuum. Thereby, grasping of new knowledge occurs. The students then assimilate the reflections with little assistance from the teacher, which forms the basis for horizontal continuum and actively testing of new ideas.

Actively testing these new ideas as the lesson progresses through teacher-led-demonstration technique, holistically, provides the "concreteness" of concrete experiences, thus, starting the Experiential Learning Cycle, afresh. This cyclic nature of Kolb's Experiential learning model (showed in fig. 1), also supports the cybernetic principle adopted in the researcher's designed instructional model, used to facilitate condition for recall and transfer of learning during the experiment.

### The "Concreteness" and Relevance of Kolb's Concrete Experience

The concreteness and relevance of Kolb's Concrete Experience is subsumed in his theory that knowledge is created through the transformation of experience and in the (ELC) model. Therefore, the validity and justification of this theory and model are situated, firstly, within the context of instructional communication and secondly, within the Experiential Learning





Cycle's (ELC's) treatment of learner's subjective experience as of critical importance in the learning process. Neill (2004).

Within the context of this submission, it is postulated that for effective desired learning outcome in the Fine Art, there is need to facilitate learner's contact with concrete experience or raw experience or better still, real-life situation. Subsequently, this contact generates interactivities centered on the exposed concrete "experience" (the 2-Dimensional manipulative fish sculptures). The ultimate benefit of such interactivities begets a social process which produces common understanding and unity within the social group. This makes communication becomes an interaction having shared meaning. In his book, "learning in infants and Young Children" Michael Howe states that the term "experience" is synonymous with exposure to the environment, it is usually inferred that learning has taken place when changes in behaviors occur as a result of experience, practical and training. (Azi 2006)

Relatively, Rogers (1969), Rogers and Freiberg (1994) opined that Experiential learning is equivalent to personal change and growth. They are of the view that all human beings have a natural propensity to learn and that the role of the teacher is to facilitate such learning. These include; setting a positive climate for learning; clarifying the purposes of the learners; organizing and making available learning resources; balancing intellectual and emotional component of learning and sharing feelings and thoughts with learners but not dominating.

Therefore, the peculiar subjective nature of Fine Art, both as a teaching subject and as a medium of human communicated messages justify the application and appropriation of Kolb's ELT&M in learning of Fine Art. In addition to these qualities, teaching, learning and praxis of Fine Art entail processes which embrace the cognitive, the psychomotive and the affective sphere of influence subsumed in the Kolb's Experiential Learning Cycle adopted for this study.

### Learners' Subjective Experience / Perception in Art learning

In the domain of the visual arts, Fine Art serves as a means of communication of human experiences which meaning are shared by perception. For instance, an artist shares his experience by coding his thoughts or feelings in objectified shapes which are appreciated through visual interpretation. This process of translating thoughts or feelings from an abstract state into concrete and tangible shapes, describes the power of visual arts as instructional communication media in coding and decoding events. In corroboration, Dickinson (2002) seems to have presented a resume of the perception in the Art learning inferred to in this study, when he claimed that through artistic experience, perception of the environment is required in clarifying, intensifying and enlarging knowledge.

Supporting this view, Steveni (1968) saw art product as useful form of personal expression which acts as a means of self-understanding and a palliative of civilization. He went further to expound that just as language encapsulates a certain kind of thought that is definitive and conceptual, so does artwork or visual response (art form) promote a type of thought (idea, concept).

Analytically, Steveni (1968) perceives art work as an effective outcome of the progression of three processes which he called the elements perceives art work as an effective outcome of the progression of three processes which he called the elements namely: the conceptual element, the operational element and the synthetic element. In his view, an art work can only result after the idea must have been conceived first in the mind of the artist as (conceptual

element) and then further processed through the (operational element) which deals with the material, media and techniques of handling same, and finally through the (synthetic stage which is the perception and actualization of the idea in the visual form. An illustration of this perception is presented in a chart form thus;



Fig. 2 Illustration chart of Art Process. Stevni (1968).

The illustration clearly shows a one-directional flow in which the idea must first be conceived before the art work can originate. This is the conceptual framework within which the 2-dimensional manipulative fish sculptures (Fig. 3) used in this study as instructional materials were utilized in the experimental group. The fish was conceived firstly as an “abstract” idea which was generated through operational process into an art form in the final synthetic stage of actualization. This entire process describes the connectivity between art process as “abstract – concrete –continuum” and Kolb’s experiential circle of “concrete-abstract-continuum”. This paper therefore posits that for effective “grasping and transforming of knowledge” in the Fine Art’s abstract conceptualization, Kolb’s idea of Concrete- abstract-continuum, becomes appropriate. Thus the assertion posited by Mcloughlin and Oliver (1999), that designers should know that 90% of communication is non-verbal, conveyed through visual means such as gestures and images especially in the early stage of mental growth.

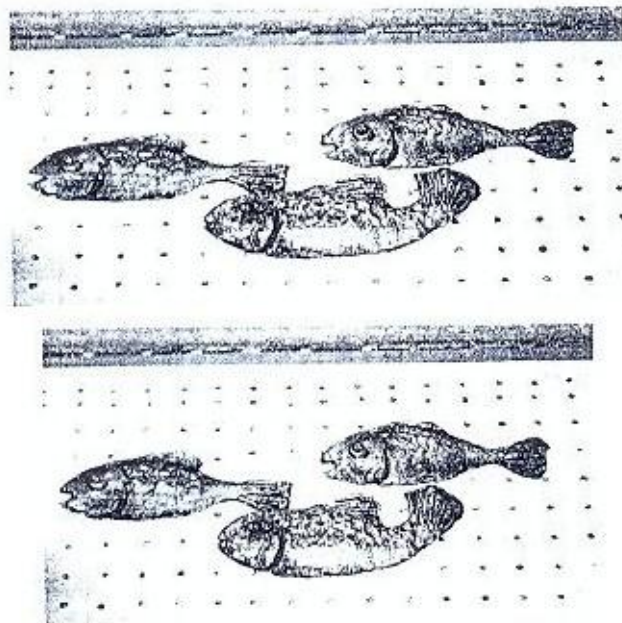


Fig 3. 2-dimensional manipulative fish sculptures on display board

In order to determine the academic connectivity between KELT&M and learning of Fine Art, this paper endeavors to compare the effect of Kolb’s Experiential learning Theory and Model (KELT&M) on instructional interventions such as Teacher-led demonstration and Expository



techniques on students' performance in Fine Art, in secondary schools in Uyo. However, gender performance only becomes imperative on basis of male and female students. The 2-dimensional manipulative fish sculptures provide "concrete experience" and lesson contents.

### Objectives of the Study

1. To compare secondary school students' performance in Fine Art when taught using teacher-led demonstration technique with KELT&M and Expository without KELT&M.
2. To compare male secondary school students' performance in Fine Art when taught using teacher-led demonstration technique with KELT&M and Expository without KELT&M.
3. To compare female secondary school students' performance in Fine Art when taught using teacher-led demonstration technique with KELT&M and Expository without KELT&M.

### Research Questions

- 1) Will secondary school students perform better in Fine Art, when taught using teacher-led demonstration technique with KELT&M and Expository without KELT&M?
- 2) Will male secondary school students perform better in Fine Art, when taught using teacher-led demonstration technique with KELT&M and Expository without KELT&M?
- 3) Will female secondary school students perform better in Fine Art, when taught using teacher-led demonstration technique with KELT&M and Expository without KELT&M?

### Research Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses are made:

- 1) There is no significant difference between secondary school students' performances in Fine Art, when taught using teacher-led technique with KELT&M and Expository without KELT&M
- 2) There is no significant difference between male secondary school students' performances in Fine Art, when taught using teacher-led demonstration technique with KELT&M and Expository without KELT&M
- 3) There is no significant difference between female secondary school students' performances in Fine Art, when taught using teacher-led demonstration technique with KELT&M and Expository without KELT&M

### Research Design

The study adopted a pre-test post-test non-randomized control group design. It was specifically a quasi-experimental design made up of two groups; experimental and control. The relative comparability and equivalence of the groups were ensured by the use of intact classes.



This study was carried out in public secondary schools in Uyo Local Educational Committee (LEC) in Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria. All the public secondary schools within Uyo Local Government Area fall within the Uyo Local Educational Committee.

The population for the study was made up of all SSI Fine Art students in two senior secondary schools in Uyo Local Educational Committee, Akwa Ibom State. Out of the existing 14 secondary schools in Uyo Local Educational Committee, only 2 schools offer Fine Art at the Senior Secondary School Certificate Examination (SSSCE) level, representing a total of 173 senior secondary one (SS1) Fine Art students. The decision to use SSI students was based on their presumed levels of maturity and competency. Moreover, it is at the end of SS1 that the students select subjects for their final Senior Secondary School Certificate Examination.

A census of 173 students was utilized for the study, thus no sample was taken. The census consisted of four streams from SS1a and SS1b in each of the 2 secondary schools offering Fine Art in Uyo Local Education Committee (L.E.C), Akwa Ibom State.

#### Instrumentation

In order for the study to generate both quantitative and qualitative data, the researcher made use of two instruments: the Entry Point Assessment Checklist (EPAC) and Students' Achievement Test on Fine Art (SATFA).

The entry point assessment checklist (EPAC) was used as reliability test and also as preliminary investigation to determine the entry point behavior of the students. The Students' Achievement Test in Fine Art (SATFA) was the researcher's designed pre-test, post-test instrument used to determine the effect of the instrumentation or treatment on the Students' Performance in Fine Art.

#### Teacher-Led Demonstration

The treatment for teacher-led demonstration in the experimental group was the development and utilization of a set of 2-dimensional manipulative fish sculpture composition as the instructional materials. During the development process, the students became familiar with the abstract lesson contents referred to as the elements and principles of design in a sculptural composition. For the purpose of this study, **line**, **texture** and **shape** were studied as elements while **rhythm**, **dominance** and **unity** constituted the principles of design used as the lesson contents. The students were expected to acquire knowledge of artistic techniques and terminologies, processes, the use of materials and maintenance of tools and equipment.

The adaptation of KELT&M in the experimental group enabled the students to physically interact with the 2-D instructional materials, prior to lesson delivery, by handling and manipulating the fish sculpture models into two-dimensional visual composition.

#### Expository Method (Control Group)

In the control group the students were taught the same lesson as in experimental group, but without the KELT&M and materials (2-dimensional manipulative fish sculpture on display board). Only the usual expository method (the conventional verbal and chalkboard) was used. The production process of 2-dimensional fish sculpture was verbally and elaborately



described to the students, with occasional chalk sketches of the sequence drawn on the black board.

### Validation of the Instruments

In order to establish the extent to which the instrument (SATFA) measured and controlled what it should, it was subjected to face, content and construct validation by experts in measurement and evaluation.

### Reliability of the Instrument

In order to establish whether the instrument measured consistently what it is supposed to measure, a trial test was undertaken using equivalent group. That is, a group similar to the study sample but was not part of the study.

The research applied the same test as the previous one after two weeks of interval (test-retest method). The scores were subjected to Pearson Product Moment Correlation Co-efficient using the Statistical Package of Social Science (SPSS). The test-retest reliability analysis shows the reliability coefficient of 0.582., high enough to justify the use of the research instrument.

### Procedures for Data Collection

The researcher visited the two secondary schools offering Fine Art. A total of 173 question papers were personally distributed to the 173 Fine Art students in the two secondary schools. Not many students offered Fine Art. Thus, only two streams of intact classes were used in each school. Research assistants, who were Fine Art graduates from each of the schools, helped in the data collection.

### Method of Data Analyses

The data collected from the respondents was analyzed using the independent t-test, analysis of covariance (ANOVA) and multiple classification analysis (MCA) statistical tools.

### Analyses

#### Hypothesis One

There is no significant difference between secondary school students' performances in Fine Art, when taught using teacher-led demonstration technique with KELT&M and expository without KELT&M.

The covariate to the post test is the pre-test which was derived and used for the analysis, hence analysis of covariance was used in testing the hypothesis and the result is as presented in table 1.

The main effects are teacher-led demonstration technique with KELT&M and Expository without KELT&M. The calculated value as shown on the table resulted in a value of 99.41



with a corresponding significance of F at .05 probability level of .000, thus, showing that the result is significant. This implies that the main effect which is the KELT&M on teaching Fine Art is significant. To determine which of the groups was more significant, there was need to examine the mean scores and the result indicated that the mean students' performance of those taught using teacher-led demonstration with KELT&M method was 54.07 while those taught using the expository without KELT&M method was 37.78. This means that the teacher-led demonstration with KELT&M method resulted in a higher mean score than those taught using the expository technique without KELT&M. The student achievement score in the experimental group (teacher-led) is higher than that in the control group (expository).

Based on this finding, the null hypothesis is rejected while the alternate hypothesis is upheld that there is significant difference between secondary school students' performance in Fine Art, when taught using teacher-led demonstration with KELT&M and expository without KELT&M. The result revealed that the teacher-led demonstration with KELT&M is a better method.

Table 1. Analysis of variance of the Difference in students' performance in Fine Art when taught using Teacher-led Demonstration and Expository Techniques

Source variation	of	Sum of Square	df	Mean Square	F	Significance of F
Covariate		230.133	1	230.13	2.71	.103
Pretest		230.133	1	230.13	2.71	.103
Main Effects		8454.17	1	8454.17	99.41	.000
Techniques		8454.17	1	8454.17	99.41	.000
Explained		8654.31	1	4342.15	51.06	.000
Residual		9354.63	110	85.04		
Total		18038.94	112	161.06		

## Hypothesis Two

There is no significant difference between male secondary school students' performance in Fine Art, when taught using teacher-led demonstration technique with KELT&M and Expository without KELT&M.

In this hypothesis, the intention was to find out whether male students taught Fine Art using teacher-led demonstration with KELT&M will perform better than those taught using expository without KELT&M?

To do this, scores derived from the use of teacher-led with KELT&M and those for expository without KELT&M method, for male students, were compared and the covariate to the post test which is the pre-test was gained and used for the analysis, using Analysis of covariance and the result is as presented in table 2.



The main effect as presented on the table resulted in an F-value of 34.882 with a corresponding significant F of .000, showing that  $p < .05$ . This implied that the main effect which is the treatment is significant. Following from this, the null hypothesis is rejected and the alternate hypothesis is upheld that, there is a significant difference between male secondary school students' performance in Fine Art, when taught using teacher-led demonstration with KELT&M and expository techniques without KELT&M.

Table2 Analysis of variance of the Difference between male students' performance in Fine Art when taught using Teacher-led Demonstration and Expository techniques

Source of variation	Sum of Square	df	Mean Square	F	Significance of F
Covariate	1.332	1	1.332	0.14	.906
Pretest	1.332	1	1.332	0.14	.906
Main Effects	3295.271	1	3295.271	34.882	.000
Techniques	3295.271	1	3295.271	34.882	.000
Explained	3296.603	1	1648.302	17.448	.000
Residual	3873.283	41	94.470		
Total	7169.886	43	166.742		

### Hypothesis Three

There is no significant difference between female secondary schools' performance in Fine Art, when taught using teacher-led demonstration technique with KELT&M and Expository without KELT&M.

The intent of this hypothesis was to examine whether the performance of female Fine Art students taught using teacher-led demonstration with KELT&M method was significantly different from their counterparts taught using expository technique without KELT&M. The post-test score of the female students taught using the two techniques were derived while the pre-test score was used as the covariate and analysis of covariance used to test the hypothesis. The result is as presented in table 3.

Findings from the table revealed that the main effect gave an F- Value of 67.148 which when compared with the significant F of .000 was found to be significant even at the .05 level. This implied that the mean effect which is also the treatment is significant and therefore the null hypothesis is rejected in favor of the alternate hypothesis. This means that there is a significant difference between female secondary school students' performance in Fine Art, when taught using teacher-led demonstration with KELT&M and expository method without KELT&M.



Table 3 Analysis of variance of the Difference between female students’ performance in Fine Art when taught using Teacher-led Demonstration and Expository techniques

Source of variation	Sum of Square	df	Mean Square	f	Significance of F
Covariate	483.564	1	483.564	6.238	.015
Pretest	483.564	1	483.564	6.238	.015
Main Effects	5205.237	1	5205.237	67.148	.000
Techniques	5205.237	1	5205.237	67.148	.000
Explained	5688.801	2	2844.401	36.693	.000
Residual	5116.271	66	77.519	34.882	.000
Total	10805.072	68	158.898	17.448	.000

### Discussions

The result of the analysis of data on corresponding hypotheses has established that there is significant difference between secondary school students’ performances in Fine Art when taught using teacher-led demonstration with KELT&M and expository techniques without KELT&M. It therefore indicates that the teacher-led demonstration with KELT&M is a better technique and gender friendly, than the expository method without KELT&M.

This result appears to be attributable to the efficacy of the application of Kolb’s Experiential learning theory and the assertion that Experiential Learning theory is the process whereby knowledge is created through the transformation of experience. (Kolb, Boyatzis, & Mainemelis 2000). The claim that knowledge results from the combination of grasping and transforming experience becomes validated. The four stage framework which includes concrete experience, reflective observation, abstract conceptualization and active experimentation are in tandem with the teacher-led demonstration method. The findings also indicate that KELT&M support the importance of observational learning with strong psychological (perception) and social disposition (Experiential) on learning of Fine Art in Secondary schools in Uyo.

Besides the enabling intrapersonal and physical interaction between teacher and student and 2-Dimensional instructional materials, the teacher-led demonstration method with KELT&M proved to be a better method for introducing new skills, developing understanding and showing the appropriate ways of doing things than the expository method without KELT&M.



## Conclusion

The need to determine the appropriate instructional communication theory and model suitable for teaching and learning of a technical subject such as Fine Art became necessary, especially due to the prevailing rate of poor performance in secondary schools in Uyo, Akwa Ibom State.

The result of the findings in the study indicated that KELT&M supports teacher-led-demonstration and that adapting KELT&M as the appropriate instructional model for teaching and learning of Fine Art as a technical subject in secondary schools yielded the following expected learning outcome:

- Embed learning in complex, realistic and relevant environments.
- Provided for social negotiation as integral part of learning.
- Supported multiple perspectives and the use of multiple modes of representation.

The following attributes of teacher-led-demonstration with KELT&M, influenced effective behavioral change noticeable in the Fine Art students' performance in secondary schools in Uyo:

1. Blended learning which allowed combined methods of seeing, touching, telling and reflecting.
2. Physical contact, interaction and activities between teacher and students and with manipulative 2-Dimensional instructional materials which promoted concrete experience, reflective observation, abstract conceptualization and active Experimentation.
3. Tasking of the cognitive, psychomotive and affective domain of learning.

## Recommendations

Based on the findings, the following recommendations are made:

1. Instructional system design that supports the concrete – abstract-continuum model should be explored.
2. The use of improvised manipulatives and other hands-on experience as instructional materials which support and strengthen experiential learning should be encouraged in the learning of Fine Art subject in Secondary Schools in Uyo.

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## Plane, image and space

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### Abstract

The research „Plane, image and space” was made in the framework of the ECO workshop: Paper Casting – Paper Works in the Pardaugavas Music and Art School, Riga, Latvia, from 2009 through 2012 in the school’s programme. In this period in the school’s Visual arts’ programme a special attention was paid on how to develop in students the understanding of the ecology and a friendly attitude towards the nature, how to find out the qualities of the naturally and industrially produced materials and to get acquainted with the responsible use of them, moreover to use all the previously mentioned in an attractive way for making the students’ works creative. Meanwhile an inter-subject connection was made between different school subjects like Drawing and Modelling, Work in the Material and Composition, by exploring and depicting a united theme in the plane and space, however, using the different means of expression.

The aim of the work was to do the cuts and folds of the paper/cardboard and to find out the transformations of the flat surface into the plastic image in the space. Students obtained the knowledge about the interaction of the plane and the space – about the simplification of the form, the stylization of the image and the usage of the details that creates the significance of the identification and impression of the silhouette. The practical work of the cutting of the image and the form, the folding, the sticking and putting together was done in the meantime of the studies of artists’ utopian ideas, experiments and art works. The result proved that the students’ understanding of the rules of perspective is improving; they spend more time on the making of the general image and together with that they learn and develop the skills necessary for realizing the construction and planned design works.

Overall we came to a conclusion that the tasks of the inter-subject connection and their realization created the revelations about the joy, imagination and surprises which can be characterised by:

- In the groups of 9 - 13 years – the transformations of the plane in the spatial, incredible images;



- In the groups of 14 - 18 years – the dynamics of the working process, the diversity of the images and the realization of different layers of one topic;
- In the audience of the teachers – the conclusions that the plane, the image and the space in one whole creates our everyday life and that it is worth to research and understand it in a creative way.

#### Key words

Eco-workshop, paper, silhouette, image, space

#### Plane, Image and Space

The research was made in the framework of the ECO-workshop: Handmade Paper Casting – Paper Works in the Pardaugas Music and Art School from 2009 through 2012. In this period in the school's programme a special attention was paid on how to develop in students the understanding of the ecology and a friendly attitude towards the nature, how to find out the qualities of the naturally and industrially produced materials and to get acquainted with the responsible use of them, moreover to use all the previously mentioned in an attractive way for making the students' works creative. Meanwhile an inter-subject connection was made between different school subjects like Drawing and Modelling, Small scale design and Composition, by exploring and depicting a united theme in the plane and space, however, using the different means of expression.

#### The Material

We chose paper and cardboard as materials for our spatial/experimental works. They can certainly be characterized as cheap, accessible and environmentally friendly materials. While working with those materials it is easy to start a conversation about ecology and to talk with students about a careful attitude towards nature and use of the natural resources.

Nevertheless, paper is not the first medium most people think of when they imagine a sculpture, but it has qualities that help children to create some of the most incredibly intricate 3D art. In the process of studies we used the waste of cardboard as well as new sheets of paper and tried to discover and operate with the characteristics of those materials and the possibilities of the means of expression. Initially a research of the technical characteristics of the chosen materials – plants, trees, plywood, cardboard, corrugated cardboard and different sorts of paper was implemented. While starting the work on the “ECO-workshop Paper works” we were planning to provide those kinds of activities:

- How to do paper cuts and folding and discover the transformations of the flat surface into the plastic image in the space;
- How to obtain skills to hold a knife and carefully cut with the scissors, how to develop skills to make simple paper cuts and folds, stick and unite the forms;
- How to develop to create paper cut structure without sketches on paper: to think and to visualise object directly in space;
- How to talk about the simplification, stylization and details of the visible forms that create the significance of the identification when depicting the objects and silhouettes of the images;
- How to feel the interaction of the plane and space and depict that;



- How to research and use the variety of paper forms and characteristics while working with the paper sheets, plates, strips, crumpled paper, paper mass, while researching the transparency of the paper, its thinness, solidness and usefulness.

Practically we did a modelling of spatial objects/ images/ stories that manifested

as:

1. The studies of nature;

2. the works of the imagination/ fantasy;

3. the small scale models of design objects – shelves, houses, hair-cuts;

4. the three-dimensional compositions of several objects, installations;

5. the photos documentations and photos sessions.

### The Working Process and Inspirations

The aim of the work was to do the cuts and folds of the paper/cardboard and to find out the transformations of the flat surface into the plastic image in the space. Students obtained the knowledge about the interaction of the plane and the space – about the simplification of the form, the stylization of the image and the usage of the details that creates the significance of the identification and impression of the silhouette. The practical work of the cutting of the image and the form, the folding, the sticking and putting together was done in the meantime of the studies of artists' utopian ideas, experiments and art works.

The inspirations for the youngest group came from Finland Art school's experiences (1001 Paperia 1995) and Danish paper artist Peter Callesen (Out of Nothing, 2009) who works mostly with A4 paper cuts and Annie Vought, who has been working with cut out letters for the past four years. For the oldest groups we got inspiration from one of the Berlin's most original photographers Kerstin Zu Pan and from the Dutch artist Ferry Staverman's Cardboard sculptures (2009-2010).

The art teachers discovered how Danish artist Peter Callesen defines the problem:

“A large part of my work is made from A4 sheets of paper. It is probably the most common and consumed media used for carrying information today. This is why we rarely notice the actual materiality of the A4 paper. By taking away all the information and starting from scratch using the blank white A4 paper sheet for my creations, I feel I have found a material that we are all able to relate to, and at the same time the A4 paper sheet is neutral and open to fill with different meaning. The thin white paper gives the paper sculptures a frailty that underlines the tragic and romantic theme of my works.”

The Finnish art educator and curator of the project Riita Heikkinen in 1001 Paperia (1995) wrote that paper in itself can communicate. It is a living product that can be transformed by time or remain relatively unchanged for centuries. We can research the variety of usage of paper in China, Egypt and Japanese culture; we can link it to the experience of Georges Braque and Pablo Picasso in the usage of collage technique in the composition modelling in 1910. Moreover, Matisse's paper-cuts, Bauhaus School's experiences in the introductory courses on the use of materials and fact that in 1928 Josef Albers published an essay entitled “Paperworks from New Point of View” indicates the various and longstanding possibilities of the usage of the paper. He first had his students work without tools, the idea being that nothing should be removed from the paper in the process of creation. They folded, twisted and rolled the paper; they made zigzags and formed concentric circles. The Futurists,

Dadaists and members of the Fluxus group used waste paper and real objects as an extension of their anti-art. (R. Heikkinen, 1995)

Paper cut snowflakes, paper plastic and origami - since the origins of origami as a children's game back in the 14th century the traditional figures – cranes, birds and frogs have not changed. These are spatial or relief paper modelling exercises using sheets of paper. Those are the skills of folding techniques and working according to the sample and instructions – skills to measure, compare and fold precisely. There is a simple difference between mere paper craft and origami: the traditional concept of origami uses the piece of paper only once with no cuts or glue. (R. Heikkinen, 1995)

Anni Nørskov Mørch (2009) has said:

“About paper - it can lay there on the table and stare at you, empty, white, demanding; fill me up with words, fold me, give me content. Paper as a metaphor is often seen as an image of what is entirely empty of meaning. For example, being like a blank sheet of paper is poor starting point for solving problem. Or it is like the unrealized potential of the white sheet in the typewriter, which scares the writer into a writer's block.”

The practically implemented topics and a summary demonstrating that flatness of paper can transform into a living three-dimensional picture:

Table 1. Plane, Image, Story and Space

The inspirations for Paper Casting – Paper Works and Inter-subject Connection came from Finland Art school's experiences (1001 Paperia 1995), Danish paper artist Peter Callesen (Out of Nothing, 2009) and Annie Vought's words cut out from paper									
Age	Size of the object	Means of expression				Category		Knowledge	
		Forms	Stylization, silhouette	Colour	Light	Story	Design	Exercises	Ecological understanding
9-13	20x20cm	an abstract	x	2 colours	x	-	decorative	cut and fold	waste paper
	30x30x30cm, geometric 30x30x60cm		x	limited	x	x	My Dream cut, house, tower	fold, stick, glue, build	waste cardboard
	A4	letters	x	2, black white	x	very personal	fantasy shrift	write, cut out, fold	paper sheets
	A1, A2	geometric, plastic	x	2 colours	x	x	ZOO, Oriental fairy-tale	cut, fold, build, flying details, visualisation, literacy	paper sheets

The conclusions:  
 In the groups of 9 - 13 years fulfilment of the tasks of the inter-subject connection between school subjects Works in the Material and Composition raised:  
 1. The revelations about the joy;  
 2. The imagination;  
 3. The surprises that can be characterised by transformations of the plane in the spatial, incredible images.

Table 2. Plane, Space and Design

The inspirations for Paper Casting – Paper Works and Inter-subject Connection came from Kerstin Zu Pan and Ferry Staverman Cardboard sculptures (2009-2010)									
Age	Size of the object	Means of expression				Category		Knowledge	
		Forms	Stylization, silhouette	Colour	Light	Story	Design	Exercises	Ecological understanding
14-18 years	40x40x80cm	geometric	x	limited	x	personally myself	wall-shelf	cut, fold, stick, glue, build, function, work in pairs, photo	waste cardboard
	irregular	plastic	x	limited	x	beauty	x cut, roll, shape, hair-dress, function, usefulness, photo		paper strips
	40x40x60cm	plastic	decorated objects group	limited	x	music	3D still-life cut, fold, build, imagination, critical thinking, usefulness		waste cardboard

The conclusions  
In the groups of 14-16 years the fulfilment of the tasks of the inter-subject connection between school subjects Drawing, Painting and Modelling raised:  
1. The dynamics of the working process;  
2. The diversity of the images;  
3. The realization of different aspects of one topic.

### Positive and Negative Silhouette

It looks like a game for youngest children group - a regular sheet of paper transforms into grass, birds, trees, animals, bridges, houses.

We can fully agree with Visual art curator at Trapholt, Denmark, Anni Nørskov Mørch (2009) that the pictures out of paper are multi-dimensional in sense that there is both a positive and a negative form, in which the silhouette, the absent picture, is often the most intense expression. Similarly, the unfolding tale is equivocal, stretched between the strivings of hope and the gravity of reality. The very important is that many of works carry literary references to fairy tales, treating themes like lost land of childhood, the frailty of the notion.

That was fully proved by the results, because we chose a possibility to use limited, however, several means of expression – form, silhouette, colour and light. Viewing and analyzing results we noticed that miraculous and imaginative stories derive unexpectedly and unplanned. Using two colours in the base, changing the direction of the light or viewing angle





we can tell several and completely different interpretations of the story with just one work. For example, in the works ZOO and “Oriental Story” we discovered that:

- A white bird obtaining a dark green empty space inside of its silhouette instead of a white one, gets a story of standing on the bank of a small pond;
- A bird during the flight obtains a shadow that creates an illusion of the movement;
- The empty silhouettes of the spatially displayed objects creates imaginativeness, rhythm and dynamic;
- By changing the light and its intensity we get silenced or dramatic stories;
- We physically feel the space.

We found that creating the three-dimensional stories and fairy-tales (exercises of the story telling and reading, and visual perception) helps students to become better learners and thinkers, and discoveries indicate that those, who participated in the program, performed better in categories of the literacy and critical-thinking skills - extended focus, hypothesizing, providing multiple interpretations, schema-building and giving evidence through description.

#### The Usefulness of the Study Work: Different Aspects of the Topic

We have noticed that often it is not possible to ensure the value of the children’s and youngsters’ works – the authors are more interested in the process of discovery, action itself and means of collecting new experience. Often works are left at school, nobody needs them, and they are not taken home and not preserved as a value or a personal archive.

We use nature studies as well as different set-up compositions – still lifes, installations, visuals in the process of visual art education while learning drawing and painting. The main difficulties are caused by the understanding of the laws of perspective in different age groups and the spatial feeling.

To facilitate the process and make it more interesting we started to use three-dimensional works to:

- Create inter-subject connection tasks;
- To use as models – set up compositions for drawing and painting;
- To use as models for photos or photos sessions.

It means that works are not only created, but also viewed publically in a small scale class groups in the following lessons, they are researched, interpreted and teachers can successfully use them in the study process repeatedly and in a longer period of time.

The usage of the students’ works is done not only by students themselves, but also by the audience of other students and those works are offered to be used in creative ways in different age groups. A socializing of the local art school society is implemented by involving other children and youngsters; moreover the works are gaining an added value and being useful and actually used. The works are needed by someone, they raise questions and discussions. They gain and own value. We have got not only the joy about the accomplished work, but also an emotional satisfaction that a work is useful for somebody and something.

Table 3. Different Aspects of One Topic

No	Topic/object	Usefulness of the Study Work			
		9-13 year		14-18 year	
		1.	2.	1.	2.
1.	Dream house, My City, Tower	as models for thematic composition	as exhibition objects	as models for analytical drawing	as models for a photo documentation
2.	Hair-cut	as models for a fantasy drawing	as exhibition objects	as models for a fantasy drawing	as models for a photo session
3.	Decorated musical instruments and objects' group			as models for an individual drawing composition	
4.	Names and symbols	as models for a photo documentation	as exhibition objects		

Summary of the results proved that the students' understanding of the rules of perspective is improving; they spend more time on the making of the general image and together with that they learn and develop the skills necessary for realizing the construction and planned design works.

We came to a conclusion which can be characterised by:

- In the groups of 10 - 13 years – the transformations of the plane in the spatial, incredible images;
- In the groups of 14 - 18 years – the dynamics of the working process, the diversity of the images and the realization of different layers of one topic;
- In the audience of the teachers – the conclusions that the plane, the image and the space in one whole creates our everyday life and that it is worth to research and understand it in a creative way.

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## AVATARS for artistic and technological learning

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### Abstract

This artistic research aims for the artistic and technological professional development of teachers of art. We have studied the theories of McLuhan and Marc Prensky. We have also reviewed literature about the development of artistic workshops with the theme of identity. We have focused on case studies conducted by Escaño, Zafra, Acaso, Agra and Eça, among others. We provide a new methodology in the field of art education using Internet and social networks for the artistic and technological professional development of Art teachers.

AVATARS, international exhibition, has been organized by Saura Angeles from research groupUAM : PR-007 "Digital Resources for Arts Education". It opened in June 2009. It is about the concept of network identity. AVATARS is a collective and itinerant exhibition of self-portraits. It has been put together at the teacher-artists's network E@: [www.arteweb.ning.com](http://www.arteweb.ning.com). Coordinated by teachers and artists, it comes in two formats: analog and digital. 120 participating artists from 12 Latin American countries sent their works to form part of a permanent virtual exhibition. The works chosen by the selection committee were printed on paper at Madrid and Colombia. Pedro Villarrubia designed a poster (Fig. 3) showing all participants' works and customized it depending on the context of each of the exhibitis which continues its journey through different universities and galleries around the world. The exhibition is an excuse to have a workshop and a meeting of art teachers in order to start developing collaborative work online.

### Key words

Art, education, digital resources, avatars

### Introduction

Avatars is the name we give to the images we use to interact on internet through a variety of social networks (Saura, 2009). Web surfers may use one or more of these, and sometimes change them frequently, depending on their interests. These images, generally two-dimensional and in a square format, are usually photographs or drawings, concrete or abstract. They show up on our profile whenever we contact other users by e-mail, in chat rooms or through videoconference, to mention a few.

Nowadays, almost everyone is present on internet with a visible image. We must be prepared, as someone somewhere will sooner or later be placing a tag with our name on a photograph from a party or some other event and everyone else will be able to identify us. These images

have an emotional meaning, they speak about us and in a sense, they certify our existence (Saura, 2011).

"Those who have not yet discovered or who have chosen not to take part in this meta-media banquet, those who do not exist on the web, those who decline to because it drains the blood out of real life, those who defend a natural existence, are missing out on an important side of living today, since not existing on the web amounts to not existing in your time". (M.J. Abad, 2010)

Fig. 1: Nicolás Vilamiñana's avatar , 2010



Studies have shown evidence of the importance of education in the successful development of modern societies. We live in a complex world, fraught with uncertainties. The artistic minded have always worked with complex models of expression and, on the teaching front, have developed artistic projects that are saturated with uncertainty with regard to the end result. We artists have a great deal to offer in the field of education, in many different ways (Acaso, 2009).

Today, teachers of artistic branches of learning quite naturally assume a virtual working context in which digital imaging is a key element to artistic teaching and communication, to social inclusion or exclusion, in which our self-portraits are called avatars (Fig.1).

### AVATARS Exhibition Project

What follows is a summary of the artistic and educational research project carried out between 2010-2012 by the research group known as "Digital Resources for Artistic Education" (UAM: PR-007), coordinated by Ángeles Saura.

AVATARS is the title given to a collective, international and itinerant exhibition of self-portraits. It was organized entirely by working collaboratively on the Internet through the





social network E@: Educación artística 2.0, which can be reached from the URL [www.arteweb.ning.com](http://www.arteweb.ning.com). (Fig. 2)

Fig. 2: E@, [www.arteweb.ning.com](http://www.arteweb.ning.com)



This project is artistic in format and in continual development. It allows us to focus on the activities of a group of artists working together, connected through internet.

As members of a social group that encourages participation and imagination, we develop our digital skills. (Asensio, 2011). Members interact with the knowledge they have gained through a social network, in NING format. The network was specially designed for developing cultural, artistic and learning-to-learn skills. It is proving useful for online learning to artists-educators who, having taken on a leading role, develop their ITC skills without actually mentioning ICT, discussing Art instead.

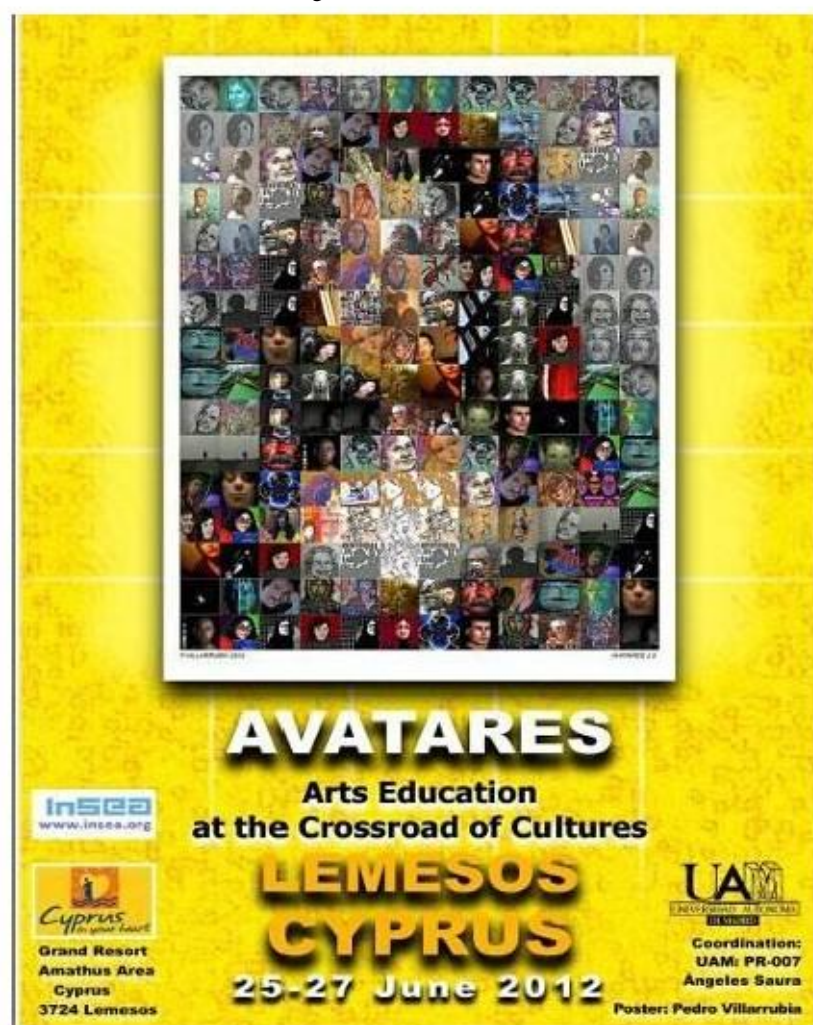
The social network E@ was created by Ángeles Saura in January 2010. Lecturer at the Department of Artistic Education of the Faculty of Teacher Training and Education at the Autonoma University of Madrid, Spain; doctor in Fine Arts by the Complutense University of Madrid and Master of Science in Educational IT by the UNED (Open University of Spain).

E@ has flourished within the context of another, wider-reaching inter-university research project known as "Interterritorialidades 2.0". Initially, this involved just nine lecturers from universities in Brazil, Chile, Cuba, Spain and Venezuela (Saura, 2010). Sponsored by the

Autonoma University of Madrid and in collaboration with Banco de Santander, it is currently on-going. On 1 January 2012, the E@ Network completed two years of its existence and, today, continues to extend links for active communication between more than 1400 teachers & artists in 35 different countries.

The exhibition AVATARS (Fig.3) speaks with images of individuals and citizens, and is a pretext for a critical reflection on identity, seeking to tough the soul and stir teachers of artistic subjects into action, thus promoting professional, artistic and academic discussion.

Fig. 3: Poster exhibition



One of the themes addressed is the need for teachers of arts to engage in lifelong learning through an artistic research project. This project employs artistic procedures from the fields of drawing, painting, sculpture, photography and video, among others, but it also incorporates technological methods, being developed entirely on internet and making full use of the information technology infrastructure.

In this inter-cultural project, every individual is equally important, equally active and listened to. It has been created without borders, without race, without gender, without limitations... with full liberty and fully independent. Artists inhabit a new common space, inter-connected.



The cloud is their hub, their new artistic living space. It is not a museum – it is closer to a virtual workshop where they all work together and where their works grow and multiply.

The working premise is in appearance very simple. Artists are asked to think about the image they want to use to present themselves to others on the web; they create their avatar using artistic and technological means; they send it by e-mail to the coordinator of the virtual exhibition, who does two things: posts it on the network and takes it to a digital press. The result is a two-fold existence and a double experience: virtual and real, from which we can all learn something.

Until now, analog has prevailed over digital in the teacher-training process for Artistic Education. Thus, Faculties of Fine Arts and Schools of Arts and Crafts have traditionally focused on solving problems related to plastic and audiovisual expression rather than on understanding reality as a social system developed within a Cybersociety context (Saura, 2005).

The importance of Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) has grown enormously, taking up a key role in our lives. It is very difficult to remain invisible on the web. At present, declining to have an online image can be considered bordering on a counter-cultural statement. On receiving an email, we also receive an image of the message's author. Additionally, we are also offered access to biographic and professional data. This has many weighty implications for us all. A single image awakens many others, giving rise to fantasies and ideas about its owner. According to Remedios Zafra, professor of new artistic practices and new forms of collective communication and social action, expert in communication, cyberculture and virtual worlds at the University of Sevilla, the traditional passport is no longer any use for travelling in virtual worlds.

"Online users demand much more than just a mugshot." (Zafra, 2010)

What does our profile photo say about us on social networks? These images we use to present ourselves on social networks are the object of study in our artistic research. They provide information and reveal truths and untruths about users. No-one is as ugly as the photo on their ID card, or as lovely as their profile photo. We have become resigned to knowing that our ID photos don't do us justice, but we dedicate time and patience to achieving the best possible look for posting on internet, and our online image opens and closes more doors than that ID photo.

Talking of the huge changes that the so-called information age brings has already become obsolete; we are living in a communication society transforming at full speed into digital. These changes affect the way we view technology and, in turn, how this affects its migration toward specific scenarios of educational application for developing cultural and artistic competencies. (Caballero, 2009).

## Artistic Education 2.0

Learning how to learn is a skill developed on internet that necessarily integrates ICT in day to day learning tasks, changing the teaching model centred around the course matter for each subject. We need a diversified teaching environment in which all the members of the social network have a prominent role to play. In order to ensure the conditions for successful



integration of this new educational technology, the expected educational changes will not depend solely on the digital technology, but on the modifications to the roles of educators and students, as well as on the interrelations between these modifications, the information and the experience. (Brea, 2010) At the Autonoma University of Madrid we have gradually introduced new technologies into the new virtual teaching environments, in many cases without altering the traditional order governing their use and we have also adopted the current models for the transmission of knowledge in response to the need for innovation, making use today's technologies to begin building the curriculum for the future (Marín, 2010). Without the traditional educational framework, teachers lack the tools to continue learning in a structured manner. To a great extent, creative learning has been confined to artistic disciplines, and the need to face the uncertain by transforming it into something that is predictable, foreseeable, is specific to our field of knowledge, Arts Education for Visual Culture.

We should consider artistic education as a process for understanding ourselves and the world (Hernández, 2008). Does it make sense today to focus our artistic subjects through the development of manual skills? We cannot train professional artisans or artists in the same way as we teach primary and secondary school students or train teachers. (Fig.4)

Fig. 4: UAM; Madrid, 2005



Our presence on the network is perceived through an image that reflects our personality. There are many examples through history of the use of an artistic image with propagandistic purposes.

Fig.5: Neptuno's fountain



An image that is able to create an emotional impact at first sight. For example, at a location very close to Madrid, in the gardens surrounding the palace at Real Sitio de San Idelfonso de Segovia, there is a profusion of fountains with mythological themes. As these gardens belonged to the king, many of the myths depicted may be interpreted as propaganda. The presence of Neptune ( Fig. 5) on the fountains that embellish the Royal Palace gardens is also intended to highlight the status to the Monarch. Certain heroes, such as Perseus, or gods, like Apollo, act as alter-egos that refer symbolically to the King.

Our self-portraits have ceased being epic biographical monuments. Our image will appear alongside every interaction, every comment and will become the visual symbol of our online identity (Asensio, 2011). Some users are faithful to their first profile image whilst others need to keep changing their identity, updating or redefining themselves at each phase of their existence. It isn't easy to reflect our mood without resorting to stereotyped icons. The continual flow of information in the digital age is accompanied by the participants' changing identities. Artists, accustomed to working with tools geared towards personal creativity, can design and update a more artistic self-expression ( Fig. 6)

The impact of profile images on social networks is already the subject of studies at several universities. A new professional job description appears in the labour market. These individuals are responsible for studying strategy and managing the so-called online impact. Professor Joseph B. Walker of Michigan University claims that people with attractive friends on Facebook is seen in a better light than the rest (El País, 2012).

Uploading a photo of ourselves when we were younger or slimmer is common amongst Internet users. Mark R. Leary, professor of psychology and neuroscience at Duke University, also studies the factors involved when we edit our online image. Some people try to impress, others are more ascetic and do not change their image at all, although a little deception is the general rule. An idealised or aspirational image, rather than what is actually the case, is the norm.



Fig.6: Examples of avatars; Workshop- Cyprus, 2012



### Questions and Hypotheses for this Artistic Research

Does the learning methodology, based on the artist-teachers' creativity, foster a positive impact on the development of cultural and artistic skills?

Can artistic activity promote the development of digital skills?

Does this approach to learning, from uncertainty and unstructured transfer of knowledge, transmit a creative, artistic culture and innovative ethos to teachers and develop self-sufficiency and enterprise?

Does this methodology bestow long-term development, fomenting innovative and creative cultural opinion through empowerment and differentiation in the learning environments?

### Project Methodology



This is an applied methodology, based upon the co-creation and co-participation in activity which follows a fivefold developmental sequence: Participation, Inspiration, Ideation, Integration and Implementation.

The five stage process has been validated based on three principal research phases:

- **Generation:** using exploratory research techniques by means of audiovisual communication via the Internet, semi-structured information regarding artistic activities has been obtained from the teachers. By running avatar creation workshops, utilising analogue and digital methods to produce avatars, various proposals have been developed for participants' expression and creativity.
- **Validation:** using artistic research techniques we proceeded to validate the AVATAR concept and its characteristics by presenting a selection of teachers' works of art and a series of experimental student trials, observing their degree of engagement, perception of quality and satisfaction with the proposed solutions for the innovation and strategic development of the project.
- **Application:** Definition of the AVATAR concept and its variations. Implementation of an observatory for viewing the permanent virtual exhibition using our social network as the communication platform (24 hours / 7 days a week), with representative samples from artists from different countries, incorporating a continuous improvement process to allow continuous updating of the exhibition content. Trends and best practices were detected in different fields (Education Observatory).

Last but not least, regarding the operational procedures and strategy for this international project, these developments take place within the framework of the Masters Degree in Secondary Education and Degree studies for Infant and Primary Teaching at the Autonomous University of Madrid, in addition to existing curricula of our international colleagues at IES Piaget (and others). Each group of teachers involved in each country applies the methodology as a research objective. Therefore our proposal takes advantage of every opportunity for exposure in a real context (academic) in order to deliver a specific international training seminar or workshop ( Fig.5) for the transmission of knowledge.

It is important to keep in mind that the meeting of professionals in real environments (by visiting the different cities) lays the basis for future collaborations via the Internet.

### Overall Project Objectives

Throughout this project the following document has been kept in mind: Unesco Competency Standards for Teachers, 2009 (downloaded 1st June, 2012 from: <http://www.eduteka.org/EstandaresDocentesUnesco.php>), also the wide diffusion of artistic and technological discoveries and the internationalisation of technology transfer in the context of Higher Education.

With the AVATARS art project we aim to promote:

- The development of new knowledge and a better understanding of art education in the context of learning from a post-modern visual cultural perspective.
- The development of new skills for art education practitioners using contemporary art methods.
- The exchange of knowledge and experience between teachers and investigators in the field of education in the Arts.

- The development of inter-cultural skills and respect towards different forms of expression and knowledge.
- Meaningful collaboration between art education researchers practising in different parts of Europe and America.

Fig.5: Avatares's workshop, Viseu (2011)



### Specific Project Objectives

Provide educators with important information regarding skills most likely to be needed by future students.

Help to bridge the gap between artists' technical training and the necessary social dimension of the work they carry out, taking into account the needs of today's society.

Collect and analyse empirical evidence as to what artist-teachers do in their daily professional work, and conduct comparative studies between artists in European and American countries.

This artistic research project aims to provide objective validation of creative abilities in order to optimize the teaching-learning process in formal and informal education situations, drawing on the active participation and involvement of people in many countries.

The project includes case studies based on preliminary findings obtained from pilot trials in Spain, Brazil, Cuba and Portugal. It aims to further investigate, validate and share this new conceptual approach in other European Union and American countries where researchers are already working with the project's lead developer. For example, United Kingdom, Italy, Cyprus, Colombia, Argentina, Costa Rica, Puerto Rico and Paraguay among others.



Experimental design and statistical description will be the steps taken through cross- and longitudinal research; exploratory qualitative research techniques, anthropological observations, quantitative research techniques and in-depth personal interviews will be used. A large number of variants will be evaluated within a small set of trial experiments conducted simultaneously. In addition to the basic model of artistic research, by means of the pilot experiments, we intend to analyse stratified, random representative population samples. We intend to develop continuous quantitative monitoring of representative samples of local populations. The next phase of the artistic research will follow the following design: First step: qualitative exploration of workshops with photography, video and Internet (generation phase). Second step: quantitative confirmation. Conducting participant surveys (validation phase). Third step: performance monitoring during the workshops held in different situations (implementation phase).

### Variables, Instrumentation and Modelling

Obtain primary and secondary data based on, respectively, publication reviews, exploratory, technical and anthropological observations and interviews, using unstructured qualitative modelling tools.

Confirm the primary data using descriptive and multivariate statistical methods, through structured instruments and experimental tests for quantitative modelling.

Gain application control of the methodology by the teaching artists involved.

“Research in Art Education is a specific and very mixed field. The research issues and problems in Art Education form a very specialized area of educational research on the one hand, and in art research on the other hand.” (Marin, 2011)

### Conclusions

As teachers, researchers and artists we combine all these facets to reinforce our commitment to Arts Education; as teacher-trainers, not only by teaching but also as practising artists, curating exhibitions and researching areas related to aesthetics, art criticism, sociology or psychology.

The development of this project involving a multidisciplinary research group, with different and converging scientific and professional backgrounds (art, design, anthropology, teaching) has been very effective, given its international scope. The artist-teachers, today's citizens and current members of the E@ social network, magically emerge from their self-profiles and avatars, their real selves and invented selves, individuals and group members.

Our avatars have grown, invading reality. They have already visited Segovia, Caracas, Havana, Rio de Janeiro, Goiania, Toledo, Madrid, Orlando, Bucaramanga, Coimbra, Braganza, Oporto, Viseu, Mirandela, Medellin, Panama, Jaen and Cyprus. The rest of the world awaits, where we will travel with everyone's avatars in our suit cases. At every destination we will invite local artist-teachers to participate in our exhibition. We wish to continue to develop our initiative and promote strategies for everyone to learn, exploring new channels from an interdisciplinary approach open to the integral understanding of the human being. The project lives as each participant promotes it within their own teaching practise. Paradoxically, our avatars have invaded the real world and travel further than many of us. We can observe from the cloud, at the web address: [www.arteweb.ning.com](http://www.arteweb.ning.com)

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## A Celebration of Monet's In The Norwegian

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### Abstract

This paper discusses one aspect of a course provided in an Australian university to prepare preservice primary school teachers to teach the performing and visual arts to school children aged 5- 12 years in increasingly multicultural classrooms. This component of the course illustrates one means by which teachers can not only integrate visual and performing arts in their classrooms, but also use common understandings and experiences to bridge cultural differences, to promote student learning and understanding in the arts and to integrate the performing and visual arts. The example that is examined in detail and that provides a model for further curriculum planning is an integrated, differentiated program planned on the matrix that results by combining the two typologies of Gardner's Multiple Intelligences Theory (1983) and The Revised Bloom's Taxonomy (Anderson & Krathwohl, 2000). The example provided focuses on the Monet painting 'In The Norwegian' and is designed for implementation with 5-6 year old students. Whilst students in this course have often initially suggested this particular art work may not be an obvious, or even a suitable choice for an arts study with young students, the subject matter crosses the boundaries of time, language and culture and provides a perfect vehicle through which to support the development of age appropriate skills, techniques and concepts as described in the prescribed syllabus documents. Importantly, this perspective of planning for teaching and learning in the performing and visual arts is non prescriptive. It can be implemented in various ways in different classrooms by different teachers and with diverse groups of students without compromising any of its potential.

### Keywords

Curriculum planning, cultural inclusivity, integration of visual and performing arts

### Introduction

The current climate educational climate with its stress on standardized testing, high focus on the STEM ( in this instance Science, Technology, English and Mathematics) subject domains and overcrowded curriculum has the capacity to impact on the Arts negatively. This climate of so called 'economic rationalism' that has dominated Australian education for some years has led to an educational system that values arts mainly as an economic commodity, paying little attention to the development of the amateur creative and artistic life of all students (Senate Environment Recreation Communications and the Arts References Committee,



1995). The chairman of the Senate Environment Recreation Communications and the Arts Reference Committee writes,

Artistic expression is found throughout human history and in all peoples. The earliest records of human cultures show highly developed art forms. All extant indigenous people spend a great deal of time expressing and celebrating cultural identity through art. This suggests that artistic expression must have had considerable survival value. (Senate Environment Recreation Communications and the Arts References Committee, 1995 p v)

The foreword of this report (Senate Environment Recreation Communications and the Arts References Committee, 1995) also cautioned that the human need for artistic expression should not be denied or frustrated as it diminishes what it is to be human. However, an educational climate that does exactly that is the current situation in most Australian schools.

This intrinsic value of teaching and learning in the Arts has been widely recognized in modern times as an integral part of human life and development, personal and community engagement (Davidson, 1993; Remer, 1982). Educationalists are aware that the Arts facilitate communication of ideas, sharing of challenges and celebrations, expressions of individual creativity and reflections on social interaction, spiritual belief systems, personal journeys, political dynamics and historical heritage. Importantly, educationalists recognize that the Arts are able to achieve this effectively without suffering any negative impact from the habitually restrictive barriers of language, time, technological advances, politics or privilege, thus providing an avenue for cultural inclusion, sensitivity and understanding in multicultural societies such as Australia. Not only do the Arts have the potential to build a picture of new, intercultural Australia, learning through the Arts has the potential to make an authentic, significant contribution to the educational goals for all young Australians (Ministerial Council on Education Employment Training and Youth Affairs, 2008; States and Territories, 2007).

The Arts promote self knowledge through expression, problem solving and creativity; three of the most salient characteristics of successful individuals, even in today's data driven, technological society (Davidson, 1993). It is interesting that, despite education in the Arts enduring a relatively low profile in many Australian school systems, these student characteristics are also three of the most sought after educational aspirations reflected in the goal statements developed by schools as part of their rationales (Remer, 1982). This capacity to be creative, to be involved in the creative process, is currently considered to be the most complex cognitive process in which people engage. This is reflected in a hierarchical taxonomy (Anderson & Krathwohl, 2000), which is frequently used in educational contexts to scaffold student thinking and engage them with higher order thinking.

Gardner's (1993a) study of creativity stressed the developmental perspective as part of the framework for analysis, noting the positive impact of a childhood during which children could explore and investigate their own creativity comfortably. He also invested considerable efforts in investigating the developmental underpinnings of children's creativity in their drawings (Gardner, 1984 p 269), concluding that



It is in the activity of the young child – his precious sense of form, his willingness to explore and to solve problems that arise, his capacity to take risks, his affective needs which must be worked out in a symbolic realm –that we find the crucial seeds of the greatest artistic achievement.

The emphasis Gardner (1984) placed on the capacity of young children to explore, task risks and to problem solve as challenges arise highlights the potential of even the youngest school aged children to benefit from engaging with the Arts in meaningful way and to further develop the personal skills, knowledge and concepts that are considered to be essential to becoming an effective member of twenty first society (Beare, 2003; Burchsted, 2003; Dickenson, 2000; Gardner, 2006). The notion of the Arts as an essential component of any successful educational endeavor for every child is not new.

Two decades ago Remer (1982 p 49) indicated that ‘..arts in education programs are designed to make all the arts integral to the general, or basic, education for every child..’. Although she then elaborated on the ways in which the arts supported school goals and enhanced the degree to which the school could successfully achieved these, citing the development of students’ understanding and skills in personal expression and self awareness, communication and social and cultural awareness amongst other, more domain specific, opportunities for learning, it is proposed that it is the opportunities afforded in the learning focused on the Arts that has the capacity to capture the imagination and interest that promotes and supports learning in other areas of school activity (Reese, 1998; Sellars, 2009). More recently, the development of the Australian Arts Curriculum (Australian Curriculum Assessment and Reporting Authority, 2011) refers to benefits for students engaging with the Arts, indicating that not only does this engagement enrich the learner on a personal level, but is vital to the development of cultural understanding and social harmony. It further indicates that all art forms are interconnected and are central to all communities and cultures. However, the reality remains that the Arts curriculum is currently being created, making it almost the last of the subject areas to be addressed on the development schedule, well after the STEM subjects. However, it does indicate links to other subject domains and recommends strongly that these links be explored and made explicit to students. This nationwide curriculum is designed to support and supplement the more local state and territory curriculum documents, in this case the NSW Creative Arts Syllabus (Board of Studies, 2006), which has similar foci. Despite this, the Australian educational climate of ‘economic rationalism’ prevails, relegating the teaching and learning in the Arts to somewhat of an ancillary role.

It is with these perspectives in mind that the student teachers at this Australian university were introduced to a differentiated program of work designed for use with school students in their first year of school. Based on the New South Wales K-6 outcomes based syllabus for the teaching of the creative and performing arts (Board of Studies, 2006), the program was developed using the outcomes and indicators from the Early Stage One (Kindergarten) section of the document. The framework for planning was the combination of the two typologies provided by the Revised Bloom’s Taxonomy of cognitive processes (Anderson & Krathwohl, 2000) and the intelligence domains identified by Gardner (1993) in his theory of Multiple



Intelligences, a planning framework evidenced to support increased engagement and educational outcomes (Noble, 2004). The program has an Arts focus with the major objective of developing students' skills, knowledge and concepts related to Monet's work entitled 'In the Norwegian' at a level that was suitable for these young students whilst planning to provide opportunities for inquiry, and personal reflection. The program (Fig 1, p 5- 10) has utilized the tasks embedded in the appropriate outcome indicators across the four arts areas in the syllabus (Board of Studies, 2006); art, music, drama and dance. These are shown with their outcome codes in bold font. The other activities and tasks that are shown in italicized text have been created to support the learning in the Arts and to provide an integrated model of cross curricular activities that uses overlapping concepts, skills and knowledge and which breaks down the boundaries between different subject domains, allowing for integration with integrity (Gibson & Ewing, 2011).

This example of Monet's work, 'In the Norwegian' was selected for several reasons. The activity in which the subjects of the work are engaged is a common experience for many children. Irrespective of the historical time, specific cultural and societal elements recorded by Monet in that instance and in that particular location, the concept of fishing is a common, universal perception. This is an activity that can be pursued as an occupation, a pastime, an interest or a hobby. Each of these will have their own temporal and ethnic identities indicated by the information provided by the artifacts depicted. This artwork provides a common notion from which to explore diversity in culture, society and personal pursuits. It offers opportunities for students to reflect on their own feelings, responses and opinions in response to the artwork whilst permitting authentic integration, not only of the various art forms dictated in the syllabus (Board of Studies, 2006), but of other areas of learning.

An appreciation of the actual technique and construction of the painting itself is accessible, at a basic level, to the young students themselves. The manner in which the paint is applied to the canvas, the asymmetrical arrangement of the subjects, the reflected scene in the water, the manner in which the background and foreground minimizes complexities of perspectives and horizons for young viewers all support the learning demands of the developmentally structured outcomes for students (Board of Studies, 2006) in the Arts and also in other key learning areas of their kindergarten curriculum, for example those in the mathematics curriculum (Board of Studies, 2002).

The matrix is developed by firstly assessing the verbs from the Arts curriculum (Board of Studies, 2006) outcomes and indicators. The intellectual quality of the verbs can be ascertained in two steps. Firstly by referring to the verbs that are indicative of the cognitive processes as presented in the Revised Bloom's Taxonomy (Anderson & Krathwohl, 2000; McGrath & Noble, 2005) and then matching the indicator verbs with the appropriate level of cognitive process. Secondly, by confirming that the task itself is reflective of the level of thinking that was indicated by matching the verbs. Syllabus indicators may contain two or more verbs, which, in turn result in the corresponding number of tasks. The differentiation of tasks into the Multiple Intelligence domains (Gardner, 1993) can be achieved by reviewing



the nature of the task and which of the intelligence domains may be primarily engaged in the task completion.

One strength of the program developed using the Revised Bloom’s Taxonomy (Anderson & Krathwohl, 2000) and Gardner’s Multiple Intelligences Theory (Gardner, 1993) of cognition is that it is extremely flexible. Some tasks may be selected for completion with all the students as a class group, others may be selected by students or teachers for individual or group completion, depending on the needs of the students and on individual teacher’s pedagogical preferences. The planning lends itself to the development of learning centers, special interest groups, community and specialist involvement, although it is designed for use by the generalist classroom teacher. Another strength is that the framework, comprising as it does of two cognitive frameworks provides activities to support concept development at all six levels of thinking, facilitates the students’ understandings of the links between the Arts and other discipline areas and provides for individual student’s preferred ways of learning. The most pertinent aspect of this planning tool is that it includes and integrates the subject areas that are considered to be priorities by the policy and curriculum makers in Australia (Australian Curriculum Assessment and Reporting Authority, 2011; Board of Studies, 2006; Senate Environment Recreation Communications and the Arts References Committee, 1995)

The Arts in Australian schools may appear to have been marginalized in favor of more ‘academic’ curriculum, despite its potential to enrich society, develop new intercultural images and identities of that it is to be Australian and to fulfill basic human expression. However, educationalists who appreciate these capabilities of Arts based curriculum are intrinsically creative individuals. It is in harnessing this creativity to plan for teaching and learning in schools that education in the Arts can survive the current wave of ‘economic rationalism’ and continue to enrich the lives of their students and communities. Programs such as the one detailed (Fig. 1, p 6-10) illustrate just one way of authentic integration, starting with students as they enter schools. Differentiated units of work such as these can be developed for all students in the primary grades and implemented with comparative ease as students generally remain with one teacher for an extended period of time during these years. These and other creatively developed programs that use the Arts as a focus for other learning may be one way forward for Australian educationalists to contribute to the development of the twenty first century citizens it so clearly desires (Ministerial Council on Education Employment Training and Youth Affairs, 2008).

Figure 1. The integrated program developed for Kindergarten students using the Monet painting ‘In the Norwegian’ as a learning focus and utilizing the NSW Creative Arts syllabus (Board of Studies, 2006)

	WordLogical and intelligence Maths intelligence	Space and Vision intelligence	Body intelligence	Music intelligence	People intelligence	Self intelligence	Naturalist intelligenc e
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<p>Remembering</p>	<p>W1 VAES1.4 describes and responds to what artworks are about</p>	<p>M1 Recall what people wear to go in a boat. What can students tell you about the attire in the painting.</p>	<p>V1 B1 DAES1.1 VAES1.1 names and distinguishes a variety of different body parts while performing in a range of dance activities, eg different materials stretching artists using, walking on toes, walking on heels, touching elbows and knees, wriggling shoulders, nodding heads V2B2 MUES1.1 moves to VAES1.2 • recognises music</p>	<p>R1 Recall any songs rhymes about rowing, sailing, fishing or the sea</p>	<p>P1 VAES1.1 investigates relationships in their artmaking, eg people who are important to them such as parents, grandparents, brothers and sisters, friends</p>	<p>S1 VAES1.4 • identifies features in the works that are significant to them and makes links with their experience</p>	<p>N1 VAES1.3 identifies different colours, shapes, textures and other things of interest in artworks.</p>
<p>Understanding</p>	<p>W2 VAES1.3 recognises and identifies some of the things depicted in artworks and responds to these through associations eg people, animals, buildings DAES1.3 talks about performing their own dance, about others dancing (classmates, older students, adults), and about skills (eg 'she bent her knees when she landed') and listens to classmates' personal</p>	<p>M2 DAES1.3 • mentions the structure of a dance by observing the different parts of a dance following a teacher's guided questions, eg 'What happened at the beginning, in the middle, and at the end of the dance?'</p>	<p>how maintaining a constant beat such as • performs colour, music using thickness, body length and percussion, density of percussion lines can instruments assist them and self-made sound depicts sources various • explores things simple aspects of musical concepts (eg loud, soft, fast, slow) in their singing, playing and moving activities. DAES1.2 uses the elements of dance while travelling (eg use of different speeds, focusing on fast runs and sudden stops, slow stretches or</p>	<p>R2 Use body percussion, instruments and own sounds to make and compare the sounds of a stormy sea and those of a quiet riverbank like that in the painting</p>	<p>P2 DRAES1.1 participates in imaginative play by taking on basic roles, eg an adventurous expedition works with other students and the teacher to develop dramatic situations in the drama forms of improvisation, movement, mime and storytelling</p>	<p>S2 DAES1.2 creates different body shapes to express an idea, DAES1.3 describes observations of the elements of dance by watching other members of class, and offers personal responses, eg 'I liked Jason's dance because he used high, medium and low shapes'</p>	<p>N2 Where do you think this was painted? Why? What can you see in the water? Why? Is it windy? How do you know? What season is it? How do you know?</p>

	<p>responses about what was enjoyable or challenging</p> <p>DAES1.3 identifies that ideas can be expressed in dance to communicate meaning through movement, eg 'they looked like fish when they dived down low to the floor'</p> <p>• describes the dance following a teacher's guided questions using basic terminology to talk about the movement, costumes, set, physical and/or sound setting of a live dance or dance on video, eg from watching the Year 5/6 assembly dance, from watching an excerpt from a video or a visiting performance.</p>			<p>spins) to reflect the idea, mood or intent</p> <p>• improvises with familiar movement from memory based on an idea and develops it expressively from mime, eg to show creatures from the world of fantasy and imagination</p>				
Applying	W3 VAES1.1 investigates stories and the features of fantasy and	M3 Put these pictures in sequence (i) getting the rowboat out	V3 VAES1.2 explores the qualities of paint, recognising qualities	B3 VAES1.2 investigates paper techniques such as tearing, rolling,	R3 MUES1.1 performs simple speech rhymes and songs	P3 Practice the dramatic play that you have made up with your group.	S3 Discuss, I would/would not like to be in the boat fishing because.....	N3 Practice your skills of painting the trees by dabbing colour



	<p>imaginative characters derived from their experience, artworks, VAES1.4 describes and responds to what artworks are about</p>	<p>(ii) getting into the boat (iii) rowing out into the river (iv) getting the fishing rods ready (v) fishing</p>	<p>such as transparency and opacity and uses brushes and other tools, eg sponges, rollers, scrapers to apply paint to different surfaces to create textures, patterns, areas of colour explores the qualities of different drawing media and tools such as graphite ('lead') and colour pencils, fibre tip pens, crayons, brushes, sticks and computer applications in drawing.</p>	<p>fringing, crumpling DAES1.1 travels around the general dance space, maintaining personal space • performs basic movement, demonstrating control, eg changing speeds, using various body parts in a variety of combinations, whole body locomotor and non-locomotor sequences, various follow-theleader sequential warm-ups</p>	<p>maintaining a sense of beat and rhythm based on nursery rhymes, children's games and playground chants (Row, row, row the boat..) MUES1.2 creates simple songs, rhymes and games, with a sense of spontaneity, that are variations on known material explores ways of varying known songs, rhymes and games through using musical concepts, eg performing the song faster, slower, louder, softer, using different instruments, whispering words, shouting words, using a different voice, using different words, adding actions or body percussion</p>		<p>I would/would not like to be a painter because...</p>	<p>with the brush. Put all the paintings up together to make a forest quilt</p>
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Analysing	W4 With the teacher, make a checklist of things that you would need to go fishing on a hot day	M4 How many people in the boat? Could more people fit? What might happen if more people got into the boat?  Read "Who sank the walking boat?" by Pamela Allen  Explore the movement, asymmetrical nature of the composition, of the painting. Fold a copy in half and talk about what you find.	V4B4 MUES1.4 DRAES1.3 organises and responds by engaging in the dramatic play, identifying when the different associations are employed, eg river rapids on chorus, their play by the verse  through movement, eg faster movements when tempo increases, of the small movements to represent soft sounds, large movements to represent loud sounds.  B5 Evaluate what the performances you would like to use to develop some criteria) with water and trees	R4 MUES1.4 identifies simple musical features of the music they perform and listen to, eg the speed of the music, when a section repeats, similarities and differences, how loud the music is, what instruments are playing	P4 VAES1.4 talks about the artist who made the work and suggests that the artist has similar feelings to the things they represent in their artworks	S4 VAES1.1 talks about significant features and relationships within their artworks.	N4 Look at the reflection in the water Allow students to look at themselves in a bucket of water. What conditions are needed to get a clear reflection?	
Evaluating	W5 Which character would you like to be and why? Vote	M6 create a graph by allowing the students to individually nominate how many fish each of the girls caught and then adding all together in a picture graph	V6 Create artworks to do with the water, fish, the people in the boat etc, using the materials that you have explored	B6DAES1.2 creates a series of movement responses based on an idea (relate to fishing, rowing, fish on the line struggling etc)	R5 Which piece of music you have made or listened to suited the painting best? Why?	P5 Do you think the girls are having a nice time? Why or Why not? How can you tell?	S5 DRAES1.4 responds in personal ways to their own drama, eg talking about their feelings associated with the roles they adopted S6 Create a personal fish, using different materials (fabric, tinfoil, cellophane, tissue etc)	N5 What sort of fish might live in the water shown in the picture? Why?
Creating	W6 DRAES1.3 communicates the depiction of real-life and fantasy situations in imagined dramatic contexts (perhaps imagine what the girls are talking	M6 create a graph by allowing the students to individually nominate how many fish each of the girls caught and then adding all together in a picture graph	V6 Create artworks to do with the water, fish, the people in the boat etc, using the materials that you have explored	B6DAES1.2 creates a series of movement responses based on an idea (relate to fishing, rowing, fish on the line struggling etc)	R6P6 MUES1.2 organises own musical ideas into simple pieces, eg by creating simple soundscapes such as a thunderstorm using percussion instruments.		S6 Create a personal fish, using different materials (fabric, tinfoil, cellophane, tissue etc)	N6 Plan and make a water collage and put your fish in there



	<p>about in the boat) Create a short play with different endings about the girls in the boat</p>							
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## Monitoring the change and development of a community of art teachers learning together

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### Abstract

This paper is a part of a broader research study that follows a group of teachers partaking in a professional development opportunity in art education in the UK. It was cross phase and took place over two years and it involved an international trip.

The study monitors and follows personal development, individual professional learning and collaborative learning in art and education. The work created is largely image based. This is used to help analyse and reflect on the virtues of the 'community practice' (Wenger 1998).

The rationale of the research was to evaluate the changes in knowledge and understanding of the group of teachers experiencing the professional development opportunity together. Analysing data gathered from written, visual and an exhibition enables the consideration of the professional opportunities and impact on the classroom, wider community and the individual.

This paper concentrates on Stages 1 and 2 of the methodology. Stage 1 is the initial planning and preparation for the collaborative journey. This is the process of the learning opportunity where the group of teachers is identified and plan to record their learning journey (Eisner 1998). Periodic questionnaires and interviews chart understanding and knowledge. Stage 2 follows the actual trip abroad to Milan to visit schools and galleries. The data collected enables contemplation of how visual material can be used to assist with theorising the role of the learner and the teacher and it informs the process of evaluating professional development and collaborative cross-phase working in an art education landscape.

### Key words

Individual, Professional, Collaborative, Community of practice, Visual Journal

### Introduction

This research examines a learning community of 12 teachers and their individual, professional and collaborative learning in art. This particular group of teachers are geographically spread across Hampshire which is in the South of the United Kingdom. Teachers come from different phases and types of school. These are Infant, Junior, Primary, Secondary and a Special School. They all have some responsibility for art in their schools and have all worked alongside the Local Authority subject adviser/ Inspector for art, in some way. It was this role that enabled the visit and took on the role of the instigator and facilitator. The teachers were all at different levels and stages of their education careers.

The idea for the professional development opportunity was borne through working with three different groups of primary teachers and secondary teachers on some action research projects, all centred on art education. These considered a myriad of topics relating to art in the classroom and teaching and learning in the schools. The materials which were created collaboratively from previous action research projects were used for resources and information to share with other teachers. Some of the teachers used this impetus towards



master's units. The separate groups were brought together willingly to enable a professional development opportunity that included an international trip.

This paper focuses on the professional development of the newly formed group of assembled teachers and looks at preparation for a shared international visit to Milan, the visit and then briefly the repercussions and events following the visit. The research uses data collected over a period of about two years. Ultimately the data that has been collected about the collaborative professional development opportunity and analysis of it reveals that there is an interplay and dynamic associated with shared training and development opportunities. This paper accounts for only a small part of the broader research study about the professional development opportunity in art education.

The rationale for the research was to evaluate the changes in knowledge and understanding of the group of teachers whilst working as individual professionals, collaboratively as a group of teachers and independently as artists. The research looks at the role of the teacher as a learner, teacher and participator. The study monitors and follows the interplay between the aspects of personal circumstances and development at individual and professional levels focussing on learning in art and education.

The methodology used for the research is divided into 4 stages. This particular paper will briefly reflect on some of stages 1 and 2. Stage 1 concerns identifying a group of teachers, an application for an international visit and planning to record the teachers' journey and then starting to record the experience.

### Identifying the Group

Assembling the teachers was quite straight forward by asking some of the current working groups containing key practitioners in art in the County's schools. The groups enabled the party to cover the education age range of between 4-16 years old and also covered various types of schools. Travelling abroad for professional development added an extra dimension to training. It was particularly attractive to consider training with like-minded individuals and also to have a focus on art education and creativity abroad. The teachers involved all shared a passion for art and had a responsibility in school and many also in County for the subject. The trip would require that teachers would be prepared to give up their own time during the school holidays as all of the visits took place out of school term time. The opportunity would potentially inspire and stimulate ideas preconsidered and also new thoughts and energies to enthuse art and education for the teachers as individuals and in their professional capacities.

The initial application for a study trip abroad was submitted in Spring 2007. The application was to the Department for Education and Skills (DfES) for their Teachers' International Professional Development Programme (TIPD). The theme for the visit was Creativity (Art and Culture). The reason for choosing this theme was to enable a group of teachers from Hampshire schools a professional development opportunity. The intention was to enhance their teaching and learning strategies to promote art and design and creativity further through an appreciation of creativity and culture in Japan. I felt this to be the subject matter that would enable the most suitable experience albeit a broad brief; it encompassed and unified the teachers' expertise and interests.

### The Application



An application form process began. The completion of forms was to become a central part to assist my methodology. It stated all aims and objectives for the trip and the professional training opportunity. The initial application within the local authority was approved. Following this an application had to be made to TIPD and the procedure was for the organisation to identify a host in the Country of the visit that would be able to support us and offer assistance. Simultaneously the teachers to be involved would have to be identified and complete application forms. Teachers were invited to sign up for the trip. Almost all the teachers invited wanted to be involved. A couple of teachers were not able to commit immediately because of domestic or professional obligations.

A detailed plan of the learning objectives for the teachers involved stated:

- To observe, research and collect information from a visit to Japan in order to inform and inspire creativity in teaching and learning from the real experience and appreciation about Japanese arts, culture and life in another continent.
- To work individually and in groups to create resources for teaching and learning and identify professional development events to disseminate ideas.
- To understand, appreciate and analyse creative education in Japan.
- To research contemporary and traditional creative in Japan to inform teaching and learning.
- To plan opportunities for cross-curricular projects on return to classroom

The objectives were arrived at by talking with the teachers during meetings and conversations about the reasons for going on the visit and the impact the influence might have. The application also required a statement about the contribution of the outcomes to raising pupil achievement. During discussion teacher's did contribute to this section, but as the Local Authority lead for the professional development opportunity I was charged with completing this. I aimed to commit the teachers to developments that I thought were both realistic and challenging. They also had to be broad to appeal to the variety of teachers and schools involved. The outcomes that I envisaged that might be realised for learners were:

- Teachers' inspiration and creativity will cascade to learners' creativity to increase understanding, knowledge and achievement.
- The Strategic groups will embed ideas from the visit into their practice to ensure that provision for all abilities is offered that enriches experiences and opportunities.
- Teachers will disseminate and share projects and learners' achievements in professional development opportunities to inform ideas for success.

The application proposal had to then be put in the context of its contribution to school development plans and the local authority and how it would assist to meet these specific aims. Teachers would do their own individual ones and I referred to the Children and Young People's plan set by Hampshire Local Authority that was tailored by the agenda set to the agenda 'Every Child Matters' ( Department for Education 2003). The section was as follows (TIPD3 April 2007 page 4 of 7):

The CYPP for HCC guiding principle is that in Hampshire each and every child really does matter. The vision is that every child and young person, including those who are vulnerable or disadvantaged, has the best possible start in life and develops to their full potential.

During the international visit the teachers would specifically address and plan a proposal to ensure that dissemination addresses the following set priorities in the CYPP (2007):



Be able to grow and develop in safety and free from prejudice and discrimination

- Receive an excellent education in preparation for a fulfilled life
- Have their achievements celebrated
- Be listened to and have their views taken into account
- 'The aims and results of the visit will contribute to the County Council policies on,
- Intercultural Education, by ensuring that pupils have a more relevant and authentic learning experience of another cultural tradition.
- Rights, Respect and Responsibility, which is based on the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and this will contribute to Article 29 of the Convention'

At the time of completing this application form, it was a timely tool that would be used in the future to act as a guide and a plan for the opportunity. The shape that the professional development would take could initially be mapped out with this form. Many of the questions and plans that were thoughts were now committed to paper. The form required information on how the teachers were intending to prepare for the activity. This resulted in responses which in fact formed an action plan. (TIPD3 page 4 of 7):

- Teachers have identified key areas for research to collect ideas and inspiration to disseminate on their return.
- Teachers will consider some RRR considerations for inclusion in their preparations and research
- Teachers will identify and organise key dissemination activities, events and projects for teachers and learners
- Teachers will organise a County celebration of 'East meets West'.

The responses had all been discussed with the teachers at some point. The application process became a way for organising future proactive research and developments. Dissemination ideas had been discussed and all teachers had their own ideas too, these included:

- Teachers will embed ideas into their own planning and teaching in order to create exemplar resources to share with their own colleagues, other schools and learners.
- Most teachers are involved in groups to cascade knowledge and information.
- The County/Inspector Adviser will call on teachers to cascade their influences and findings at courses, conferences and school visits.
- All teachers will share their findings in the 'Art News' publication and the County website.
- All teachers will contribute to celebratory exhibitions, dates and venues to be confirmed.

The application process focused the group and also ensured accountability as each teacher and their school had to complete an individual form and state personal intentions for the opportunity. All forms were collated and forwarded for the next stage of decision making.

### Recording the opportunity

It was decided by the group that visual journals would be used to capture the opportunities for professional development. The teachers were given a choice of sketchbooks and journals to





record in. They could use them as they wanted. Teachers started to diarise the collaborative learning together, and their individual experiences this occurred gradually. Inevitably there was a range of viewpoints and approaches. The teachers were willing to record their learning journey. Gilbert (1998 p255) states that teachers were reluctant to share the contents of sketchbooks with others. The group of teachers involved in this development opportunity did not mind sharing and in fact most relished other members' ideas and even took motivation from the sharing of their books. The work created was largely image based. This was key data for the research and to reflect on what Wenger (1998) purports of the 'virtues of the community of practice'.

Days were arranged to meet and plan for the trip together from the outset. Time was also spent doing practical art and investigating and sharing ideas, techniques and processes. For some new ideas were gleaned, whilst for others it was a revisiting and renewing of approaches and sharing their variations and practicalities. Throughout the times that the group met they completed questionnaires, responded to email communications and were involved in conversations to establish understanding, knowledge and needs. Early indications from the data before the international visit took place revealed that the collaborative learning and individual learning that took place from the collaborative CPD was effective. Teachers were developing their practice. Early questionnaires have been valuable in later stages of the research to reflect on. Continual monitoring with questionnaires and emails took place since the beginning of the project and for some time after.

Group members also shared their sketchbooks and their enquiries with mini presentations. Some of these were used for crediting Master units and also assisted the rest of the group by sharing research methods. Continuously the responses and group were monitored to reassess and direct the course of the professional development according to the requirements and ability of the group. The days the group met saw a growing involvement, enjoyment and dynamic with all teachers sharing an interest in art but all at varying abilities. Impetus for recording pages in the journals was set early on with a decision for each person involved in the international trip contributing two pages which would be used to create a photo book to take as a gift to the host Country.

### The visit

Stage 2 of this research's methodology focused on the International trip. The initial application for a study trip abroad was submitted in spring 2007.

The application process was a frustrating one as it was really uncontrollable because of all the partners involved to design and organise the trip. Teachers enrolled and schools gave their consent. Approval was sought and granted but the destination for the visit was changed twice and on the third occasion we were timetabled with an amended destination to Milan. The visit finally happened in autumn 2009.

When waiting at the airport one Sunday in the October 2007 half term the group were in disbelief that they were eventually about to leave for the professional opportunity. During the week six educational establishments were visited together with places of interest. These were a range of types of schools and specialisms together with the Opera House, Exhibitions and trips to key sites in Milan. Constantly teachers were recording in their journals making visual and written notes. For them there was an impetus for sharing the work and ideas on return to the UK. The atmosphere was supportive, infectious and competitive. Teachers were creative in their keeping a visual journal/diary to record their experience individually and also elements of the group's encounters. The contemporaneous recording of the experience and



also reflective note taking captured the teachers thinking and account, this affirms what Eisner considers as 'The ability to use a form of representation skilfully guides our perception.' (Eisner,2005, p.79).

Each page, piece of art and each book reveals an eclectic mix of thinking and artistry. The work reveals the teachers interaction and motivation for the professional development opportunity. The community of teachers did have a common starting point. They all had an interest and responsibility for art education and worked in the same County. This was unlike the research conducted by Schulman (2004) where teachers came from different subject areas.

The work was so revealing about the teacher's experience and pedagogical use of the collaborative experience. The journals communicate the voice of the individuals through their engagement and real participation in the learning journey. This reflects what Eisner states are the, 'unique requirements that particular subject matters exact' (Eisner 1998 p.94).

The results show teachers are teaching themselves to learn and open their own minds alongside others in the group. The format of the recording varied and ranged between concertina books, photo books, handmade books, mini and macro sized books. In the journals there is a development of confidence and enquiry that builds momentum. There is a real sense of teachers becoming enquirers and purposefully responding to the opportunity. The journals reveal teachers multifaceted contexts associated with learning. These include; teachers learning both in and out of their classrooms, teachers' personal development and learning and teachers developing their collaborative practice together with the professional development group.

The pages show teachers learning out of their classrooms with images and writing capturing days working on practical skills, visiting schools in Milan or details about an experience. All record the information differently and for different purposes. Some are personal accounts and artistic opportunities and some pages provide an insight for developments in the classroom that the experience has inspired. These vary from visual ideas to written notes, from one or two words to lengthy paragraphs. Some try practical ideas themselves that stimulate lesson ideas to initiate at some point. Others have a timetable and immediate thought for introducing the work with pupils. Some initiate their own personal artist investigations solely for their own enquiry. Across the year the group's thinking is uniform about embracing the ideas. Confidence is increasing by way of practical recording and annotating in the books. Some teachers also use cameras to do a photo diary and capture the experiences. Early on the journals became art pieces. Teachers challenged and motivated each other with ideas. Some pages took on the influence and style of a workshop where we studied the exciting work of Perella (2007). The book was thought provoking for individuals with its combining of techniques, layering of materials, placement of image and text, range of skills and materials used. Some pages and works became more experimental and creative, other more colourful, others had more text and fonts explored and the execution was more considered.

The journals were like a form of participatory action research. They reflect the visits, schools and Italian education system alongside events at home in the UK. They also unravel the trip's itinerary together with extra – curricular events with sites of interest, events and leisure activities enjoyed by the group. Teachers were developing focus for the collaborative and individual learning; they were experimenting and growing in confidence. So many approaches and experiences were captured in a variety of ways. One teacher did material experiments to investigate expressing and recording the persistent rain that happened during the visit. Another recorded coffee cups to trace the variety of combinations and blends available to sample and savor. One captured various observations by using luggage tags and working onto them with information, drawings and annotations.



Whether these were new or old skills, the teachers were all in some way benefitting from the opportunity. Be it a new way of recording, new materials and processes or even the luxury of having the time and focus to pursue art practicalities and log their participation.

### Community of Practice

Shulman's research (2004) considers the interactions between a community at different levels. This research differs as the teachers were a like-minded group and were from an art subject background, they also were known to the facilitator/researcher and had worked with other members of the group before the international visit project commenced. Schulman (2004) considers a theory for teaching communities with a group of teachers from different subjects and levels affecting the group. The model that Schulman (2004) proposes is for the interplay between the different perspectives focusing on individual, community and policy. This research model in a similar way looks at the developing perspectives that the professional development research considers focusing on the individual, professional and collaborative levels.

Wenger (2011) explores the concept 'knowledgability in landscapes' and considers how an individual's personal experience and competence interact and feature in a community. This reflects on the profiles of the individuals in a landscape of practice and looks specifically at the engagement, alignment and the imagination of community members. By drawing trajectories for an individual member of the community it is possible to consider the interplay and tensions that the various levels and roles have on an individual and their personal landscape. Each individual in the group has a personal landscape, each of these contribute to a complex web which produces the group's landscape. By analysing an individual's landscape and focusing on each member's individual, professional and collaborative modes it interestingly focuses on energies and tensions of the various levels and demands on the teachers. It enables consideration of the choices, circumstances and accountability of each individual. This information has come from data gathered from questionnaires, interviews, meetings, email, and correspondence and by informal discussions on occasions with the teachers on the extra- curricular opportunity. The findings revealed that the professional development experience had enabled teacher's own and collective work to have an increased aptitude and potential. The nature of the sustained professional development indicated in the very early stages that it would seem to have unleashed capability, promise and vigor.

The result from applying this scrutiny of each teacher's responsibilities reveals some interesting data. Certainly early on it would seem that constant continued professional development and collaboration can transform an individual's composition, relationships and focus with the sustained energies that come from an embraced continued professional development opportunity. Early indicators may suggest that the success and motivation of the group of teachers can be attributed to the selection process, introductory sessions, close monitoring, facilitation process and relationship of facilitator and teacher and mentoring that took place.

The visual diaries are doing more than recording; they are not just research and understanding but also emerging as works of art themselves. The teachers were fuelled and competitive about keeping a journal. Personally as artists they embraced the time to be creative and challenge themselves. They absorbed the opportunities offered in the UK with museums, gallery, an Italian language session and practical workshops. This reveals something unique about this community of learners who are collaboratively challenging each other and becoming so involved. The journals reveal many hours of work and attention. All the teachers



had different levels of engagement and commitment. Shulman (2004 p 265-6) explains about community levels of learning and talks about the extent that teachers learn and engage in the process. As Schulman (2004 p 266) illustrates in the diagrammatic format of levels of analysis. The sharing at the community level motivates the individual and the practice. The sketchbooks of artwork by both teachers and children superficially reveal an impact and influence. Teachers engaged with the professional development opportunity have recorded their progress, perceptions and viewpoints. How much the learning has infiltrated will be seen in a showcase opportunity and additional data collection and scrutiny of it. The data will have to consider individual schools, children, colleagues and also each individual teacher involved in the professional development group. As well as the influence on the teacher's professional capacity the data will also need to be able to reveal any personal influence for each teacher and their artistry.

This suggests an additional dimension to the framework used for analysis of a community of practitioners as offered by Schulman (2004). A framework that is particularly suitable to the needs of art practitioners that can consider the element of the twofold personal practice as an artist and a professional. To some extent the data has started to apply a structure and trial a model for participatory action research. This follows a spiral of experience, creativity, application, reflection and sharing at the three levels of personal, professional and collaborative. Further analysis of data from this research will assist to formulate a specific framework for art specific professional development as the research unfolds.

In the early stages of the group meeting they planned to organise an exhibition to share their work after the visit to Milan. This was about 18 months after they had initially first met. By that time the community of practice was very cohesive. They were like minded individuals that had found a real connection. As time moved on the need to facilitate lessened and a conscious effort was for them to direct the showcase event. The visit happened in October 2008 and the exhibition in July 2009. In that time the transference and influence of the professional development exercise was evident in teachers' schools, their own work and in teachers' learning. The exhibition was the culmination of the learning opportunity, the learning was made visible. It reveals enquiry along with curiosity, involvement, understanding, exploration, trial and error. It was a diverse display of teachers' personal work, children's work, professional work and collaborative work. Responses collected from teachers, children and schools assist to reflect on the experiences and values. Various levels of transformation were unleashed in both teaching and learning with this project.

This model of practice has motivated teachers through interaction and aesthetics. Lave and Wenger (1991) discuss the social character of learning in a community of practice. Certainly the collaboration and energies from the group and between the teacher was valuable in directing the learning and influencing the teachers in both personal and professional ways. Of importance is that each individual teacher was afforded time and opportunity to learn and be receptive to the opportunity. The recommendations for valuable and successful collaborative professional development is that the offer for the community of practice enables all levels that an individual can operate at are addressed and given attention. The three levels of connections in the synthesis considered are those of personal, professional and collaborative. The model has changed attitudes, profiles and consciousness at various levels. What this means for teachers will be considered later in the research. There is still liaison and relationships between the group, that is self-initiated. These ideologies and processes are transferable to other settings and can be used to enhance performance and mastery and also to support sustaining motivation and creativity.



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### Abstract

A two-week international workshop was held in Finland during February 2010 and again in Glasgow in February 2011. A third workshop was held in Nicosia, Cyprus in February 2012. Entitled "Intercultural Innovation Insight Workshop" (3EYES), they were sponsored by the European Lifelong Learning programme. Students from Portugal, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Finland and the United Kingdom were placed in multi-cultural teams of five. Each team had two product designers, one graphic designer, one financial and one marketing student. They were set the task to devise new product ideas for a local company and they had two weeks within which to do it. These intensive workshops comprised lectures and practical tutorials as well as ideation sessions for the new product ideas and represent one way in which international issues may be appreciated and accommodated. This paper will compare the three events and discuss issues of social responsiveness, shared goals and identity and draw conclusions on the suitability and sustainability of this form of activity.

### Keywords:

Intercultural, innovation, teamwork, product design

### Introduction

This paper will reflect on three workshops financed by the European Union under the banner of the Erasmus "Intensive Programme" (IP), an element of their Lifelong Learning programme (intensive programme 2009, 2010, 2011). They were entitled "Intercultural Innovation Insight Workshops" (3EYES).

For the European Commission an IP, as expressed in the application form, aims to (European Commission 2011):



### General requirements

- To improve the quality and to increase the volume of student and teaching staff mobility throughout Europe, so as to contribute to the achievement by 2012 of at least 3 million individual participants in student mobility under the Erasmus programme and its predecessor programmes.
- To improve the quality and to increase the volume of multilateral cooperation between higher education institutions in Europe.
- To increase the degree of transparency and compatibility between higher education and advanced vocational education qualifications gained in Europe
- To improve the quality and to increase the volume of cooperation between higher education institutions and enterprises
- To facilitate the development of innovative practices in education and training at tertiary level, and their transfer, including from one participating country to others
- To support the development of innovative ICT-based content, services, pedagogies and practice for lifelong learning

### Specific requirements

- Present a strong multidisciplinary approach.
- Focus on subject areas which are currently under-represented in Erasmus student mobility (over-represented areas: business studies, social sciences, law, arts, humanities, languages).
- Train students' entrepreneurial competences in any subject area

Five European universities collaborated in this venture:

- Glasgow Caledonian University, Scotland (product design)
- North Karelia University of applied Sciences, Finland, (product design)
- Frederik University, Cyprus (graphic design)
- Silesian University in Opava (Marketing)
- Polytechnic Institute of Porto (IPP) (Finance)

They met the above requirements by asking students to create feasible ideas for new products according to needs expressed by a collaborating company because new product development (NPD) demands cross-disciplinary activities requiring, as it does, input from design, market, finance and manufacturing.

### The three workshops

a. The first workshop was held in Joensuu, Finland (Silva P et al, 2012). It comprised lectures and seminars coupled to teamwork on the assigned problem. One student from each country was assigned to a team and, working on a flat table, they were guided through a process that culminated in a presentation to the SME of their suggested new product. During the course of their team discussions, there was staff available to facilitate progress. At the end of each day, the teams' work was displayed and they were asked to explain and answer questions on their work. To help them, and to encourage a technical understanding of the issues, students were taken to the company to inspect their products.

One particularly important part of the IP was the cultural experience. A number of typical events were staged to help them appreciate this aspect of the country within they worked.

b. The second workshop was held in Glasgow, Scotland. In contrast, this workshop helped a micro-company comprising just 2 people: a father and son. The arrangements were similar



to the previous year but, in reaction to criticism, the lecture series was curtailed to allow more team time.

c. The assignment for the third IP was different again. The teams worked for a Municipal Authority of Nicosia, Cyprus to develop promotional products. Working again around flat tables the teams were guided in a more formal way by means of timetabled team meetings with two assigned tutors.

#### How the students evaluated the workshops

At the completion of every IP, the students were required to complete a questionnaire to be submitted to the European Union, together with the final report. They were asked about motivation, information and support, accommodation and infrastructure, recognition, and evaluation of the IP. From the teachers' point of view it became a means to understand the points in need of improvement for subsequent workshops.

Most of questions used a 1-5 scale. In some questions 1 represented 'poor/negative' and 5 represented 'excellent'. In other questions 1 represented 'not at all', and 5 represented 'very much'. Some open questions were also available in the questionnaire.

A total of 98 students participated in the programme, but the number of respondents was 96. A student from Finland and another from Portugal did not respond to the questionnaire during the first workshop. In Finland, during the first workshop of the programme, the participation was of 30 students. In Scotland, during the second workshop of the programme there were 28 students. In Cyprus, during the last workshop of the programme the number of students was 40. The whole population comprised of 60 female and 38 male students. As the population is limited, no generalizations are attempted; however, the results obtained can be used to give some preliminary clues for the improving of future workshops and programmes. In addition, some students were encouraged to write a short report on their experiences. Quotations from these and from the questionnaires are included below in italics.

#### Quantitative analysis of the workshops

We start this discussion with a student's opinion about the importance of the workshop participation. A student said in the second workshop:

*It was a very good experience in my life to work in a real project, this project improved my skills gave me a good opportunity to have a job after my graduate, and to have friends from different countries and see their traditions.*

#### Timing of the workshops

In terms of dates and duration of the programme students were very satisfied, especially during the first and third workshops. In average of the three workshops, almost 80% of students responded 4 or 5 (in which 1=not at all satisfied and 5=very much satisfied). The lower values were during the second workshop, in Scotland, in which less than 70% of students responded 4 or 5. In Finland, more than 82% responded 4 or 5 compared with similar values in Cyprus (more than 80%). A student commented:

*I thought the IP could last longer, we only had two weeks to learn about the subjects and to start and finish the project. We could have participated in more activities*



together, like the caileigh, which was very fun. But in a general perspective, the program was very good, and well structured.

This idea was not full shared by lecturers. During the first workshop, in Finland, a lecturer said:

The duration of 2 weeks for such a programme proved to be quite difficult for staff members since this is a very long period to be away from home institution and duties. As a suggestion, an additional member of staff can be added so that each lecturer can have a week each.

In the second workshop the idea about the duration of the IP shared by the lectures was similar to the first workshop. A Lecturer said:

Two week period might be too long to be away from home, Universities but it became evident that there was a need for all to be part of the experience throughout the whole period.

#### Their motivation

Most of students (57% in average) consider European experience (attributed 5, in which 5=very much) as the main motivation to participate in the programme. But in the second workshop the most valuable factor was Academic factor, with 87% in average (attributed 4 or 5, in which 5=very much), and the second most valuable factors were European experience and the practice of foreign language. This international experience was a very important factor of motivation, as said by a student during the first workshop:

I like working in international teams, because I could improve English and I explored something about different countries and styles in teaching.

On the contrary, the less important factor was 'Friends living abroad' as only 38% of students indicated 4 or 5 in average of the three workshops.

#### Student support

In terms of support, students admitted a better support from the home institution than the host institution. In average of the three workshops we had 74% of students that responded 4 or 5 for the home institution and 67% students that responded 4 or 5 for the host institution. The only exception was verified during the first workshop, in Finland, in which students admitted a better support from the host institution than from the home institution. In this case, almost 80% of students responded 4 or 5 for the host institution and 70% responded 4 or 5 for the home institution.

#### Accommodation

Accommodation in the host country was not very well judged by students. With the exception of the first workshop, in which almost 80% of students responded they were satisfied or very much satisfied (i. e, responded 4 or 5), the other two workshops had lower results. Only 18% of students responded 4 or 5 during the second workshop, which improve to 42% of students that responded they were satisfied or very much satisfied with the accommodation in Cyprus, during the third workshop of the programme. During the second workshop a student said:



Also there was a problem about the accommodation because we didn't have hot water for a few couple days, it was really cold in there and it was pretty far from the school.

However, is very grateful to receive very positive feedback from students (what happened during the first workshop). A student affirmed:

The way in which we were accommodated was a very positive aspect. Students from four countries were put up in the same hostel. This gave us more time to get to know each other and so were more comfortable when working in our groups. This also gave us time to socialize together and relax within the hostel in the mornings and evenings. The short distance between the hostel and the university meant that each group could walk together giving us better sense of direction around the area. This was a real pleasure for us to walk every day and would not have changed this if given the choice.

#### Their experience

Students believe very strongly that this experience will help them in their further studies / career (in average of the three workshops, 85% of students chose 4 or 5, in which 1=not at all and 5=very much). The second most important was the personal outcomes with 82% of students responded 4 or 5 (in which 1=not at all and 5=very much).

In terms of pedagogical issues, capabilities and expertise of professors were very well assessed by students. In fact, this question was the best evaluated by students, concerning pedagogical issues. In average of the three workshops 80% of students responded 4 or 5, in which 1=not at all satisfied and 5=very much satisfied. Additionally, in terms of the quality of teaching, more than 70% of students responded 4 or 5. A student from the first workshop, in Finland, demonstrated this:

... we had one lecture with a teacher about design and everybody enjoyed it so much. This lecture was young oriented and very interesting.

Students also assessed very well other activities, since 77% responded 4 or 5 in terms of satisfaction. This level of satisfaction was particularly high during the second workshop, in Scotland, in which 82% responded 4 or 5.

#### Overall evaluation

Finally, more than 80% of students (85%) evaluated the programme as 4 or 5 (in which 1=poor/negative and 5=excellent). This means that students' opinion was very positive, which is very rewarding for the organization team. This can be demonstrated by comments from several students. A student, from the first workshop in Finland, wrote:

I personally think that 3 EYES project in Joensuu, Finland, was overall very beneficial for every involved student, especially for me. (...) I evaluated the whole stay in Finland as very creative, funny, interesting.

In the second workshop a student said:

I consider this workshop a good life experience. This workshop gave me the opportunity to find out that the theory and practice are two totally different things. I also found out that the cooperation in multicultural team is really difficult.





Two major problems pointed out by students was the time to know each other and the language barrier. In the second workshop a student said:

I think also the first day of the project should be more of a social experience so everyone gets to know each other a little more instead of jumping straight into work and presenting with others you aren't familiar with also with the language barrier.

## Discussion

More than anything else, the students learned that international project work, while inevitable, was complicated through miscommunication that may arise from many social and cultural issues. On the other hand, discovering these issues in a safe environment was a delight. Many expressed a desire to experience international work again.

Thus the principal reason for the workshops has been achieved and Erasmus can feel justified in their sponsorship.

Equally, they came to realise how a real project relies on contributions from many disciplines in addition to their own and that the teaching and working methods in other countries and disciplines could differ considerably from their own. This is quite a big lesson because university teaching tends to be far more parochial (from both subject and institution perspectives) than is consistent with the needs of industry, (European Commission 2012) and the desires of national standards, for example, UK-SPEC (2010), which identifies the levels of competences for engineers.

All the three workshops were well received by students, albeit with some criticisms, but staff were unhappy about teamwork. There were ice breaking activities but, while teams developed close friendships, their teamworking was less satisfactory. Following an initial bonding phase, the teams cooperated to generate initial ideas on new products after which they separated on discipline lines until they were forced to re-form to develop their last presentation. In consequence, the product they developed was interesting but not outstanding. Staff left the last workshop with a view that other ways need to be used to truly encourage invention.

One way might be to move away from developing product feasibilities to developing product ideas. In this way, there is no call for finance and marketing students to use their own specialist skills. Rather, the teams would concentrate on developing ideas from many different perspectives: market, finance, design, graphics, and engineering. This scenario allows for cooperation without division and recognition that everyone can both contribute and offer a different viewpoint.

## Conclusions

Three workshops have been described that were sponsored by ERASMUS funds. The outcomes can be regarded as extremely positive as regards social and cultural learning and a desire to repeat the experience. The candidates were challenged to work in an unusual environment as compared with their home university but they learned about cooperation and the diverse needs of international projects.

Unfortunately, it would be unlikely that the high cost of these projects would be found without EU sponsorship.

We believe in these projects because some way must be found that improves the employability of students. Therefore it is our responsibility to move away from traditional



forms and experiment even more with methodologies that promote not just the pursuit of knowledge but the pursuit of experience.

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Virtual reality and multi-sensory stimulation:  
A joint method of teaching art history

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Abstract

The paper presents a research project that was initiated by the desire to develop a playful and entertaining approach to teaching art history and theory to students. The project explores ways for students to encounter artwork in a memorable way, making their learning experience more meaningful and impressionable. It involves specialized photography techniques (such as rotating, infrared/ultraviolet, macroscopic photos with interactively modifiable lighting or camera angle) in order to enhance different aspects of the artwork. The photos will be displayed on screen along with other stimuli (sounds, odors, textures, or even gravel and leaves on the floor, wind, moisture etc.), creating a multi-sensory environment adapted to the individual characteristics of each artwork.

Art is usually experienced in the sterilized environment of museums or schools using old-fashioned teaching methods. However, young students are surrounded by sophisticated technology today and we need to use such to stimulate young art viewers. The modern technology proposed allows interconnections between sound, motion, visual, and could be implemented with any type of artwork. Integrating technology to enhance the sensorial perception of art would create a more stimulating experience, enhancing all senses to arrest the interest of young participants.

The role of the senses in art has caused a diachronical aesthetic debate from Procratics and Plato to 20th century phenomenology and from ancient Greek art to 20th century modernism. The senses of hearing, touch, taste, smell and sight are present in art from antiquity to the 20th century either iconographically or in structural or conceptual framework. The relationship between color and sound in particular has followed the expansion of space from abstract two-dimensional paintings to immersive three-dimensional environments. The emerging of new and more complex art forms questioned traditional schemes and concepts regarding all art and its didactics.

These near limitless frontiers offered a broadening of definitions and thematic fields of art as well as new curatorial and educational practices regarding the presentation of artwork. The ArtFelt project is an attempt to highlight the role of the senses in understanding art, reducing the visual domination in the interpretation of artwork. The proposal is an initiative of the Art Historian and musician Dr. Themis Veleni and the photographer Orestis Kourakis ([www.orestiskourakis.gr](http://www.orestiskourakis.gr)). The project will act as a pilot program in collaboration with Stevens Institute of Technology ([www.stevens.edu/sit/](http://www.stevens.edu/sit/)) in New Jersey. The research results will be recorded and systematically analyzed in order to form a database that will act as guidelines for designing pilot interactive multimedia for use in museums and schools.



## Keywords

Art education, multisensorial interactive environments, visual arts, technology, interaction

## Introduction

The senses of hearing, touch, taste, smell and sight and their interconnections have raised an aesthetic debate in art from antiquity to the 20th century. Music and sound have played a crucial role in introducing the freedom of other senses in experiencing art. The history of the relationship between color and sound has followed the expansion of space from abstract two-dimensional paintings to immersive three-dimensional environments (Veleni, 2012 and Brougher/Mattis/Strick/Wiseman/ Zilczer, 2005). The phenomenon of hybridization further questioned traditional schemes and concepts regarding art history and theory along with the need for new curatorial and educational practices (Popper, 2007).

Investigating the interrelation of music and visual arts through the 20th century together with Fulbright photographer and instructor Orestis Kourakis, we explored a way to highlight the role of the senses in understanding art, enriching the perception of artwork.

During various visits to museums seeking new way to process the extensive range of art from a variety of chronological periods and geographical areas, an inspiration came in mind - to explore the thread that runs through artistic creation and the viewers' evoked multi-sensory responses. Such research could dramatically enrich how we understand and, therefore, exhibit art, especially when targeting young children (Van den Beemt, Akkerman, Robert-Simons, 2010) and people with special needs.

The 1990s has been the decade of images, while the 2000s focused on data and information. Now is the era of experiences and emotions. Museums have realized that the most effective way to attract the public is the experiential engagement of their visitors. This ensures the visitors retain images viewed, while leaving a pleasant sense of their visit that encourages them to return. Contemporary art exhibitions today, which themselves have an extravaganza character, often adopt the latest technology to attract and engage audiences (Scott, 2012). Thus, the exhibitions themselves are transformed into interactive multi-sensory installations, which often combine sound, motion, speech and image. Some representative examples include the exhibition *Visual music* held at the Hirshhorn Museum, the *Sons & lumières* exhibition (Duplaix/Lista, 2004) and the exhibition *Danser sa vie* at the Centre Georges Pompidou (Macel/Lavigne, 2011).

## Conceptualization

During our recent visit to the MET museum we were left inspired by Édouard Manet's *Spanish singer*. Besides the visual synthesis of the painting, its true magic is found in the visual hints that bring the viewer right into the scene - the singing mouth, the hands playing the instrument, the hovering leg of the guitarist implying movement following rhythm. The artist takes the viewer beyond reality and demands he/she take part in his work, hearing and feeling his music. We tried to incorporate this purposeful involvement of the senses in art and we sought to find a way to remind our students that all their senses have to be heightened when meeting any form of art. Questions filled us - how can one teach viewers to engage their senses and how can we heighten those senses often so inhibited when viewing "works of art" in a formal museum?



The challenge grows greater when non-representative paintings are included. Music gradually invaded art in deep and intrinsic ways. Ethereal, intangible, abstract, timeless and freed from the tyranny of imitating nature, music has inspired painters since the first decades of the 20th century, demanding they follow its example to liberate painting from visual conventions and restrictions. Artists like Wassily Kandinsky, Paul Klee and Piet Mondrian were inspired by musicians; the atonal Schoenberg, the contra punctual Bach, the jazzy Gershwin (Maur, 1999). Kandinsky and Klee, deliberately transcribed music to visual elements, corresponding color to notes, lines to rhythm, transforming the canvas into a potential musical notation or a floor dance following the development of music movement in time (Düchting, 2004 and Düchting 1993). Revealing these affinities to viewers of their art enlightened the experience, unveiling the interconnections between art forms and reflecting the sense of the era.

Could you dance a Mondrian painting with a be-bop or a foxtrot from which his paintings are inspired? Would your body movement help you understand the rhythm of the painting? Could you sing Klee's polyphonies? How does color correspond to sound, lines to rhythm, etc.? Does pitch alter your color perception? Could the resurgence of music when viewing a painting enhance the aesthetic experience of the artwork? Could all of this be extended to incorporate other senses, such as touch and smell? Can evoking other senses (smell, touch, hearing) empower the imaginative muscle of the viewer in order to better experience art?

Are young children without inhibition and, therefore, more sensitive? What educational and curatorial practices and methods could be implemented to examine these assumptions?

#### Inspirations/research

Visiting the US to explore possible collaborations we came across the Liberty Science Centre (<http://lsc.org/>, 08.30.2012), a centre where kids learn about themselves and their world in a stimulating and engaging interactive environment. There, young people discover science, communication, perception and environmental issues through playful installations that act as Brain Teasers. The function and role of senses in understanding the world around us has obviously inspired the Centre.

Various exhibits attracted our attention; the Touch Tunnel is a mysterious, pitch-black, crawl-through maze that invites the visitor to converse it using only his/her sense of touch. Another impressive installation was Graffiti. On Liberty's 10-foot-long Graffiti Wall, visitors can use digital "spray paint" to leave their mark. Here technology directly serves modes of expression. With the Resonance Tube one can see the altering of pitch and volume of sound in the cube. These alterations are translated into detectable movement that changes the speed, mass, and volume of the material inside the tube. The exploration of the senses and their role in our perception of the world around us as well as the interconnection between them is a fascinating field, especially when young audiences are involved and, even more, when this is applied to our understanding of arts, both visual and acoustic. In this direction, the UnMuseum(<http://contemporaryartscenter.org/unmuseum,08.30.2012.>) located at Cincinnati, Ohio, is a gallery of interactive art for children. The motto of the UnMuseum is that one must hear, smell, and/or touch art. The Sensory Elephant project consists of small boxes containing different sensory experiences. It was made to appeal to blind and seeing-impaired children, as well as to encourage sighted children to discover art through other senses.

The Please Touch Museum (<http://www.pleasetouchmuseum.org/>, 08.30.2012) is a children's museum located in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, USA. One of its main exhibits is the Walking Piano, a musical instrument invented in 1976 by kinetic artist and inventor Remo



Saraceni, merging dance, music, and play. The user's feet play the Piano. Shoes, socks, or toes can tap the keys that make the music.

The Tactual Museum (<http://www.tactualmuseum.gr/>, 08.30.2012) of Athens is addressed to both non-sighted and sighted people. Visitors are urged to touch and feel the exhibits and try to conceptualize the sculptures by touch. Collecting all this constructive and inspiring data and experiences we were inspired to find the most engaging, appealing and self-active way to present interact artworks in an exhibition. In order to avoid conventional ways of exhibiting, the presentation of the artwork needed to become, in a way, an installation itself.

Working on the photos, videos, and music production for the exhibition "Macedonia from Fragments to Pixels", a special exhibition of prototypical interactive systems, we had the opportunity to have a 'taste' of how visitors respond when offered a novel approach to viewing classical antiquity: "served in ultra high-tech plate available at the public's fingertips, touchingandplayingwithantiquities"

([http://www.makedonopixels.org/index.php?c=0&sub\\_c=1&l=e](http://www.makedonopixels.org/index.php?c=0&sub_c=1&l=e), 08.30.2012). The subjects were drawn from ancient Macedonia and the exhibition was held at the Archaeological Museum of Thessaloniki with the collaboration of ICS-FORTH (Institute of Computer Science of the Foundation for Research and Technology). The interactive installations are permanently in view at the Archaeological Museum of Thessaloniki. A representative selection is presented below:

Figure 1. Polyapton, ©A.M.Th./ICS-FORTH, 2009



This is a very large interactive screen that can be used by several visitors who wish to explore multifaceted information on a subject at the same time. The system's special multi-touch screen recognizes the touch of many fingers or hands, but also specific objects, at the same time. Visitors can 'scroll' across the painting and focus on points of interest with multimedia information by touching them, zoom in on details with the use of a paper magnifying lens, while an infrared torch displays a modern rendition of the painting. Macrographia (fig.2) presents very large images which visitors can explore by walking around the room. The images are projected on a screen and are analyzed part-by-part depending on the location of each visitor in the room. The system occupies a room with one wall the projection screen. Visitors enter the room and the system follows the movement of each one separately. The images projected before each visitor change according to hers/his location in the room. The painting is divided into five sections, which correspond to the prey of the hunters. When someone stands in front of a section, depending on the distance from the screen, the image she/he views and the caption underneath change. There are four levels of

information: the present state of the painting, an artist's sketch, an artist's modern rendition, and notable details. Visitors can select the language of the

Fig. 2. Macrographia, ©A.M.Th./ICS-FORTH, 2009.



- accompanying text by entering the room from the left (for Greek) or right side (for English).
- Multimodal diverse travel (fig.3): This system enables more than one visitor at the same time to interactively explore information about various areas and points of a map of Macedonia. The system comprises a table covered by a printed map on which the location of various cities and other notable sites is projected. White paper tablets with a colored frame are at the visitors' disposal and on each tablet a magnifying glass is displayed. When the magnifying glass is placed over a city, related images, videos and texts appear on the tablet. For every city there are multiple information "pages", which can be viewed by touching virtual buttons at the bottom of the tablet. The color of the frame of each tablet designates the language in which information is presented.

Fig. 3. Multimodal diverse travel, ©A.M.Th./ICS-FORTH, 2009



Contemporary exhibitions adopt a multimedia character in order to engage various audiences and especially younger people, thus transforming into interactive multisensoral environments that often try to creatively combine sound, motion and visual elements (Holzer, 1994). We

insist that this modern technology, which generates associations between sound, motion and visual elements could be creatively employed to alter traditional display of artifacts. What differentiates our project from the above is the creation of an immersive multisensorial environment in which the participant attains the information on the exhibit in a non-verbal and non -exclusively- visual way. Content becomes media and vice versa, blending all senses and artifacts and their display merges in an installation that offers a holistic approach to the visitor.

Fig. 4. Touchy Feely Art, Rainbow camp/Anatolia College of Thessaloniki, @Themis Veleni 2012



#### Implementation in a preliminary stage

Within this framework and as part of our research, we wanted to implement our idea non-digitally - but still very experientially- to children 4 to 12. We designed an educational project that encourages young viewers to discover art through each of their senses and it was implemented within the framework of a summer camp at Anatolia College of Thessaloniki, 18th to 29th of June 2012<sup>24</sup>. The project was divided into two parts. The first addressed children from 4 to 8 years old and the second children from 8 to 12.

For children 4 to 8 years old:

In order to stimulate their sense of hearing when confronted with a painting, we showed them five famous paintings in printed form (e.g. Pablo Picasso, *The rooster*, 1938). The paintings imply sound and children were asked to produce fast and spontaneously the specific sound for each image.

Then, aiming to trigger their sense of taste, touch, and smell, children were shown a still life painting with fruit and vegetables (fig.4) and were asked to play the roles of the “pathfinders”. Pathfinders try to guess the depicted fruit using their odor, taste and touch and eventually to set the painting in life.

With this process children’s recollections were enhanced. Using more than sight to commit to memory the synthesis of the painting makes their interaction with it more engaging and experiential, thus more effective.

Still life became for them an interesting trigger to evoke their other senses. Thus it made the confrontation with this genre more meaningful. Each time they are view a still life painting they can recall the game and try to reproduce it with their imagination.

The third art sensory game asked children to choose from 2 different music pieces (Beethoven’s *Spring sonata* for violin and piano and David Brubeck’s *Take five*), one that corresponds to a Degas ballet class and the other to a Hund’s jazz painting. We showed them

<sup>24</sup>Special thanks to Eva Kanellis, Anatolia College Director of US College Counseling and Special Programs for her strong and inspiring belief in our project and for introducing us to Stevens Institute of Technology.

a video by Jackson Pollock dripping paint at a large canvas while listening to music at his studio filmed by Hans Namuth then asked them to express themselves and translate music through body movement into painting. They chose one of the aforementioned music pieces.

Using finger paint each child was asked to pick a color and, using his/her feet, paint a large canvas on the ground while dancing to the chosen piece (fig.5). We all moved with the music.

Children enjoyed the process and they realized that making art is a way of finding new forms of expressing oneself, often by making connections between already known things in order to master the unknown and imaginative. The game was so engaging that even the assistants participated.

For children from 8 to 12 years old:

Starting with Manet's painting *Allegory of the five senses* we explored through observation and discussion the five senses and their symbolism in painting. After a short introduction on how music has influenced great painters like Klee, Pollock and Kandinsky, with the help of a specially developed digital application (where one can play a colored keyboard and listen to specific sounds) we explained to them the correspondences between instrument sounds and colors/shapes that Kandinsky used when he was painting (fig.6).

Every child listened to a specific instrument and made his/her own connection to the sound with a specific color and shape. An abstract painting based on music was thus created. Children became aware of abstract painting, which they first considered just smudges, and then they realized that it is all about forms, shapes, and colors and about finding an interesting way to synthesize them all on a flat two-dimensional canvas.

Thus, abstract thinking is promoted. Literal and constrained ways of thinking are substituted by free expression. A further asset for them is that they realize that there is no right or wrong in the way they correlate sound, shapes and colors. In fact, they soon realized that when art is concerned all ways of thinking and expressing oneself are a priori right. That was very liberating and inspiring for them and at the same time it taught them to respect each other's differences.

Fig. 5. Touchy Feely Art, Rainbow camp/ Anatolia College of Thessaloniki @Themis Veleni



Developing the idea

Combining art, technology, and play can offer an emotional outlet within which children could be encouraged to develop imagination and creativity. Therefore, we invented the idea of the ArtFelt Project. The project is divided in two parts. The first part is archaeologically



oriented and includes a group of objects from the Archaeological Museum of Thessaloniki (A.M.Th.). The objects have been chosen in order to depict various aspects of life in ancient Greece (infant life, activities, symposium, marriage, war, death) (fig.7). The second part focused on modern art, presenting two-dimensional paintings that already have an intrinsic relation to other art forms, like music, in a way that enlivens the sound component and playfully reveals their associations. Deconstructing the elements of the artwork, various colored shapes are extracted from the painting, forming a virtual shape gallery (fig. 8). The viewer is invited to re-compose the pieces - like a puzzle - on a wall touch screen. When the viewer grasps and drags a piece from the virtual shape gallery a certain sound is heard, based on what Kandinsky documented on the associations between colors, shapes, and sounds. When the colored piece was placed on the black and white rendition of the painting on the wall screen, its new location becomes colored. The visitors experientially interacted with the artwork, learning about the color-shape-sound correspondences that Kandinsky used to paint.



Fig. 7. Ground plan of the installation at the Archaeological Museum of Thessaloniki @Veleni-Kourakis/Stevens Institute of Technology 2011-12.

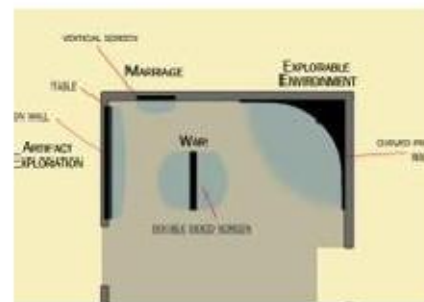


Fig. 8. Color-shape-sound installation @Veleni-Kourakis 2011-12.



Fig. 6. Touchy FeelyArt, Rainbow camp/Anatolia College of Thessaloniki with the use of digital Chromephone @Themis Veleni 2012.

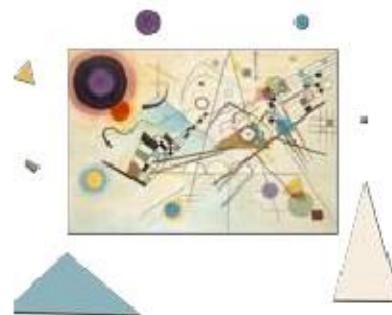


Fig. 9. Singing Feet, Stevens Institute of Technology, 2012.





### A creative partnership

The institution that we collaborate with for the development of this project is Stevens Institute of Technology, located in New Jersey. Stevens is already developing projects that are closely related to ours and, therefore, its contribution is valuable in terms of developing the hardware and programming the software we need. Two representative examples designed and constructed by Stevens' students are the following: The first one is Singing Feet (fig.9). It is a wooden glockenspiel that produces a musical tone driven by the force of the user's feet. The latter is translated into the horizontal force of a mallet hitting the tine through a lever mechanism, thus generating sound. Although Singing Feet is mechanical and in a draft version, the spirit is very close to our suggested interaction for an active ground that, by means of movement, produce music. However, ours is designed to be digital and oriented to the interaction between artworks. The second Stevens Project is the Interactive Multimedia Composition by Nicholas Catania. The program composes a song outline that the user interacts with to create his/her own media composition; the user moves his hand holding two sticks with colored balls appended to their edge. The system recognizes their movement and, depending on their position, generates varied sounds that can end in a fully orchestrated song. Our proposal meets Stevens' objective for a project-based learning and cooperative education that aims to the creation, application, and management of technology to solve complex problems and to interact with arts and humanity sciences.

### Description of the ArtFelt project

The digital version of the ArtFelt project addressed to both adults and younger viewers will be developed within a year. The outcome will be a permanent installation at the Archaeological Museum of Thessaloniki. It will act as a prototypical pilot interactive multi-sensory intermedia to further applications in any work of art with the proper adjustments designed for use both in museum and schools. The objective of the ArtFelt project is to deliver a highly immersive interactive and multisensorial experience for museum goers, engaging participants with artifacts using the most recent developments in technology. The following is a description of the primary means of participatory engagement that we will be employing in the museum environment.

The conventional description of an object like the one depicted in figure 10a in a museum display would be limited to: "Rattle of the 4th century B.C."

Our proposal includes an experiential, playful, and sense-inspired way to perceive the object and its history. While the object (a clay apple) appears on screen, a spot highlights a replicate of it on a table in front of the viewer (fig.10b). The viewer might wonder about the use of this object and is invited to find out in a most playful way. A baby's cry is heard and the visitor is invited to grasp the replica and shake it (fig.10c). Sensors receive the movement and the sound of the rattle is heard. The sound calms the baby, which stops crying and laughs.

Fig.10a. Rattle of the 4th century B.C., A.M.Th.



Fig.10b. Illustration of the installation designed for the A.MTh.@Veleni-Kourakis/Stevens Institute of Technology, 2011-12.



Fig. 10c. Illustration of the installation designed for the A.MTh.@Veleni-Kourakis/Stevens Institute of Technology, 2011-12.



There will be four primary components: tactile, visual, auditory and gestural. The tactile component will consist of a 3D reproduction of the original artifact, which the participant will be free to interact with. Participants will be able to “touch” the virtual object and receive sensory feedback. The visual component will consist of contextual virtual reproductions of the environments in which the artifacts displayed were commonly used. Participants will then be able to interact with the objects using natural gestures, with the ability to observe fine detail of the artifacts. The auditory component will consist of realistic sounds of the original objects, which will be triggered by gestural movements by the participant. In addition, the auditory component will provide realistic sounds of the environments in which the artifacts were in common usage. The gestural component will consist of object interaction, such as spinning artifacts to obtain a 360-degree view, as well as object placement to experience artifacts in context.

The Stevens Institute contribution will consist of the modeling and 3D print reproduction of artifacts, based on high resolution images of the original artifacts. Furthermore, the Stevens team will work to build realistic virtual environments of the artifacts in their usage context, and provide contextual sound components. Basic gestural programming will also be incorporated to trigger sounds. In addition, we will make an effort to partner with Senseg (<http://senseg.com/>, 08.30.2012) in order to incorporate a responsive tactile component to the



installation, where participants will not only be able to see and interact with artifacts, but will also be able to experience artifact textures.<sup>25</sup>

## Conclusion

Following the sovereignty of image and verbal information, the 21st century has begun to nourish the prevalence of an experiential and feeling-based way to understand and perceive the world around us. Museums gradually take into account that the most effective way to engage visitors in the museum experience is to cause them to actively associate themselves with the exhibits. They try to motivate them by designing exhibitions that engage museum visitors cognitively and psychologically with the objects and the museum experience, and, thus, provide them with a holistic interaction (Parris, 2006). Furthermore, museums try to promote the active participation of their visitors as well as to create a challenging new experience for everyone (Weaver, 2007). This participation leaves a strong mental imprint and an agreeable reminiscence of their visit to the museum.

Art and technology have always challenged each other in terms of innovative creation (Hayward, 1990). However, integrating technology to convey traditional art in a non-traditional way emerges as an entirely new and unexplored approach to art education. Therefore, creating sensory-immersive and interactive experiences putting technology in the hands of art and museum educators seems a very challenging and promising field. This would invite visitors to evolve from passive observers to active insiders, activating all their senses in order to reconnect in a profound, holistic, and intrinsic way to art.

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## Using the Consultation and Critique Processes to Enhance Learning in Visual Arts

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### Abstract

This paper sheds light on how students' thinking and artworks evolve over time through the consultation and critique processes. Consultation by the visual arts teacher with students is a way for students to gain informal feedback and refine their ideas and concepts on their artworks prior to the actual critique presentation and assessment of performance. During consultations, students articulate their ideas and intent to the teacher who provides feedback and suggestions. The critique sessions provide a more formal arena for students to give and receive feedback from not only the teacher but also their peers, develop their ability to ask, and reply to critical questions and build their confidence in speaking about their artworks. Essentially using the consultation and critique process in the visual arts classroom, can enhance and deepen students' understandings of visual arts and their use of techniques, experimentation, expression, and media.

### Keywords

Visual arts, consultation, critique, secondary school, signature pedagogies

### Introduction

The purpose of this paper is to gain a deeper understanding of consultation and critique, two pedagogical approaches that are used in teaching visual arts students. This paper reports the results from a subset of the data from an on-going larger study of specialized arts education in the Republic of Singapore. The researchers were guided by the following research questions: 1) In what ways do the processes of consultation and critique enable teachers and students to gain deeper understanding and engagement in the arts and advance their own work? 2) What are examples of consultation and critique in visual arts classrooms?

In 2000, *The Renaissance City Report* envisioned Singapore as a Global Arts City in which the arts are vibrant and central to Singapore's future as well as to the Asian Renaissance in the 21st century (*Renaissance City Report*, 2000). During the decade that followed, local arts and cultural organizations developed while, at the same time, international artistic and cultural partnerships were bolstered. In March 2004, the Singapore Government established the School of the Arts (SOTA), Singapore's first independent pre-tertiary arts school which





focuses on four arts disciplines: music, dance, theatre and visual arts. In 2012, The Report of the Arts and Culture Strategic Review described Singapore's vision for the arts through 2025 with the overall aspiration that Singapore is "A nation of cultured and gracious people, at home with our heritage, proud of our Singaporean identity" (p. 15).

The SOTA's vision is to nurture students who are talented in the arts and to prepare the next generation of artists, creative professionals and individuals who are passionate for and committed to the arts in a multi-cultural society. SOTA offers an innovative connected arts and academic curriculum for students, aged 13 through 18 in music, dance, theatre, and visual arts. SOTA has a 6-year curriculum pathway (grades 7 through 12) which awards an International Baccalaureate diploma.

### Literature Review

This research study has been influenced by the work of Project Zero at Harvard University documented in the book "Making Learning Visible Children as Individual and Group Learners" (Project Zero, 2001). Signature pedagogies are intricately connected to making learning visible. Shulman (2005), in a seminal article, conveyed that disciplines have signature pedagogies which characterize the emphasis teachers place on common traits and values. Consultation and critique, two signature pedagogies of visual arts teachers, are discussed in this paper.

Consultation in visual arts classrooms involves the teacher and students engaging in a series of observations of and iterative conversations about the development of students' technical skills, composition, conceptual development, and subject matter regarding one or more artworks that are being developed. Consultation is a constructive process that scaffolds students' artistic development.

For the most part, critiques in visual arts can involve the detailed presentation by a student about one or more works-in-progress, comments, questions, and feedback by peers and responses by the presenter. Through a dynamic conversation, the presenter is immersed in decision-making, justification about the work and steps that have been taken. Critiques provide opportunities for students to reflect on their own works as well as the works that are critiqued. The hallmark characteristics of critiques in the visual arts are that feedback is offered, the presenter is expected to be accountable by responding to feedback through explanation, examples, reflections, self-questioning, thinking and re-thinking and the critique process is iterative. The comment-response-comment cycle continues until the allocated time has been used or resolution has been achieved.

Teachers, peers, or a presenter can facilitate critique sessions. The structure of a critique session can be determined by the teacher or through mutual agreement by all participants. From time-to-time, invited experts and guest artists may be invited to participate in the session. While the critique process can be implemented as a specific type of assessment (Soep, 2005), critiques do not have to be restricted to assessment. When used over a period of time (Soep, 2005) and embedded in the pedagogies of visual arts teachers, critiques foster the further development, evolution and transformation of students' aesthetic and intellectual development.

### Context



The data collection took place at the SOTA during the second term of the school year. The themes were “Identity” and “Emotions” respectively for year 1 and 2 visual art classes. The structures of the lessons were similar. Both started with observational studies, research about artists and their artworks in order to develop techniques, experimentation, expression, and use of media. During one class, the students visited an exhibit of Impressionist art at a nearby museum. These were then followed by the independent work, consultation, and finally, the critique session.

### Research Methodology

This study emerged over time as the researchers were immersed in a larger study of arts education in Singapore. As the visual arts teacher and researchers focused on the examination of teaching approaches of visual arts teachers, the research questions emerged as the researchers and teacher were engaged during an extended period of time on observing students, examining their sketch books, interviewing, and engaging in self-reflections and self-questioning.

The research methodology is consistent with the ecological approach to design ethnography (Barab, Thomas, Dodge, Squire, & Newell, 2004; Barab & Roth, 2006). Design ethnography involves deep engagement within a particular context over an extended period of time. Data were gathered in multiple ways. In-depth conversations and interviews were conducted with students and the teacher. During classroom observations, researchers took field notes, video recorded, and photographed the sessions.

### Data Sources

When describing signature pedagogies of visual arts teachers, the teacher used various metaphors including spiral and double-helix which are emphasized through iterative dynamic activities that allow students and teachers to revisit, experiment, and engage in re-reflection about their works. There is a back-and-forth process. Various pedagogies could be included in the teaching arc of visual arts teachers. While not a comprehensive list, signature pedagogies can include an emphasis on technical skills, mastery of techniques, experimentation, documentation, consultation, critique, aesthetic sensibilities, and artistic identities. For this paper, the focus is on the pedagogies of consultation and critique.

Artefacts that were collected include lesson planning documents, samples of students’ work, students’ reflections, students’ sketch books, and teachers’ reflections on the lessons. These multiple data sources support triangulation of data and propel a deeper understanding of teaching and learning processes. However, for the purpose of presenting this article in a summarized way, we have opted to review 2 students, namely Student 1 from year 2 art class and Student 2 from year 1 art class.

### The Consultation Process

When consultation is incorporated into pedagogy, teachers scaffold students’ learning and engagement in the visual arts. According to the visual arts teacher, consultation is used to guide students and can only be undertaken when students have completed some independent



work. According to the teacher, “You must see me with something.” The teacher described the consultation process in the following excerpts:

“Consultation here means you need my help. I am here offering my help as guidance.”

“But I realised that they were not ready in the beginning. So, rather if I set them to already start on the subject matter whether it be something they have on hand or whatever it is, just start working on some pieces. And then I just walk around to guide them. Whether they have successfully thought about a concept through or not, I won’t care for this next term. I’ll just see what they are doing, there’s a kind of improvement... I’ll just look at what they’re doing, and try to work towards the development of their skills in that sense. I’ll be walking with each one of them rather than they face me and get that kind of apprehension [laugh] again.”

“...In general, I meet them as a group for the first few minutes, tell them what I intend, set them to do some small task, such as improve your composition or write down some reflections, that sort of thing. Then I see each one individually. I take 15 minutes per person. When they met as group, then some of them lost interest, I said go and do your things and then I’ll call you back when it’s your turn.”

An important function of the consultation is to allow students to articulate their ideas, rationale and concepts. During the consultation process, students typically bring the independent work they have completed. These may include sketches, try-outs, and research work from various artist references. The students also explain the final concept that they are working towards, along with their reasons behind the development of their work thus far.

Consultation, as well, is a means for the visual arts teacher to gauge the individual students’ stage of development in their artwork and concepts, which then helps him determine how much he can ‘push’ the students to engage in deeper exploration or expansion, and progress further in their work.

The following is an example of how the student progressed from a tentative idea, with minimal justification of the concept, to a refined and more profound explanation of her concept.

Teacher: And that sort of body coming in and stitching up to her head. Her head is not in control of her body. ... she wants to be responsible for her wrong doings...You are talking about stitching as well right?

Student 1: Yeah. I think like rather than stitching her face, maybe the neck is a good idea.

Teacher: The whole body can be a stitched body. But the face can be further stitched up. You know, that sort of thing. So everything is about patch work.

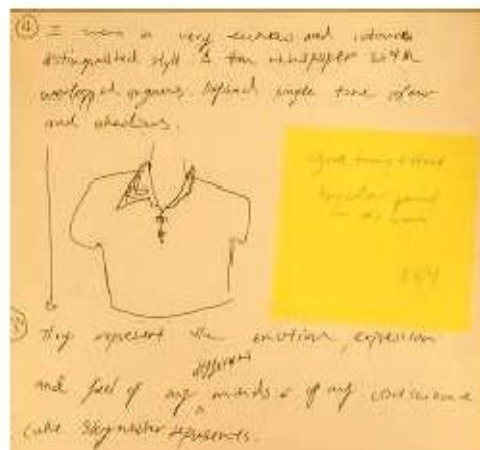
At this point in the consultation, Student 1 has come up with the idea of putting dotted lines like those indicating a scissors cut, to symbolise the disconnect between her subject matter’s thoughts and actions (see Figure 1). However, she is still exploring the idea and has not made a decision on where the dotted lines should be placed. She has not yet been able to articulate clearly what this would symbolise. The teacher’s role, here, serves to refine her earlier statements to suggest that the dotted lines indicate that “her head is not in control of her body.” During the critique session, the student is able to explain in greater detail the reason for the dotted line and why it is left on the face. Clearly, since the consultation, the student has reflected on the reason for her concept and what it symbolises:

Figure 1. Student 1's Sketch Painting



"It's to show that she is very detached from her body. Like her mind and her body is very detached. Because she keeps thinking and saying to herself that she doesn't wanna spend money, she wants to be responsible, she wants to like help her parents out. But then her body likes spending money and doing stuff that like is very irresponsible ... it's like she has a choice to cut ... So, the line also shows that she is very detached. And like if someone were to just cut it, she'll be even more irresponsible. So she still has like her mind with her."

Figure 2. Sample of Teacher's Comments



Consultation may also come in the form of giving written feedback (see Figure 2), through which the teacher comments on the works in the sketch books. While the works in the sketch books may not be part of the final artwork, they typically are exercises that help develop technical skills and conceptual thinking required in their final works. In one instance, a student remarked that,

"(The teacher) always collects our sketch books and comments something on these post-its. And on these post-its, he will talk about the good points. He asks us, us, to continue. And also

tells us our mistakes and tells us how they can be improved and also relates them to the current projects we'll be doing.”

Consultation also includes a grade given by the visual arts teacher as a form of feedback which lets the students know where they are within the expectations of the teacher for that project. Altogether, the face-to-face consultation session, written feedback, and ‘consultation grade’ allow the students to identify areas of their work that require further improvements, and areas that are strong and can be further developed. As one student puts it,

“In the process we are improving our work, not, not only by like the normal standard work like practices [such as those in their sketch books] but also through the project work so, so through it we have more, we, we, have a more wholesome learning experience.”

### The Critique Process

Critique, as explained by the teacher, comes near the end of the term or unit and when the work is finished “within a logical process.” During the critique process, students demonstrate that their work has evolved over time, as evidenced by the sketch book and research that has been undertaken, a degree of independence, a sense of mastery, and composition.

Critiques provide students with a more formal platform to present their works and concepts to a larger audience, namely their classmates. By this time critiques take place, students would have produced a work, or a series of works, that are almost, if not, completed. By the time of the critique, students demonstrate greater clarity about their work, and have more refined explanations of what their work is about and how it came to be. For example, during the consultation, student 1’s explanation for the brushstrokes used required some prompting and suggestions from the teacher (see Figures 3 – 5).

Student 1: because it is very messy and she...

Teacher: And she what?

Student 1: So it’s like very er... It looks like it is very quick work.

Teacher: Okay. Quick... So it’s like her personality?

Student 1: Yeah.



Figure 3 Figure 4 Figure 5  
 Quick Sketches of “Messy” Brushstrokes in the Background (Figures 3 and 4) Which Lead to the Final Work (Figure 5)





The critique also provides a relatively safe arena for students to present and justify their works, receive comments from their classmates and explain their decisions. Presenting artworks to a wider audience can be a vulnerable process for the presenter and it is important to provide an environment in which the student can display artworks without fear of criticism. As one student noted, “I think it’s helpful, because you get to hear other people’s opinions. You know that they are not criticising you, they are just giving their own advice and feedback.”

The critique also allows the students to view their works through the eyes of their classmates, providing them with perspectives other than those of their own and the teacher’s. This helps to widen their understanding about the possible ways in which their artworks could be viewed. They also learn what could be done to guide viewers to a more accurate understanding of their work (if that is their intention). As one student commented:

“I get to understand that a lot of my friends, though they are friends, they don’t really get what I try to portray sometimes. And sometimes, it’s easy to portray, but I just didn’t portray it correctly. So the feedback I get from them helps me, because I know my mistakes and I’ve tried to learn from them. So during my critique session, I get to share about my art piece and my friends get to understand more about it. Because when you look at an art piece, you don’t really know what it is until the artist explains it to you and you kind of take it differently.”

Many students felt that the critique helps built their confidence and esteem, noting that the critique helped to “improve our public speaking” and “we got more confidence.” They feel more prepared for future presentations will be inevitable in their later years in school. Interestingly, the critique may also be used as another form of consultation, where the student receives feedback about their works and go on to improve on what has been presented. In this case, the ‘final product’ that is displayed during the critique, leads to the process of creating another ‘final product.’ This can be seen in the case of one student where, as the teacher explained:

“There were like 4 pieces of work and the last piece was a watercolour which he was not very happy [with], and it was meant to be a 6-piece, final piece of work in ... the research panel. And then he did not have the time, and he had only four [works] during the critique. Then later on he made improvements after the critique. So ... I think he added two more pieces of work to it and so this was the later addition. ... So it’s like a kind of thinking that the consultation helped him to make the decision and the critique with his friends’ and his peers’ comments helped him further to decide on the final product... But then, with the interview here [referring to an interview conducted with the student after the lesson observations], he presented totally newer pieces... I didn’t recognise it during the critique and I never saw it at all... the critique was over and he was talking about other stuff.”

Evidently, for this student and a few others, the critique did mean that they had finished their artworks. On the contrary, it can become a process from which they used the feedback and advanced the development of their works until they reached a point where they are satisfied with what they produced. As the teacher summarised:

“It’s ... rather [like] a helix in which students circle back because the consultation must go back. If, let’s say, during that consultation and let’s say, ‘hey this really doesn’t work,’ the subject matter, you have to go back to observation again, and look at it again, and try to experiment more. And then at the critique time, if I say ‘hey this thing is...’ you know it becomes a consultation ... So he has to reflect more and go back and work on it again. ... It’s not like a display and show, and get over with that kind of thing. It’s more like a give and take sort of thing. So, it goes back and forth [on] the stage. I won’t say it’s linear.”

Prior to the consultation, Student 2's work was not in series or sequence but showed a rendering of his favourite hero, Luke Skywalker. During the consultation he recalled an idea from Andy Warhol's Chairman Mao series and decided to work on a series depicting Luke Skywalker. During the critique he showed a 4-piece series of works which he wanted to develop as a 6-piece series of portraits of his alter-ego who mirrored his own fears and desires in life. He used various media, such as charcoal, pencil and watercolour to mark each stage of his experience, projected or imagined. He used metaphorical associations which were associated with the media. For example, charcoal represented his dark past and watercolour represented his enlightened future. Since the critique, he added another piece to the series (see Figures 6 – 10).



Figure 6



Figure 7



Figure 8



Figure 9



Figure 10

Finished Artworks by Student 2 Presented During a Critique Shown (Figures 6 – 9) and the Additional Work Which was Created After the Formal Critique (Figure 10)

The teacher reflected on Student 2's work (see Figure 11):

“I believed he has developed a linear sequence of thought process for his work, assimilating an artist's reference for his use in research which enhances his composition and ideas. Technically, he experimented with the media to achieve a form of realism for the portrayal of his alter-ego. Both the consultation and critique enhanced his conceptual skills and integrated various techniques and an unlikely art process, such as the Pop Art series, into a timeline representation of himself associated with the unit's theme of ‘Identity’.”

For Student 1, the teacher explained that:

“She chose to depict her friend's personality as a reflective pool of emotions. Before consultation she used the paint heavily and loosely, such as dripping the paint to get effects of hair, painting over the flesh to blend colours. She was not sure how to apply these techniques which she learnt during an art lesson for her project idea. None of the effects worked to convey the emotional trauma that she wanted to express in her portrait. Then, through suggestion in consultation, she was introduced to a medium/substance that would bulk up the paint in the body. She experimented with various ways of adding ‘texture’ to the skin of her subject matter. Here again like Student 2, I see her composition taking on a metaphorical link to the medium but the difference between them was that Student 1 chose to narrow her research into the aspect of texturing as a reflection of the inner turmoil of the subject's situation and found one elusive representation through paint. Student 1's studies are more

thorough and well-documented in her reflected writing and she explained the steps she took to reach her final painting. Consultation and critique helped her to eliminate unnecessary steps and pinpoint her alignment with the final depiction. Experimentation was used to show what she did not need or should have been improved upon.”

Year 1 Visual Arts  
 Drawing

**Assessment Criteria For Art Consultation**

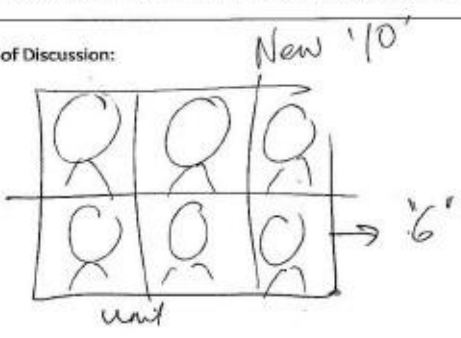
STUDENT NAME:	Student 2	CLASS: VA	1 <sup>st</sup>
ASSESSOR'S NAME:	Mr Yap Kheng Kin	SEMESTER:	2
THEME OF WORK:	5th drawings - Luke Skywalker secret identity	YEAR:	1
<b>ASSESSMENT CRITERIA</b>		<b>Satisfactory</b>	<b>Unsatisfactory</b>
1. Evidence of first-hand observational studies		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. Evidence of sound drawing skills and making experimentation	character	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. Evidence of reference to artists' style and work	Andy Warhol's <del>painting</del> Composition	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
4. Ability to develop your drawing sketches to a final work		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
OTHER COMMENTS:			
6 identities of - Luke Skywalker			
left / 3/4 new fascinating in left			
Sketches of Discussion:			
			

Figure 11. A Sample of Student 2’s Consultation Form with the Visual Arts Teacher’s Reflection

**Takeaways for the Students**

There were several lessons that the students took home from the critique. They learnt several skills that would be useful for their future work, such as managing the stress of doing the critique – “it can be a little bit nerve wracking,” and striking a balance between their artwork



and academic work. The students also found that the deadline of having to do a critique presentation “teaches us time management.” In fact, one student recalled that “[the teacher] always emphasizes that we have to like manage our time in the upper years to be able to excel.”

While the students agreed that critique from the teacher could be harsh, they also felt that they had benefited from it.

Interviewer: So although the critique, as you call it, was harsh, you felt that it helps you in your development?

Student 1: Yeah definitely. I mean it pushes you to become better, because you know you don’t want to hear criticism, like bad criticism every time you do a critique. You kind of what to hear people say that’s kind of nice.

Student 2: I think its his critiques and his strict timelines, deadlines, I think that makes our class and I very, more responsible of our work and I grew in confidence by a lot.

## Conclusions

Consultation and critique are interwoven processes and they need not necessarily be linear. The visual arts teacher associates the processes with a helix metaphor in which student-artists revisit and re-reflect on their artworks. Consultation and critique are envisioned as integral — and not ending points — in the development of student-artists. These processes can propel further insights and the continuation of learning.

The visual arts teacher uses consultation and critique to scaffold students’ learning and artistic development. The process enables the teacher to be reflective about students’ individual artworks and give appropriate support and feedback. The consultation helps students to be aware of their stage of development in their project, whether they meet its requirement and gain more insight into the creation of their artworks. The critique builds confidence of the students as they present their works and strengthen their artistic sensibilities.

For the future, fruitful avenues of research could examine the ways in which the consultation and critique processes could be refined. In what ways do teachers’ prompts and questions foster enhance and deepen students’ understandings of visual arts and their use of techniques, experimentation, expression, and media? How can visual arts teachers develop their own approaches to the consultation and critique processes?

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Arts Education in the Crossroad of Cultures

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## PART 6

### Education policy making and arts



## Art education in Slovenia between policy and practice

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### Abstract

The paper aims to discuss the discrepancies between policy and practice of (visual) art education in Slovenian primary school education in order to contribute to current discussions and actions within the framework of national and European policy initiatives in arts and cultural education (e.g. Arts and Cultural Education at School in Europe, The Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency 2009; The White Paper on Education, Slovenian Ministry of Education and Sport 2011; Primary School Curriculum: Visual Art Education, Slovenian Ministry of Education and Sport 2011). Framed by curricular theories the authors critically analyze arts curricula by comparing art education with music education and literature within the Slovenian language curricula. The research showed that art education is imbalanced in terms of making art and responding to art. Art curriculum is centred principally on art-making activities, with an obvious neglect of appreciation. Experiencing works of art, understanding art and developing positive attitude to art and culture remain an under-recognized area within art education. This model of education becomes problematic from the European point of view, for does not fully include the European competence of cultural awareness and expression. Although European countries today share similar policy initiatives in education and culture, they differ markedly in how they conceptualise and realise arts and cultural education.

### Key words

Art education policy, curriculum criticism, cultural awareness and expression, model of art education

### Introduction

In 2011 was finished the last curricular reform, which included conceptual and system changes in education, written in the White Paper on Education in the Republic Slovenia, and updates of curriculum for compulsory subjects in primary school. Updating curricula after Slovenia became part of the European Union and a member of the Council of Europe, among other things meant the integration of fundamental European competences for lifelong learning. One of these is cultural awareness and expression.

The competence of cultural awareness and expression was in years since Slovenia integrated into Europe more an issue in the context of cultural rather than school policy. Cultural education was placed in the core strategic document on the cultural policy (National Program for Culture 2004-2008; 2008-2011; 2012-2015), few studies were done, in 2009 special



national guidelines for cultural education were created, which were confirmed by expert councils in education. Based on the White Paper, the Ministry of Culture made a number of remarks that referred to the cultural education.

The White Paper as a fundamental document for the development of the Slovenian education with principles, objectives, strategic challenges and conceptual solutions frames the whole system and different areas of education within. We could say that the issues of cultural education integrated in the general principles of education, the general objectives of education and strategic challenges and directions of the educational system, since everywhere is the emphasis on common European heritage of political, cultural and moral values.

In the field of elementary education, the White Paper includes many principles on the importance of the cultural and art education (Bela knjiga, 2011: 114–117). The principle of providing universal education, quality and sustainability of knowledge assumes that general education in addition to linguistic, mathematics, science, social science, technical, physical and informational literacy also includes artistic literacy. The principle of school's cooperation with the environment explicitly foresees the participation of the school with museums and galleries, if we emphasize this authentic space of experiencing art. The principle of creation and dissemination of national culture and promotion of intercultural understanding involves knowledge and creation of culture, a sense of importance of the culture and promoting interculturalism. In accordance with this principle, among other things, students need to acquire knowledge of the history of Slovenia and its culture, which is connected by the following principle, the principle of creating an awareness of knowing one's own identity and active involvement in the creation of the heritage communities. All these and other principles are a part of a wider program of education – the curriculum.

In our research we critically analyzed the reform of art education in primary school in terms of certain competences of cultural awareness and expression, which we did by comparing curricula in the field of arts or aesthetic education, where we originated from the curricular and not from art and pedagogic theories, which mainly framed previous attempts of curriculum analysis (Zupančič 2008; Herzog, Batič, Duh, 2009).

#### Curriculum theoretical frameworks

The curriculum is the focus concept of the curricular theory and is very wide in its definition. In the International Encyclopedia of Curriculum (Lewy, 1991) the concept includes conceptual and terminological points of view of curriculum, influences of different theories, science disciplines, policies, ideologies on creation, development and shaping of curriculum, components of curriculum (these reach from curricula to textbook), different models, approaches or concepts of curriculum, curricular planning (defining and assuming curricula, contents and methods), transfer of curriculum into pedagogical practice and evaluation of curriculum. From the first definition of the curriculum as a program of teaching and learning from the end of the 40s of the 20th century and until now, the fundamental conception of curriculum did not basically change: Curriculum with four basic components – learning goals, contents, methods and evaluation of learning accomplishments – means the plan of the educational process (Tyler, 1949). What changes with the development of the curricular theories is something that we could call shift from discussion on curriculum as a product to its process points of view, where different issues, connections with planning, implementation, changing and controlling of curriculum (who is planning, what is planning, how is planning, etc.) are in the foreground. The fact that we value and perceive goals, contents, methods of education differently led researchers to discussions on system, ideological or philosophical



concepts of the curriculum (e.g. Kelly, 1999; Marsh, 1992; Posner, 1995) as well as to discussion on the curriculum in terms of concrete political, economical, technological, demographic and other circumstances (e.g. Ornstein A., Pajak, Ornstein S., 2011). As says Kroflič in the discussion on theoretical approaches to planning the curriculum, planning educational activity has a “very interdisciplinary nature” (1992: 10).

In the core of the curricular reform should be the consideration on planning and structure of curriculum in connection with the models of education (cf. Pevec Semec, 2007, 2009). Since curricular planning and implementation is a very complex process, wide conception of curriculum is very important, and the basic question is, what we want to achieve with a specific curriculum. Kelly says that we have to have a critical view on the curriculum, we have to doubt on appropriateness of our discussion on curriculum and our views on it, and that we need to consider also and mainly fundamental values included into the curricular studies. “The concern is not with mere methodology, with the how of educational practice, but much more with questions of the justification of such practice, with the why as well as how.” (Kelly, 1999: 20)

General curricular issues are transferred also to specific educational fields. Gluck (1991) in already cited encyclopedia of curriculum in connection with educational field of arts and visual art inside it introduces the reader into different curricular issues: The question of the role and meaning of the art for the development of the student, lack of definition of didactical recommendations and standards in the field of art education, the question of (non)relevance of educational programs in this field. In the encyclopedia we can find historical and conceptual reviews of aesthetic education (Otto, 1991) and programs (models) of education in the field of art (Efland, 1991), special discussion on museum education (Lee, Solender, 1991), with curriculum in the field of art connected issue of human relationship to art (acknowledgment of art as a personal and social value) (Morris, 1991) and other curricular topics in the field of art education. Diversification of these confirms the fact that the curriculum is not only learning content, some implementation plan of the class, but is also its context, the basis for it (cf. Kroflič, 2002).

According to the above mentioned, we could sum up the discussion on primary school curriculum in the field of art into few basic questions, such as: Which learning goals we are trying to reach? What are the selection, scope and succession of learning contents? Which teaching methods help reaching planned and expected goals? Are learning goals, contents and methods synced? And last: Which model of art education do we have? Such discussion on curriculum should include the curriculum in connection with manuals, textbooks and other learning aids, and it should also include wider context.

#### The purpose and method of the research

The competence cultural awareness and expression is defined as: “Appreciation of the importance of the creative expression of ideas, experiences and emotions in a range of media, including music, performing arts, literature, and the visual arts.” Essential knowledge, skills and attitudes related to this competence: “Cultural knowledge includes an awareness of local, national and European cultural heritage and their place in the world. It covers a basic knowledge of major cultural works, including popular contemporary culture. It is essential to understand the cultural and linguistic diversity in Europe and other regions of the world, the need to preserve it and the importance of aesthetic factors in daily life. Skills relate to both appreciation and expression: the appreciation and enjoyment of works of art and performances as well as self-expression through a variety of media using one’s innate



capacities. Skills include also the ability to relate one's own creative and expressive points of view to the opinions of others and to identify and realise social and economic opportunities in cultural activity. Cultural expression is essential to the development of creative skills, which can be transferred to a variety of professional contexts. A solid understanding of one's own culture and a sense of identity can be the basis for an open attitude towards and respect for diversity of cultural expression. A positive attitude also covers creativity, and the willingness to cultivate aesthetic capacity through artistic self expression and participation in cultural life." (Official Journal of the European Union, 2006).

In terms of art education we assume in regards to certain components of competence of cultural awareness and expression that the student acquires knowledge of art, develops ability to experience works of art and develops positive attitude to art and heritage. Emphasized are understanding of culture (to understand specific culture, we have to know it) and the feeling of identity (to understand it, we have to develop it) to live and work in an intercultural environment. The competence, a new concept in education, is understood as knowledge and skill or ability. "The concept of competence warned about the complexity of knowledge, on its intertwinement with dispositions of an individual and on urgency of teaching the use of knowledge." (Bela knjiga, 2011: 23)

The methodology was qualitative. In the research we included updated curricula, but analysis itself does not include textbooks and other teaching aids, because there are not any (yet). We did content analysis of the curriculum for the art education and for comparison also the content analysis of other curricula in the field of art – music education and literature within the Slovene language curricula (the latter includes also elements of drama and film education). We classify those three subjects in the field of aesthetic education – education for experiencing, which derives from direct contact with visual, music and literary art (Otto, 1991). The comparison referred to the clarity, precision, direction and coordination of learning goals, contents and methods. All curricula have the same basic structure: First we have the definition of the subject, second are basic goals of the subject, follow operative goals and contents by educational periods, after that we have standards of knowledge, and the curriculum is concluded with didactical recommendations.

The comparison of the art education with the literary education and music education

In terms of cultural awareness and expression and definition of aesthetic education as education of experience, which comes from the interaction with art, music and literary work, the comparison primarily showed terminological confusions. The curriculum for art education does not include uniform and entirely appropriate terminology for art, art work, culture and heritage. The comparison with the literary and music education also showed that in the context of art education there is no basic name for direct contact (interaction) with art work; books are read, music is listened to, artworks are looked at (Otto, 1991). Consequently, there are not even the most appropriate activities in this area.

Literary education includes reading, listening, watching performances of art texts, speaking and writing about literary texts and (re)creation of art texts. Musical education in addition to conducting and creating includes also listening to music. All these activities lead to experience, understanding, evaluating literary and music works of art; in short, they lead to the development of student's ability to accept, evaluate and appreciate. It is about affective area of learning and development, which is in the Oxford Dictionary of Education (Wallance, 2008: 11–12) defined as the area of learning, which objective is embodied by the aesthetic





appreciation in the area of visual art, literature and music, as well as in spiritual and moral education. Within art education curriculum learning contents or activities relate to the field of artistic creation (creation on the plane and design in three-dimensional space) and lead to practical art expression (art making), which especially emphasizes spontaneity and individuality, while a work of art has a function of teaching tool to learn concepts related to the art design (cf. Podobnik, 2011; Tacol, 2011). In accordance with the contemporary curricular theories that emphasize process and development planning (cf. Kroflič, 1992, 2002), we would classify such art education among older, behaviorist models, because it does not enable appropriate effects in the field of moral and social development. (The general usefulness of the subject is defined with the development of the space presentations and the ability to visualize.) “Process and developmental model of education assumes transfer of specific knowledge and experience, but emphasizes beneficial character of those contents and methods of teaching that contribute to development of student’s personal abilities, let it be the development of cognition, which is a fundamental condition of critical thinking, development of those cognitive and affective features that enable gradual creation of value orientation of an individual and autonomous morality or for the assimilation of such knowledge, skills and habits that enable quality professional socialization of an individual.” (Pevc Semec, 2007: 136)

Although the goals of art education include goals related to the development of the abilities to experience art works and attitude toward art, in comparison with literary and musical education those objectives are not aligned with contents and methods. The fundamental difference is that literature and music education includes knowledge of art works from different periods and placement of those in the historical context, but art class does not. Correspondingly are also didactic recommendations on the teaching of literature and music; they include recommendations regarding the selection of art works, reading and listening strategies and also methods how to enable student to come to his/her own experiences of art work. Knowledge and abilities that students acquire or develop are also examined and assessed (both curricula include methodology of examination and assessment). The comparison also showed that the literature and music classes are gradually planned, this means that the steps of acquiring receptive abilities are precisely defined from the first, through the second and to the third educational period.

In terms of competence of cultural awareness and expression the comparison also showed that in both curricula, for literary and musical education, the art (literature and music) or its perception (reading, listening) is defined as human’s need and value. The emphasis is placed on the active and creative attitude towards literature and music; reading texts, listening to music, going to film shows, theatre performances, literary events and concerts also in students’ free time. As says Morris (1991), the active attitude towards art has to be learned, while it is not just about the question of students’ attitude toward art, but about the question of teacher’s attitude toward art, the status of the subject in school and human attitude toward art in general (ibid: 684–685).

## Conclusions

The European policy is trying to introduce more artistic contents into the school curricula (Kulturno-umetnostna vzgoja v šolah po Evropi, 2010). Knowing and understanding art, critical evaluation, understanding of the importance of the cultural heritage, understanding of cultural diversity, abilities to express and develop own identity through art and creativity - these are the fundamental objectives of cultural and art education. The purpose of art education is not only the knowledge on artistic language and artistic expression, but also



identifying the influence of the culture on the formation of personal, local, national identity (recognized is the importance of the cultural heritage), learning about and accepting different cultures, aesthetic appreciation. Comparative analysis of curricula in the field of aesthetic education has shown that visual art education does not realize these objectives, and the reasons are primarily inadequate conceptual structure of the curriculum. It is organized by areas of art creation and its goals are oriented into art making that has to be spontaneous, free and has to enable individuality and subjectivity. It is basically an expressionist model of the art education (Efland, 1990), for which we could say that it is not only one of the approaches to art education, but has been for a long time now dominant and official model of communicating art contents in Slovenia. (Official textbooks which have been in use since the first Slovenian curricular reform in 1995, are titled *Likovno izražanje* (Artistic expression).) In this sense adding “missing” modern art practices, where Slovenian researchers see the reform of the art education (Vrlič 2002; Zupančič 2008; Herzog, Batič, Duh, 2009), would maintain the same concept. Our analysis has shown that the art education is a completely different issue (which we have to consider in the context of what Kelly calls support of educational practice), the issue is to develop aesthetic ability that derives from interaction with art work – both historic and contemporary.

In terms of selected components of competence of cultural awareness and expression it is assumed in regards to art education that the student acquires knowledge about the art, develops the ability to experience art works and develops creative relationship to art and heritage. This requires from the teacher knowledge of art and methods of encouraging experience and understanding art. The Eurydice survey (*Kulturno-umetnostna vzgoja v šolah po Evropi*, 2010) has shown that in some European countries generalist teachers also have the art history area of study – area, which is present with art specialist teachers in almost every European country –, while both generalist and art specialist teachers acquire knowledge on art pedagogy (ibid: 68–69). (Other areas of study are: child development in the arts, arts curriculum and personal arts skills.) Our analysis has shown the importance of appropriate knowledge and competences of teachers, as it is expected from them to develop competence of cultural awareness and expression among students within art education. The question arises, to what extent primary school teachers (generalist teachers and visual art teachers) know the natural processes of perception, experience and understanding of art works and methods of encouraging the ability to aesthetic experience. It would be especially useful to include the historical overview of the fine art into the education of primary school teachers. A part of art and didactic profession itself has already warned about this flaw in the education of primary school teachers (Podobnik, 2011). Some time ago they also considered similar problem in the field of education of preschool teachers (Jontes, Lesar, 2003).

Starting from the names (and not the content) of subjects in some European countries, which integrate art subjects e.g. into arts education, cultural growth, art and culture, artistic and cultural education, aesthetic education and similar (*Kulturno-umetnostna vzgoja v šolah po Evropi*, 2010: 24) the authors of the White Paper suggest that in Slovenia we consider the integration of individual subjects in the field of arts, while necessary ensure preservation of existing goals and standards of knowledge of individual subjects (*Bela knjiga*, 2011: 125–126). Would such combination in the field of arts make sense or not, is the subject of some other article, but interesting for our final discussion is the realization about the possibilities of such merger. The analysis of the curricula for art education, literary education within Slovenian language curriculum and music education has shown that such integration is not even possible, because of conceptual differences between art education on one side and literary and music education on the other. There should be a content analysis of these merged subjects as well as comparative analysis of curricula in the field of art education. One of these



(for the first primary school level) was made in the time of the last curricular reform (Herzog, Batič, Duh, 2009); the authors among others came to the conclusion that Slovenian art education is set to developing awareness of their own culture, learning about other cultures and developing attitude to art (ibid: 26). Our research showed the opposite, so this would have to be checked.

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## Stories of Change: with twelve guiding principles of learning along the way

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### Abstract

As art educators we are given the difficult task of taking the important knowledge that has been assembled to date and translating it into situations and experiences that will bridge the learning and knowledge between one generation and the next.

Narrative research has told us that people create and recreate the stories of their life or lives by attaching meaning to important, pivotal moments. The rest of the stories fall into place, fitting within those points of reference. However we do not remember everything in the correct or linear order and the brain; the ultimate filing cabinet or document folder opens up information when prompted by a stimulus in a non-linear and non-sequential way.

This paper will in the first instance, consider the importance of hearing the stories of experience and the way these stories can inform us of how to review and change our beliefs and practice where necessary.

It will then introduce a selection of changes in education experienced by the author and different generations of her family. Within the context of a narrative approach to find meaning; these small life stories will provide the opportunity for her to identify and make explicit 12 guiding principles of teaching and learning.

These principles are presented for consideration and debate in terms of a teacher's roles and responsibilities when educating the current and future generations of technologically able learners.

### Keywords

Guiding principles, creativity, narrative

### Introduction

I am a narrative researcher. I investigate how and why storied experiences can inform and change peoples' lives. I also represent an educational time that has progressed at lightning speed through an ever increasingly open and broadening accessibility of knowledge. So in this talk I will take a brief journey through an era that still astounds: there will not be many notes, dot points, or heavy references. There will be words and text and there certainly will be images because most importantly this is a visual arts conference. There will be a number of principles that I believe should provide a set of issues that need to be problematized and discussed by you in your own workplace as general day to day considerations in teaching in this visually oriented age of learning.





Narrative research has told us that people create and recreate the stories of their life or lives by attaching meaning to important, pivotal moments. The rest of the stories fall into place, fitting within those points of reference. However we do not remember everything in the correct or linear order and the brain; the ultimate filing cabinet or document folder opens up information when prompted by a stimulus in a non-linear and non-sequential way.

Why am I telling you this? You may ask. The reason is that I believe that this is how we learn and retain learning. We attach meaning to what is already known and we grapple to contextualise it from a known frame of reference. There are pieces of knowledge that we must have before we can progress. There are also concepts that must be confronted and conquered before knowledge and thinking can continue. We assemble the knowledge, we synthesise the known with the new until all these experiences become the new and ever changing narrative of learning and ultimately of life.

So let me begin this narrative upon which you can attach your own threads of connection.

When I was 18 years of age my grandfather said to me:

I have seen an amazing world. I have seen things change: steam trains, horse and buggy, electricity, the first car, the first flights, rockets up in space and a man walk on the moon. He also said, I have seen too many wars and terrible things men (sic) do to each other.

He spent his whole working life as a lino- type operator until finally he was made redundant as the new age of printing superseded his skills. I remember this conversation well because I remember the tone of his voice as he recounted the progress he had witnessed while his voice was tinged with the resignation of being reduced to a person whom the world had left behind.

This conversation occurred just as I was about to set out on my teaching career and I would suggest in retrospect, as life narratives usually are, that this was a Guiding Principle for me.

### Guiding Principle 1

Education should support a learner in ways that enable them to change, develop and explore new ideas, skills and opportunities. Education must be ongoing and lifelong.

This leads me to consider: what were some significant learning changes that I remember?

Firstly: The introduction of the BIC pen during my Grade 6 year.

In my school, this led to fraught discussions; would the child's handwriting be ruined if allowed into classrooms. All sorts of restrictions were imposed: they could only be fine point and blue. You could only have a biro once the teacher had decided you had acceptable style and handwriting using a fountain pen. Progressive teachers allowed children to rule a red line for a margin. ( I have been informed recently that in some parts of Australia students are still required to gain a pen license!). What may seem insignificant now, was a major improvement in my life. As a left-handed person it was a great relief; I no longer smudged ink across the page. It is important to note and leads me to Guiding Principle 2.

### Guiding Principle 2



New technologies must pass through a process of absorption and move from curiosity to convention. That is: experimentation and learning how to apply the new technologies are essential so that their use becomes an accepted and assumed part of learning.

So the BIC biro became an essential and unremarkable part of everyday life.

I return to the memories. I have wonderful memories of hot summer days in Perth, when I accompanied my grandfather to collect the glistening blocks of ice for the ice chest that stood in the kitchen. As the large block of ice tumbled down the chute large shards would break off from the corners and I was allowed to have one to suck on the way home . The freezing water running down my chin was cooling and refreshing.

Eventually, when the ice works were closed down, my grandparents had to buy a refrigerator. It wasn't that they couldn't afford this "new fangled contraption" as nanna would say, but rather there was a high level of suspicion associated with the ability of a device reliant on electricity to keep food cold enough. From our perspective today, when electricity is a given, this seems strange, especially when they lived in a city where temperatures melted the bitumen in summer. I witnessed my grandmother's similar reaction to an electric washing machine; she never believed it would wash her sheets as well as the copper that sat over the wood fire she had to light every Monday.

### Guiding Principle 3

New technologies are often treated with suspicion and change will come about only when the old technology becomes redundant.

This suggests that our teaching must also encompass avenues for students to investigate the new, and emerging technologies in an atmosphere that is supportive, welcomes experimentation, allows for mistakes and self correction.

We were the first family in our street to have a television. The first images I remember were scrambled diagonal lines with distorted sounds that sounded like some kind of science fiction monster. I was less than impressed with this new piece of furniture sitting in the living room. When the technicians returned to fine tune the television a black and white and grey environment sprang to life. It began my love affair with TV that has never diminished.

Now as I sit in front of my digital flat screen TV connected to a sound system that has a variety of speakers in all sorts of shapes and sizes to create "surround sound" it is incredible how the images have changed and emerged into the colourful world that enters my home each night.

Each development has provided more and more consumer driven pleasures and facilities. The video player has enabled families to view films in the private home space, changing the way individuals can access entertainment away from public scrutiny. More recently, computers and mobile phones have taken these experiences further into the realm of private and individual entertainment.

### Guiding Principle 4



Technology has enabled the transfer of social and educational engagement once only available in a public space to the private and personal space .

It has removed the necessity for constructed space; we can now visit galleries remotely, connect with friends across vast distances in real time, construct and reconstruct our identities, review and replay images over and over again. We can capture images digitally and transmit them across the world in a matter of seconds.

It is the challenge of the educator to enable students to experience and experiment with these aspects of public spaces in ways that contribute to their ongoing development as independent and creative learners.

The first computer I saw was in 1969. It took up a whole wing of a building at the University of Western Australia. In my memories, it is like an old science fiction movie: lots of lights, buttons, levers, wheels spinning, tapes, and sounds of clacking and crashing. The data was punched out on yellow cards; if you got one hole in the wrong place the whole program would fail. It was a privileged place to be – only certain students had access to this new technology. In the later development of computerised systems, mainframe computers when introduced into the public service, caused redundancies and changes in administration that were to have a profound effect upon the workforce. This leads to Guiding Principle 5

#### Guiding Principle 5

Access to technology has been a progression from exclusivity to broad accessibility; from large and cumbersome to small and portable. This progression continues to enable more and more portability to evolve.

It is important to reflect upon how socio economic conditions, manufacturing processes, cost and the consumer's desire all continue to affect these developments. My grandfather left school at 14 and learnt his trade. He had won a scholarship to Perth Modern School but could not take it up because the family couldn't afford to buy the required books and anyway, they needed his income to survive. My mother also left school and studied voice and music. She returned to study in her late 60's when education was free under the Whitlam government and achieved a Diploma of Fine Arts. I remained at school and here I am today! The privilege of a tertiary education is a relatively recent phenomenon.

The telephone is another significant technology that has evolved from a fixed and rigid system to a portable and personal item of fashion that revolves around a product and consumer driven phenomenon. In the 1990's important business people carried large brick like telephones. In a matter of twenty years here we all sit with our fancy coloured I-phones and Androids twittering texting and face booking within and beyond this current meeting space while also being able to comment and contribute to a discussion visible to everyone in the room. This allows us all to share ideas concurrent with the talk I am presenting.

The first home computer we had was a Kaypro which sat in our living room long before computers became common objects within the family home. My husband was a CSIRO scientist and he spent a long time at the keyboard creating theories and undertaking statistical analysis that meant little to me. He and my children all played the early computer game Ladder that seemed to involve you the P (for person) moving from ground level X; up the H, (the ladders) to jump over O's to reach the top. At this time, arcade games were beginning to evolve using more and more sophisticated technology. The expectations and desires of the young were demanding greater complexity and a whole gaming industry was born.



I heard the following in a radio report on the ABC on Tuesday morning this week. Online games will overtake console games by 2013; 9 out of 10 individuals own a mobile device; the average gamer's age is 32; mobile apps for games bring in over \$100 million dollars in revenue to Australia and there will be a new cultural policy developed by next year for the development and use of these mobile technologies. This is the first cultural policy to be developed for many years.

Where I was expected to have a BIC pen and an exercise book for my schoolwork, my grandson is expected to have a personal laptop with an assumption that he will have access to the internet to enable him to research his homework.

As educators we need to consider how we encourage students to employ these portable devices in pursuit of meaningful learning experiences.

#### Guiding Principle 6

With new and emerging technologies come new and emerging opportunities for creative invention and for new and different forms of employment.

This is significant for educators: we must encourage and enable our students to become comfortable with current technologies while also encouraging creative thinking to progress the use of these technologies further. Now, with the digital age there have come even greater changes to ways in which individuals choose to engage with technologically based recreational pursuits.

As a child I played with my friends in the confined area of my immediate world – in the parks and streets close to my home. We played childhood games of hide and seek, sporting games, we imagined and created a fantasy world in our heads. Now my 13 year old grandson plays virtual games with individuals from all around the world, he creates fantastic identities to inhabit virtual landscapes. With his friends he creates you tube films one of which just received a million hits – his imaginative, creative responses are exposed to a potential audience of thousands of people unknown to him.

In his art report this year we were told he has a bad attitude, he doesn't like art and he lacks concentration. He has a conceptual understanding of the world that is informed by the access he has through the medium of the internet. As educators it is this creativity and inventive spirit we need to encourage alongside the more traditional art room experiences.

#### Guiding Principle 7

We can all create our own 15 minutes of fame over and over again.

One can only wonder what Andy Warhol might have done with such freedom.

The creative work my grandson engages in is self driven and exists outside the formal learning sphere. He tells me he earns "revenue" from You Tube of about \$150 per month by contributing to gamer's information sites while his friend has been paid \$3000 for music videos put on You Tube. This is a young person with a highly creative mind, who has taught himself to sight read music, who will sit for hours with digital images involved in both creating and responding to them. This is a very different description from the report he received in the formal learning environment.



Some time ago I interviewed my son (his father) who is an architect to ascertain how he had become so confident and expert in his use of computer technology to generate incredibly detailed and attractive 3D visualisations of buildings yet to exist anywhere except on a design brief. He undertook an architecture degree at Melbourne University where he was constantly tortured with the need to develop highly intricate, accurate, pristine white cardboard models of the structures he was designing.

Then a new world opened up for him; he was able to use computers in the first ever technology based course to develop computer aided designs (CAD). He won the Melbourne University Architecture prize for CAD, won three international competitions during his undergraduate course, created his own company along with a colleague which now is hired by multi nationals and governments to create animations and graphically rendered moving images of virtual buildings that are developed for tender applications and public viewing.

Most recently he curated Australia's entry in the 2010 Venice virtual architecture Biennale. This virtual realisation went on to win the 2011 International technology prize in Monaco.

He explained that his ability to create these virtual worlds and his understanding of how to employ computer technology with ease was the result of immersion from an early age. He likened computer programming and designing to being similar to understanding a foreign language and being able to converse in a language of symbols: not unlike the experience he had had learning French in high school.

#### Guiding Principle 8

Being able to work in complex ways using computers to create, enhance or revise content requires the processes to become a known language gained through significant levels of immersion and through constant application and development of sophisticated techniques.

Teachers who want their students to realise their potential using these visual techniques to create images, animations, photomontages, vignettes, e-portfolios and so on, need to allow students access to technology for prolonged periods of time with the freedom to create in ways that require intense concentration and reflection.

Too often the way current timetables are constructed require learning to take place in small fragments of time in a day; shifting from Maths to English to French and maybe Art in the short time frame of a morning thereby not allowing time for creative, reflective processes to evolve into more complex and highly developed responses. This just compounds and maintains a vicious circle of shallow art pieces that teachers often dismiss as frivolous or derivative because the student has not been able to engage in higher levels of thinking for a sustained period of time.

Education by its very nature should move in a forward progression; however it often seems that the mechanisms for learning change at a rapid pace while the educators in the main, progress at a much slower pace. For a variety of reasons they tend to remain in their comfort zones using ideas and tasks that have sustained their own learning.

Teachers need to harness the knowledge of their students by working with them and encouraging them to collaborate within a formal setting that mirrors the way their students work and communicate outside the learning setting.





Beyond the formal places of learning students write, blog, text and post to each other at all times of the night and day. They share their ideas online and they encourage others to read and comment on their ideas freely and openly. It is unfortunate that in the main, only the negative aspects of such sharing make their way into the media.

#### Guiding Principle 9

New tools and programs can facilitate cooperative and group learning; while also allowing the student ownership of the process of their own learning experience.

I return to my grandson and remember the day when he turned and asked me “were you alive when there was no television?” I had to answer yes. But if I were to have a similar conversation with him that my grandfather had with me it would have to contain some of the content of which I have spoken today.

The changes may seem to have been less spectacular compared to the progression from horse and buggy to rocket ships and a man walking on the moon however the changes that have been wrought in my lifetime to date have been incredibly powerful for citizens of the current world.

Ten years ago, sitting on my couch in Melbourne, I watched a plane crash into the World Trade Centre on the 11th of September. At the same time my son watched the event in London, friends in Thailand, The Philippines, Perth and Sydney all watched the events unfold “with me.” No longer were we isolated from friends and family and we did not have to wait for the news to slowly filter through the older forms of news reporting. I believe the world changed for many that day, not only because of the incredible act but also because at that time the power of distance was visibly and irrevocably diminished.

#### Guiding Principle 10

Technology has changed our notions of time and place. Time has become a different kind of measure. No longer is place a hindrance to being able to maintain contact and; the cost is minimal.

We are living in the present at all times and the students we teach have few if any barriers to instant knowledge sources and communication.

It is our responsibility as their teachers to enable them to engage with and apply these amazing tools of learning; we need to learn from them as they learn from us.

#### Guiding Principle 11

Learning is a dialogue between teacher and learner, learner and learner and between teacher, learner and community.

All have a role to play and a responsibility to ensure that future generations adopt and create ways of learning that release them from being contained by learning that is still attached solely to the past. If we think of the performer in the video

[www.youtube.com/watch?v=w1DvsQ3pF5Y](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=w1DvsQ3pF5Y) ▶ 5:06



he is not only supported but he is also held fast by the technology, and only allowed to perform the same routine over and over again. This is not learning and we must ensure we are not holding fast to our students expecting them to perform tasks that are no longer relevant to their ongoing development.

I suggest that teachers have a wealth of knowledge that reside in their stories of teaching and learning. In my youth I was taught in classes of 45 and above. We were restricted by lack of space and lack of funds. The teacher had a set of resources that were finite – resources provided by curriculum offices, limited libraries within underfunded schools and access mainly through parents and the school community for any outside stimuli. Even so I do have memories of particular teachers who encouraged me to be creative.

Today; while we continue to be restricted by funding issues and priorities that can take our focus away from what students need and want, we can avail ourselves of so many more opportunities through the World Wide Web. Students themselves are able to source avenues of information that are flexible and available with an ease that could not have been imagined in my early learning experiences.

It is the responsibility of educators to gain a deeper understanding of what students experience every day of their lives that go beyond the constructions of 20th century education.

#### Guiding Principle 12

Teachers must continue to reinvent themselves so that they remain current and relevant in the world of the students they teach.

However teachers are also given the difficult task of taking the important knowledge that has been assembled to date and translating it into situations and experiences that will bridge the learning and knowledge between one generation and the next.

Within the context of a narrative approach to find meaning; these small life stories have provided the opportunity for me to identify and make explicit these 12 guiding principles of learning. As an educator it is my purpose to invite the reader to consider these important pedagogical ideas in order to focus your attention on the possibilities for new and different ways of learning in the current times.



## Against the Odds? Developing Effective Teachers of Art and Design

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### Abstract

This individual paper presentation will be of interest to those involved with training pre-service teachers, developing qualified teachers or concerned with the quality of art experiences offered to children and young people in schools. It is both theoretically and research informed and positioned in the post-positivist paradigm.

Over twenty years have passed since an important survey of teacher training in the arts in England (Sharp, 1990) highlighted the challenges for producing knowledgeable, confident and competent teachers in order to inspire future generations.

The English government's inspection agency reports of visual art in schools (OfSTED, 2009 and 2012) indicate minimal improvements have been made and indeed, several areas of concern which still remain. The technological advances made in western society during this period and the apparent fixation across education with the market economy as well as the growth of managerialism (Abbs, 2003) and educational reform have all contributed to the current situation.

This paper considers again the factors identified in the 1990s and seeks to identify which have been addressed, if any have been ignored or perhaps in some cases, made worse. The expectations of schools' curricular design and teachers' abilities to meet them are questioned at the level of training courses offered by universities. Using recent surveys of the experiences of groups of pre-service teachers, the argument is made that the task of developing effective teachers of visual art cannot rest solely on the shoulders of those who train them but across a number of inter-related aspects of English society. Consideration is also given to whether the task of developing effective teachers of art can only ever be seen as against the odds.

There could be similar themes evident in other countries and the author would be pleased to hear from colleagues exploring these.

### Keywords

Effective teaching, Developing teachers, Initial Teacher Education, Pre-service teachers, Art and Design

### Introduction

This paper was presented at the 2012 InSEA European Congress. It also draws upon information presented at the Teacher Education Advancement Network earlier in the same year (Gregory and Price, 2012). Attention is focussed on the essence of identifying what is meant by 'effective teachers of art and design' using a range of document sources as well as results from surveys with pre-service teachers. This allows the discussion about whether the



current systems of training teachers develops effective teachers and indeed how this can be known and presented for others.

The structure of the paper will introduce the context and definitions used in the English educational system before exploring previous studies and outlining the ongoing study undertaken by the author.

### Contexts

The context in the English school curriculum requires that as the defined individual subject 'art and design' (QCA, 1999) is taught to all primary school pupils. This is also mirrored in the processes for training teachers although teacher training institutions currently have considerable freedom for interpreting how this is achieved and the amount of time which will be allocated to the subject.

Earlier studies from the 1980s and 90s (Cleave and Sharp, 1986; Sharp, 1990 and Rogers, 1998) record the time allocation and content of the art courses offered within preservice teacher education and provide opportunity for comparison and reflection today. (In England, preservice teacher education is also referred to as Initial Teacher Education – ITE.) Currently, the process of inspecting schools allows a very small glimpse of the resultant art teaching and activity developed from these starting points (OfSTED, 2009 and OfSTED, 2012).

### Definitions

The terms 'effective' and 'effectiveness' are together used nearly seventy times in the most recent inspection report of art and design in English schools (OfSTED, 2012). The terms are not defined however and this presents some challenge for appreciating the ways teachers are approaching the teaching of art. The earlier report (OfSTED, 2009) offered explanation of the inspectors' grading criteria. It would be very tempting to attempt to align the term 'effectiveness' with the inspectors' grade of 'outstanding' but the author feels strongly that this should be resisted as they are not synonymous.

The wider literature available reinforces this view as the terms are best understood as a reflection of getting the best from the teaching and learning opportunities. In their work on effective teaching in general (rather than specifically art and design), Muijis and Reynolds (2011) attempted to highlight significant developments. In so doing they point to the work of Mortimore, Sammons, Stoll, Lewis, and Ecob (1988) who recognised that individual teachers contributed to the degree of success (or lack of success) experienced by their pupils. This caused them to look more closely at the features of what they termed 'effective' behaviours of teachers. Although these included the beliefs of the teachers concerned, most characteristics linked to the outward behaviour which would be seen or experienced by learners in the classroom. They included:

- Teachers having responsibility for ordering activities during the day for their pupils
- Pupils having responsibility for their work and independence within working sessions
- Teachers only covering one curriculum area at a time
- High levels of interaction with the whole class
- Teachers providing ample, challenging work
- High levels of pupil involvement in tasks
- A positive atmosphere in the classroom
- Teachers showing high levels of praise and encouragement

Other generalised studies indicated similar results although the reasons for their commissioning sometimes implied a different aspect of interest. Examples include the work of McBer (2000) who attempted to provide measureable aspects of this effectiveness. The fact that the study was commissioned by the central government as a mechanism to support the measurement of teacher performance (and linked to financial reward) meant that it was not considered – at least by teachers – as an overly helpful mechanism. It at least attempted to illustrate the variables of professional characteristics, teaching skills and the classroom climate which together would directly affect the progress made by pupils.

The study by Askew, Brown, Rhodes, Johnson and Wiliam (1997) into effective teachers of a particular subject domain highlighted the need to both recognise and utilise the dynamics and interactions between the teacher and pupils as well as seeking to understand behaviours in the light of beliefs and attitudes. Their framework for understanding effective teaching of numeracy was presented as a simplified model and sought to demonstrate the ways in which teachers might draw upon both their beliefs and subject knowledge as they responded to their pupils and the levels of understanding that they displayed. In other words, the ‘effectiveness’ aspect of successful teaching appeared to depend on the interplay between teacher and pupils in the classroom at a number of levels and not on the reduction to a simplified list of behaviours. Figure 1 is the model that they produced:

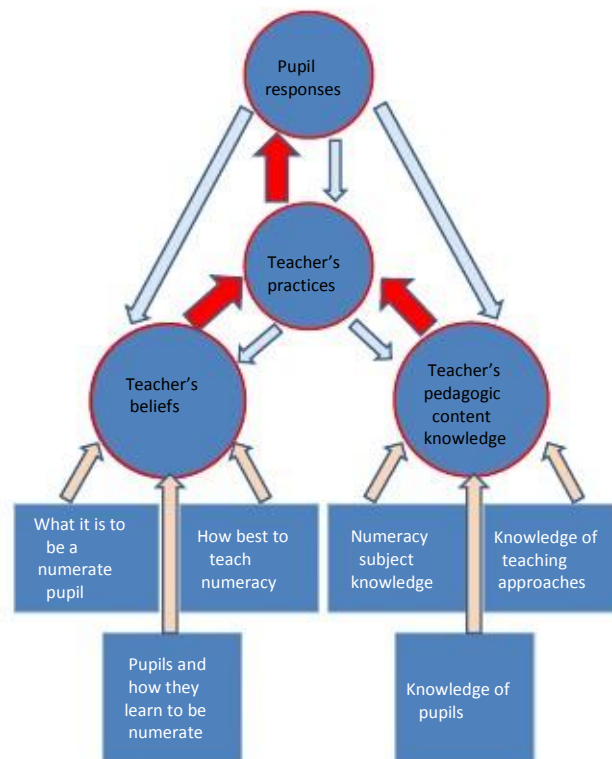


Figure 1: A Framework for understanding Effective Teaching of Numeracy  
Askew, Brown, Rhodes, Johnson and Wiliam (1997: 33)

In many respects this model seems to provide a better understanding for considering the way(s) in which art and design might be taught in the classroom. Their study of teachers concluded that they could be classified into one of three ‘orientations’ (197: 27):



‘connectionist’, ‘transmission’ or ‘discovery’. Each of these were linked with a particular set of beliefs which affected the teaching and learning styles used in the classroom as well as the teachers’ expectations of the pupils that they taught. The highest levels of effectiveness were felt to be seen in the ‘connectionist’ approach as this both allowed associations as well as prizing opportunities when pupils demonstrated the links they appreciated themselves.

Another model is described by Addison and Burgess (2000) in their attempt to enable pre-service secondary art teachers to reflect on different ways in which the subject might be taught. They described this as the ‘Didactic / Heuristic continuum’ (2000: 23) and set out a table to illustrate a continuum model moving from child/pupil centred learning at one extreme to adult/teacher centred at the other. In each of the five stages of the continuum, Addison and Burgess described the characteristic forms, the role(s) of the pupil and teacher as well as the justification for and the drawbacks of adoption. (See Appendix 1.)

In summary, there is not a single agreed definition for what constitutes effective teaching in art and design. There are good grounds for recognising a range of possibilities and also that individual teachers will differ in their beliefs. This poses some challenges for those who train art teachers: might we only focus on the model(s) that we believe are effective and thereby ignore or judge the others as ineffective? Do our student pre-service teachers need to be able to recognise all the possible approaches and be able to decide and justify when it is appropriate (or not) to adopt them? Will it be possible for teachers once qualified to maintain a broad based approach or will they be encouraged / forced to major on one as it is believed to be the one expected by others who will in turn make judgements about their teaching?

Previous studies: the challenges of developing effective teachers of art and design

There are several challenges referred to in the literature published over the past thirty years. Rather than set these out in detail, I have referred to a list drawn from a range of sources (Cleave and Sharp ,1986; Sharp, 1990; Rogers, 1998; DfEE, 1999; Ali Eglinton, 2003; Downing, Johnson and Kaur , 2003; Herne, 2000; Gregory; 2005; Ofsted, 2009 and 2012):

- Insufficient time allocated to art in training
- Status of curriculum subjects means art is ranked as less important
- Compulsory versus optional training modules
- External support agencies: variation across the country
- Quality of students’ prior experiences
- Limited subject knowledge
- Low confidence levels in teachers
- Lack of good quality examples from which to learn
- Few opportunities to extend understanding (either by courses or other means)
- Isolation of art teachers within schools and across the profession
- Curriculum development limited in schools
- Predominately Western canon of art included in teaching
- Poor understanding of children’s development amongst teachers
- Misunderstanding of assessment processes



- Art as an under-resourced subject
- Increase of generalised teaching facilities – resulting in fewer specialist teaching spaces
- The effects of art as a gendered curriculum
- Integration / cross curricular foci weakening art as a subject discipline
- Unclear subject leadership

The three in italics (my own) were particularly helpful in informing the case study described below.

A cycle of in-effectiveness?

‘The arts element of initial training has been considered with regard to the lack of confidence sometimes perpetuated from teacher to pupil to student....’

Cleave and Sharp, 1986:97

The cyclical nature of under-confidence amongst teachers has been noted for a long time. The fact that it is mentioned in almost every report and study suggests that we have not resolved this as an issue. This failure compounds the teaching opportunities provided by teachers in the art lessons:

‘Generally, teachers will teach what they know.....they carry long-held beliefs about what art is, and what art in education means.....they lack the confidence and skills necessary for teaching art.....’

Ali-Eglington (2003:11-12) italics mine

Reading earlier studies it is quite clear that some things have changed. This comment relating to the development of subject leaders in schools provides a baseline for measurement:

‘It would seem perhaps somewhat optimistic to expect students to be able to assume responsibility ... [for art] ... in the primary school on the basis of a 45 hour course....’

Cleave and Sharp, 1986: 45

Anecdotally, few institutions would be so generous with time for art modules today – although significantly there is no survey or published record to support this statement.

By the time Rogers collected his data (1998) he was already concerned that the number of hours allocated for compulsory art modules had been reduced further. However it was in the optional modules where the energy was invested for developing future leaders of art and design was invested. As the status of curriculum subjects had produced an unhelpful hierarchy in many teachers and schools (DfEE, 1999 and Herne, 2000) it was not surprising that the number of students opting for these modules was dwindling with worrying results.

‘we didn’t get enough interest in art as a specialism, so we had to drop it...’

quoted in Rogers (1998: 18)

The effects of managerialism on the arts in education (Abbs, 2003) can be clearly seen in the reduction of specialist modules offered by most English teacher training institutions. Instead, there is a greater emphasis on developing generalist teachers. It is difficult to see how the concerns about subject knowledge and confidence in art can be addressed.



Given the reduced amount of time available for teaching art, the poor quality experiences student teachers had already encountered - as pupils themselves (Gregory, 2005) and the squeezing of the curriculum in schools it is hardly surprising that the quality of teaching was set to fall yet further. Humphrys (2012) made a presentation to the UK government and stated that inspectors looked for the marks of ‘an outstanding teacher as being:

- exceptionally strong subject knowledge and
- exceptionally good interactions with students and children, which will enable them to demonstrate their learning and build on their learning.
- They will challenge the youngster to extend their thinking to go way beyond the normal yes/no answer.
- They will be people who inspire, who develop a strong sense of what students can do and have no limits in terms of their expectations of students.

Jean Humphrys in House of Commons Education Committee Report (2012)

Although there is evidence of these elements being seen by inspectors in some art lessons, the vast majority (two thirds) of those observed in primary schools were regarded as being less than good in the most recent inspection report (OfSTED, 2012). Indeed, too many teachers over-relied on published materials and taught from a lack of personal knowledge or experience. The preparation of competent teachers of art and design in England remains in a very weak and fragile state.

#### An on-going case study

Against the backdrop of the dilemmas, challenges and previous studies outlined above, a case study was undertaken in the institution in which I work in the academic year 2011-12.

Four main research questions were identified:

- Do we (as teacher trainers) prepare effective teachers in art and design?
  - To what extent do the prior experience and qualifications of the student teachers affect their training process?
  - How do student teachers develop their knowledge and understanding?
  - How confident are the student teachers as a result of the course?

Surveys were undertaken with student teachers across three different art modules: the first as a pilot study with sixty students on a very compressed programme (7-14 PGCE part-time) which only has four hours of art within it (as part of a basic foundation curriculum course). This allowed the survey instrument to be improved. The main study group involved sixty two students (half the cohort) who had five sessions of two hours (ten hours total) in order to gain a basic level of understanding. Additionally a third group was included. These were fifty five students who had studied an optional art and design in their second year of a Bachelor’s degree for an additional thirty hours. Their course was designed to deepen and enhance their understanding as well as notionally prepare them to become subject leaders in school. A comparative overview is provided in Table 1.

Table 1: Overview of pre-service teacher art programmes

Module/course background	7-14 PGCE Art and Design course (within foundation curriculum module)	PGCE Art and Design course (within foundation curriculum module)	BA2 Art and Design module (optional module)



Numbers of student teachers involved	2 groups (c30 each)	62 students (half cohort)	55 students (49 female; 6 male)
Time allocated for art module	4 hours: 2x2hrs	10 hours: 5x2hrs	30 hours: 10x3hrs
Intended outcome of module	Basic understanding	Basic understanding	To deepen understanding / notionally prepare subject leaders
Role within case study	Used to pilot survey	Main study group	Additional triangulation group

Interviews were held with students who indicated a willingness to participate. Interviews were also held with the tutors who teach art and design courses. A computer program (SPSS) was used to analyse the survey data. Additionally, attendance registers and student use of the virtual learning environment (VLE) was analysed in the light of the interviews and surveys.

### Early conclusions

The interviews with tutors were informative. They revealed that generally they hoped that they were producing effective teachers of art and design but when pressed, the optimism was very thin. None of the tutors had been able to observe a single art lesson taught by their students when on placement in schools: such was the pressure on improving English and mathematics that these were most likely to be seen. As the only observations of art teaching in schools have been provided by the inspectors in only a few schools each year (OfSTED 2009 and 2012) it is difficult to draw clear conclusions as to what is common. Each of the tutors referred to worrying tales reported by students about the way in which art was taught or even was avoided by many teachers.

It seemed as though student teachers appreciated the practical dimension of their modules. This was frequently mentioned as a strong positive when they commented about the course. The extent to which this was view was held was not immediately apparent and it was only after the survey comments were contrasted with the VLE behaviours that the situation became clearer. Both undergraduate and PGCE students were given access to readings about the inspection reports and the use of sketchbooks in developing pupils' learning. Most students read (or at least opened) the OfSTED report on the VLE. However only a minority of the pre-service teachers from both programmes opened the reading on sketchbooks – which was particularly surprising given that one of the assessment assignments directly related to the content of this article. The emphasis on experiential learning was mentioned by students and tutors: tutors were concerned that students did not engage intellectually as much as they would like. Could this be an aspect of looking for the mirroring of one's own beliefs as noted by Askew et al (1997)?



By applying the Chi Square Test (using SPSS), it was possible to identify aspects of the surveys which provided statistically significant results ( $p < 0.05$ ) and thereby isolate particular features to explore further. With the undergraduates for example, the affects of prior experience could be tracked through an audit undertaken at the start of the module. This indicated that three elements of prior experience (colour, collage and digital photography) had no links to how confident the student teacher felt. Five areas (observational work, drawing, printmaking, textiles and art criticism) appeared to have a positive impact, whereas fourteen other elements had a negative impact. Given the scale of this, the importance of qualifications in art was considered with the PGCE group. There were no obvious issues with regard to age, development of subject skills, whether or not they perceived sufficient time was available on the course or if they saw or taught art in school. There were however a range of positive links with their perceptions of confidence in linking to other subjects, working with galleries or other creative partnerships etc. These results will be considered again in the light of the student interview data. As yet overall, I am surprised at the students' perceptions of their confidence levels: is it really possible to develop effective teachers of art and design in such a short amount of time?

The last aspect considered was the student attendance rate in the taught sessions. There clearly was a difference between the groups – especially in the time of year that the module was taught. Groups timetabled for art in the final term were much more likely to be absent in order to attend job interviews etc. Given how few hours are available for teaching art to student teachers, being absent for a session could be the difference between experiencing a range of processes (eg print making) or aspects (eg assessment) ready to apply in the classroom or starting with restricted understanding. Either way, the surveys could not capture this potential link.

#### Opportunities for further study

The study presented here has partially answered a number of the research questions outlined above.

Do we (as teacher trainers) prepare effective teachers in art and design?

This remains the most vexing question as it is clear that without further research we must conclude that we cannot know. Given the limited sample size of the OfSTED inspections for art and design, this study has highlighted that more research is needed in order to fully appreciate what is happening in primary classrooms. This can only be done with the consent of the teachers and schools involved over a longer time period and will need very a careful structure and support from an outside body in order to obtain the necessary funding to complete.

To what extent do the prior experience and qualifications of the student teachers affect their training process? This has yielded some surprising results: not all aspects of prior experience and qualifications affected the process in ways which might have been expected. A more detailed exploration of the potential links is needed. Why has there been such a marked difference between the survey results from the undergraduate and post-graduate students?

How do student teachers develop their knowledge and understanding?

The students appear to highly prize the practical elements of the course and engage less with the intellectual dimensions. Is this a reflection of the tutors' own beliefs and attitudes however? As one tutor said as they reflected on the investment they made 'perhaps I need to





check that the students have read and understood the readings each week – rather than take this for granted....’

How confident are the student teachers as a result of the course?

The pilot survey moved from measuring perceived levels of understanding as this seemed to be very difficult for students: how were they to gauge what they knew against what they did not? Instead, the survey focused upon perceived levels of confidence. As has already been stated, these were higher than had been expected and posed another set of questions to be explored.

The opportunity for further study is a large and complex one. It would be useful to include a wider range of students across several institutions in order to provide a fuller picture – particularly as the last comprehensive survey of the arts in teacher training was completed before the start of the twenty-first century.

### Summary

As a study to establish whether we do or can develop effective teachers of art and design using the training models and opportunities currently employed, there has been only limited success. However as a reflective opportunity to consider the challenges, issues, insights and opportunities, the study has been particularly helpful and prompted deeper consideration of the issues identified.

In art, both qualifications and prior experiences of pre-service teachers seem to matter – but not always in the ways which might be anticipated. The extent to which practical experiences seem to be prized was greater than expected but this may not be helpful in developing the fullest extent of understanding. The timing of sessions (during the day/year) and the actual attendance rates must have an effect on the levels of understanding and confidence as well as the developments in the classroom post-qualification.

The confidence levels perceived and reported by student teachers seem to be much higher than had been expected. There seems to be the need to investigate this further by comparing results across programmes.

Lastly, as there are so few opportunities to observe the teaching of art and design the underlying challenge for art educators in England is exactly how can we measure its quality and make a judgement as to how successful we have been in preparing effective teachers in the subject?

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Appendix 1: The didactic / heuristic continuum  
 2002:23

Addison and Burgess,

centred	LEARNING	TEACHING	CHARACTERISTIC FORMS	pupil	teacher	JUSTIFICATION	DRAWBACKS
adult teacher I	PASSIVE	DIDACTIC	-instruction -information -lecture  -demonstration -closed procedure and structures	Dependent  Memoriser  Imitator	Expert -outcomes are certain (appropriate to factual syllabi) -introduces techniques, Providerestablishes a sense of shared beliefs and values -conditions pupils to become receptive, to observe, listen and (differentiation by record testing)-encourages memory skills -confirms the expert status of the teacher		-can be authoritarian -single perspective -can alienate because it fails to acknowledge difference (abilities /backgrounds) -pupils may become dependent -results in conformity and normative outcomes -knowledge may be lost unless reinforced using other methods
I I	RESPONSIVE AND ACTIVITY BASED	DIRECTED	-rehearsing andresponding imitating activities -responses to given stimuli, eg still life, work of others, design brief -working to explemars -investigation (probable findings already known by teacher) -conditioned / determined structures		Trainer -provides common experience NC Art given / fixed Director(eg core skills)determined by teacher's experience:Enables: Resourcer-continuity andoften privileging progressionmaking (differentiation -identification of by outcome and pupils not on task taste)-ease of assessment -pupils' prior -effecient transfer knowledge of skills-individual -activity:needs individual / pair / group		-knowledge is determined by teacher's experience:Enables: Neglects:





## Visual Journals & Trainee Teachers' Professional Development

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### Abstract

This paper discusses a small-scale, interpretive study focusing on the use of visual journals with trainee primary teachers in a UK university. The rationale for the research is driven by three interrelated areas: the value of reflection in teacher training (e.g., Hatton & Smith, 1995), the use of journals as reflective tools (e.g., Moon, 2006), and the power of visual images (e.g., Berger, 1972). The aim of the research was to explore the trainees' use of visual journals and understand how images can support professional reflection; the main research question being: How do visual journals support trainee teachers in reflecting upon their professional development? The trainees were free to use the visual journal however they liked, but ideally they had to make at least one entry per week during the taught course: a Primary Postgraduate Certificate in Education [PGCE]. All the trainees in my tutor group - 31 art specialists - were given a visual journal and five female trainees agreed to participate in the research. Qualitative data collection included an individual, audio-recorded, interview and photographs of visual journal entries. Following data-driven analysis, it was found that the visual journal was valued by all the trainees as a personal - and often therapeutic - space for reflection on both academic and social concerns. For example, helping to making links between art and others subjects boosted the trainees' confidence, especially in maths. However, to facilitate deeper reflection, it appears necessary to encourage the use of metaphorical/symbolic images, whilst also recognising individuals' artistic preferences.

### Key words

Reflection, visual journal, professional development, trainee teacher

### Introduction

The ability to reflect on one's practice is commonly seen as a mark of the professional (Schön, 1983, 1987) and reflection is an important part of teacher training, as it enables trainees to make helpful links between theory and practice (Fazio, 2009). As well as discussing their reflections, trainees are usually required to record their reflections in writing, sometimes leading to formal assessment. When this writing is assessed according to the degree of criticality exhibited, hierarchical frameworks, such as the one developed by Hatton and Smith (1995) are widely applied (Seban, 2009). In summary, Hatton and Smith make a distinction between: descriptive writing - non reflective; descriptive reflection - justifying actions or events; dialogic reflection - considering different interpretations; and critical reflection - locating actions and events in wider socio, cultural, historical, political contexts. I have found this framework useful in my own work with trainee teachers in a UK university, particularly when highlighting links between evaluations of classroom practice and the requirements for Masters level assignments.





Dewey (1933), considered to be the modern originator of the concept of reflection, believed that reflective thought has to be trained through an acquired habit. One way of developing such a habit is through the use of a journal, where reflections can be recorded and revisited. Moon's (2006) handbook on the use of learning journals as tools for professional development provides a range of practical guidance, describing different forms of journal and suggesting creative approaches. However, there are only brief mentions of reflection through visual images and this mirrors existing research into reflection in teacher training. Although sometimes using methods such as portfolios (e.g., Mansvelder-Longayrou, Beijaard & Verloop, 2007), video dairies (e.g., Stenberg, 2010), and group conversations (e.g., Fazio, 2009), most research in this area places considerable emphasis on writing; a rare exception being the 'zine' study of Klein (2010). As an art educator I find this situation frustrating, because I strive to promote the value of visual literacy and support the view that seeing 'comes before words' (Berger, 1972). Therefore, bringing together the importance of reflection in teacher training, the use of journals as reflective tools, and the power of visual images, the aim of the current study was to explore trainee teachers' use of visual journals and understand how images could support their professional development.

#### Research context, design, and questions

As a lecturer on a Primary Postgraduate Certificate in Education [PGCE] course and module leader for the specialism in Upper Primary Art, I have always been keen to provide opportunities for the art specialists to reflect on their learning using visual methods. In the past I have planned one-off group collage activities following school placements, but I wanted to introduce something more sustained and personal. The visual journal - an A4 sketchbook - was conceived as a possible solution. All the trainees in my tutor group - 31 art specialists - were given a visual journal at the start of the course, along with a two-page hand-out summarising its intended purpose and the research study. The following is an excerpt from this:

Much of your work during the course will be written, so you can think of the visual journal as an 'antidote' to this! It will give you a creative space where you can express your experiences, ideas, and feelings using images. However, you may choose to combine words with the images to create multi-modal\* representations. (\*A 'mode' is a form of communication.)

A visual journal is not the same thing as a sketchbook. You will not be recording from observation or designing anything; rather reflection should be the focus of the journal's use. Although you may wish to make something visually appealing, the actual appearance of your journal content might well be less important than its personal meaning and significance to you.

The trainees were free to use the visual journal - hereafter, the 'journal' - however they liked, but ideally they had to make at least one entry per week during the taught course. Although all the trainees were encouraged to use the journal, I only asked for a small number to be involved in the research study. This was for practical reasons, given that I was the sole researcher; also, it was anticipated that this could act as a pilot study for further research. Ethical approval was gained from the university and five female trainees agreed to participate in the research, giving their informed consent and choosing a personal pseudonym. Data collection took place towards the end of the autumn term. By this point, the trainees had spent 10 weeks at the university, for lectures and seminars, and two weeks on school placements. Data collection consisted of an individual, audio-recorded, interview - between

approximately 25 and 50 minutes in duration. Photographs of visual journal entries - nearly one hundred - were taken following the interview; after which the visual journal was returned to the trainee.

There was one main research question:

How do visual journals support trainee teachers in reflecting upon their professional development?

And five sub-questions:

- What do participants choose to reflect upon in the journals?
- How are images used in the journals?
- To what extent is the journal viewed as an art object?
- Does the use of the journal change over time, either in content or form?
- What types of reflection are evident?

Data analysis involved an iterative process, where the data (interview transcripts and photographs of journal entries) were frequently re-revisited to arrive at more developed interpretations. Themes were data-driven, rather than applied from literature, and narrative summaries were constructed to allow for comparisons to be made. To ensure meanings were ethically interpreted, the summaries were sent to the trainees for member-checking (Guba & Lincoln, 1989). The research findings will be presented and discussed below; organised according to the study's sub-questions.

## Research findings

What do participants choose to reflect upon in the journals?

A wide variety of themes were evident in the journals, but it was possible to identify some broad categories of common interest. Notably, non-academic interests were the most prominent, accounting for over half of all entries. This category included reflections on the trainees' home life and recreational pursuits; including making artwork in the journal, and social relationships. Indeed, as a separate category, social relationships counted for approximately one quarter of all entries. Challenges and frustrations were evident in nearly a third of entries. This category included reflections on struggling with understanding course content and expectations, and achieving a satisfactory work/life balance. Of equal importance -also nearly a third of entries - were reflections on personal learning. These entries included the recording of specific activities, such as seminar work, and also links made between art and other subjects, especially maths. Below are two examples of reflection on contrasting themes.

Figure 1 shows an entry from Lola's journal, which concerns social relationships. Lola used a copy of a photograph of a group of people holding hands to represent her closest friends on the course. She had assigned her friend's names, and her own, to the unknown figures. Friendship was an important theme in Lola's journal and it is notable that nearly one quarter of her journal entries consisted of drawings made by her friends. For example, Lola included two drawings from a fellow art specialist, who was 'generous with his drawings'. One drawing featured a hare, which she admired, and another, of a hummingbird, was a present to cheer her up following her break up with her boyfriend. A further journal entry was a drawing made by a different friend in a maths lecture. Lola explained that this friend did not

see herself as artistic, but Lola liked her friend's drawing and said she had made one similar. Lola explained that she used her journal as a space to both evaluate feelings and collate things that she considered to be appealing.

Figure 1: Lola



Figure 2: Iris



Iris emphasised the therapeutic role of the journal. She explained that she had felt stressed at the start of course and this had made her want to draw something, as by getting her feelings down on paper she could look at them and question them. Figure 2 shows an entry from Iris' journal, where she had been trying to make sense of academic 'stuff'. Coloured patches and shapes symbolised different levels of complexity, such as the theories she thought were 'thrown' at everyone. The black patches represented things she 'didn't get', the white patches were things that she understood and the yellow patch was something she was 'working through'. A further entry was about 'struggling' with formative feedback on her work. The theme of personal learning was very strong in Iris' journal and she shared some detailed thoughts on reflection in a broader sense:

I suppose it's the same with learning, coming across new ideas and things in the lectures we get told and I think 'well, I always thought that' and I think 'well, why did I always think that, who introduced that to me before now?' And another thing comes across in the lecture and you think 'Oh yeah, I never thought about that before!' But it's just giving yourself the space to reflect, because to begin with I will be honest like all the reflection we have to do on this course I was thinking 'Oh...' and then I realised I was doing it anyway...

In making later entries she said she found it useful to revisit her journal from start, likening this to her approach to essay writing. She explained how she could see similarities between reflecting in the journal and her written reflections on the course. Indeed, one of her entries consisted of a poem about stress, which she thought was possibly inspired by a poetry seminar. She added: 'I'm making it sound like I have been depressed the whole time I have been here, I haven't, but this is just where I go.'

How are images used in the journals?

Images used in the journals could be defined in many different ways, but there was a clear distinction between literal images, which had straightforward meanings, and metaphorical/symbolic images, which had more complex meanings. Entries featuring literal images, which accounted for over sixty per cent of all entries, were more likely to have positive associations; they were often a record of a specific learning activity; they sometimes involved linking art to other subjects; and also included records of recreational activities. In contrast, entries featuring metaphorical/symbolic images were more likely to be about challenges and frustrations; they tended to be more personal and emotional – concerning worry and stress. For example, they were often described in an accompanying narrative of some length and also related to ideas about self-image, beliefs, philosophy, and understanding of educational theory. The following examples provide further detail about these different image types.

In contrast to the journal entries connected to Lola's interest in friendships, many other entries involved her reflecting on various taught sessions on the course, about what she did and learnt. She thought that the journal could become a useful 'memory tool'. She explained that she liked to collect 'visually interesting, visually exciting things' and it was apparent that the majority of the images had positive associations for Lola. Figure 3 shows an entry linking art and science. Lola stuck in four pieces of chromatography paper from an experiment in a science seminar and discussed these in detail. She said she had been 'absolutely fascinated' to watch the colour separation and described the resulting patterns as 'amazing' and 'pretty', especially one which she thought looked like a feather. Interestingly, regardless of the source of the image Lola invariably concentrated on talking about the visual appearance of the things in her journal. Design and pattern making were particular interests and two of her journal

entries were patterns made on graph paper, which she explained she had ‘always had a thing about’. She even asked for extra graph paper to take home from maths seminars. In relation to one entry, she said that when they had been asked to make patterns she had thought: ‘Oh, my god, this is like heaven! I was like ‘Really? Are we allowed to just do this?’. She thought that maths was something she could never see herself enjoying but now she could see interesting connections between art and maths, such as making Aztec style patterns. She further remarked: ‘There are loads of things that I really like about Maths now, like patterns. I like symmetry, tessellation - things like that’. She even included two different pieces of graph paper in her journal.

Figure 3: Lola

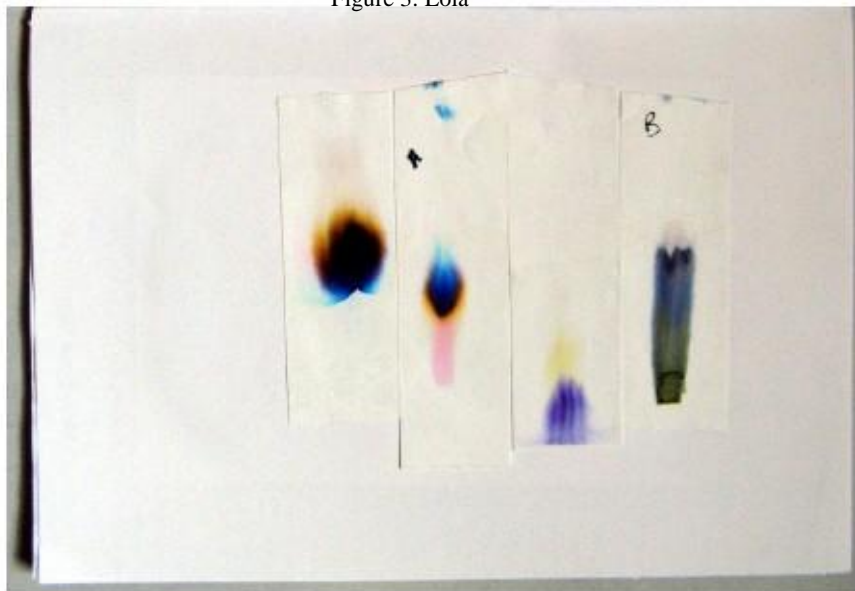
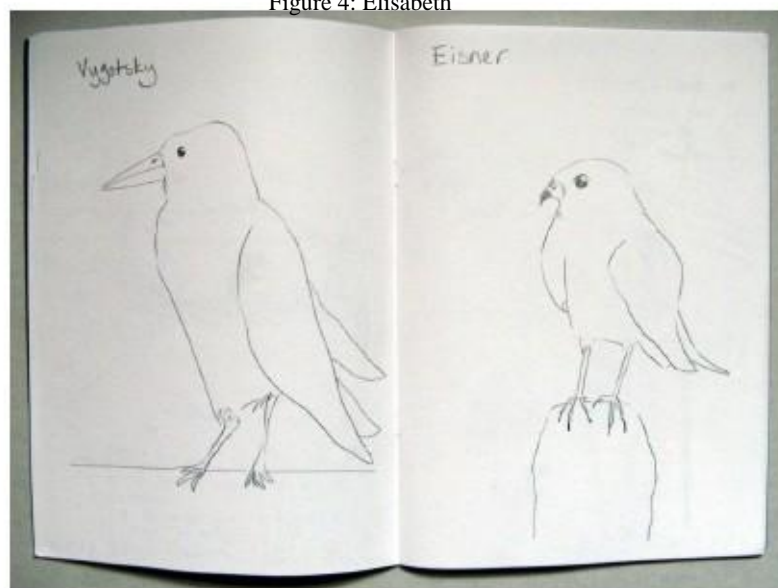


Figure 4: Elisabeth





Elisabeth explained that drawing in her journal had helped with her learning by making her reflect on things that would otherwise ‘bubble away underneath’. She added:

... because then I’m seeing it, so I can reflect on it...so that when I’m doing the course I’m actually dealing with those things. Yeah, so if I’ve got a tendency to worry or to be a bit self-critical and these kind of things, if I’ve got it in my journal I can look and go ‘actually, it’s not that bad’ and ‘yeah, you’re fine’. Yeah, having it out on the page helps me make sense of it and it’s professional development, I think, rather than scribbles or anything like, and personal development. I think that’s what it helps.

Figure 4 shows one of Elisabeth’s entries, featuring Vygotsky and Eisner as ‘big old birds’. She explained that she found them ‘scary but fascinating’ and ‘a bit remote’. Notably, and in addition to the significance of representing the theorists as birds, creatures she particularly liked, she elaborated on the drawing by saying:

...now it’s actually that Vygotsky and Eisner are feeding from my bird table in my garden. So these two birds are now coming and, yeah, we’ve got a bit of a relationship going now I’m feeding them. So I understand a bit more about them now!

In contrast to the theorist birds that Elisabeth wanted to befriend, she later drew two unpleasant characters that she described as: ‘Lord and Lady Spell-a-Lot’. This drawing was prompted by the challenges she felt in relation in literacy: ‘the idea that you have to spell correctly and everything has to be right and you have got to get you grammar correct’. She explained that these characters were judgemental and this made her angry: ‘they like to look down on you. They’ve got great big noses; they look down their noses at you because you have put an apostrophe in the wrong place’. It was notable that the only colour in the drawing was Lord and Lady Spell-a-Lot’s red pens with she said they used to correct mistakes.

To what extent is the journal viewed as an art object?

All of the trainees said that their journal contents held personal meaning and could therefore be considered art. However, all, apart from Elisabeth, said that other people might have different opinions on this matter. Iris commented on others’ perceptions of art, noting that ‘people see art as very separate from other things and it’s not - it’s all interconnected [...] It’s just another pair of glasses to look at something else and it just gives you another layer of understanding’. The majority of the journal entries were about creating meanings, rather than exploring processes. In this way, the journal was not commonly used as a sketchbook in its traditional sense. Nonetheless, two of the trainees, Alex and Iris, took more of an exploratory approach to their journal use and it was notable that neither had a degree in art. For example, many of Iris’ journal entries seemed to be about trying out different ideas, often in a physical way. She noted how ‘playing’ with some felt circles had been therapeutic and she enjoyed moving them around ‘a bit like a puzzle’, commenting on their softness and colour. There was considerable variance in individual preference for image making and image-selection based on the trainees’ unique artistic interests, which can be summarised as follows: Alex - colour; Elisabeth - drawing; Iris texture; Lola - appropriation (e.g. friends’ drawings); Louise - photographs and book making.

Figure 5: Alex



Alex did not seem to regard her journal as an art object. Instead, she described her journal contents as ‘sketchbooky’ art; visual representations of ideas and feelings, but not planned or ‘official’ representations. This interpretation seems in keeping with the evaluations she shared in relation to the artistic intentions she had for many of her entries. It was evident that she wanted to use the journal to explore different types of art making and the contents included drawings, paintings, collages, cut-outs, and photographs – as well as art postcards to which she had added decorative borders. Figure 5 shows one of Alex’s entries where she used a detailed pencil drawing featuring her head and all her thoughts and dreams as a starting point for exploring colour, shape and form:

‘I can’t remember which week maybe it is in the first few weeks of term, I was feeling so bamboozled by everything that was going on and just the volume of different demands and the different things and the way that life had changed and being in a different place so I think it was, I mean, it’s like a picture of a face which is maybe me, my brain, in the mind section there’s like plates spinning with different things, like numbers and letters and phonics is in there somewhere and a clock spinning, dreaming of some sunny beach somewhere.’

She photocopied her pencil drawing to paint and then made several cut-outs from this, which were presented in a series. The inspiration for this approach came from a book-making project she had completed at college, based on the work of an artist who used these techniques.

As previously noted, colour was a particular interest of Alex’s and many of the experiments in her journal involved colour mixing, layering, and various juxtapositions. However, despite apparently enjoying the process of making these entries, she was disappointed with the results and remarked:

*‘I think I love colour so much but I really want to learn how to work with it in an effective way, so I was kind of wanting there to be some kind of, I don’t know, just wanted it to be a bit more effective, I am not sure even how to describe what I wanted to achieve but I could see certain artwork that does it really well, I guess maybe just choosing a more restricted colour pallet but only using like colours from half the colour wheel or something like that, or tones, I don’t know.’*

The above evaluation mirrors Alex’s description of her journal contents as ‘sketchbooky’ art - i.e., she could see possibilities for developing her entries to better achieve her artistic aims.

Figure 6: Louise



Figure 6 shows an entry from Louise’s journal, recording a gallery visit, which was part of the art module. The photographs on the right page show details of the artwork of Salvatore Arancio. Photographs were a dominant interest in Louise’s journal and some of these had been digitally manipulated to achieve different effects, such as burnished edges. Here, the photographs have not been manipulated but she has arranged them with great care. The layout of Louise’s journal entries was always carefully considered and she used a variety of presentation techniques. As well as sticking in little books, which all took a different form, she included envelopes and some collaged items. For example, one page was full of lists that she had written of things to do, which she had chosen at random, commenting: ‘I have a lot of lists’. Indeed, the envelope holding the gallery leaflet was recycled from an old list. The methodical thinking behind making her lists was also evident in the titles and dates that she added to the majority of her entries; the Big Draw entry even included the exact time of her group’s workshop. There were also examples of additional decorative features, such as little dots and spirals and various forms of ornamental lettering on some of the pages. However, the first page of her journal was left intentionally blank and she explained the reason for this:

I think it kind of just reverts back to when [I was] at school or university or wherever and I had my sketchbooks, I’d always be quite precious about the first page and wanting to put something that was a good start to your journal kind of thing, which I always knew was the wrong attitude to have towards it but I just never found anything to fill it - the first page. So, yeah, it’s still empty. I am quite neat and precise about it...

Louise’s attitude to the first page of her journal - i.e., not wanting to spoil it - was shared among the other trainees. This relates to the findings in respect of the next research question.

Does the use of the journal change over time, either in content or form?

Changes in the journal entries were originally going to be investigated by comparing the data from the autumn term (interview 1) and the spring term (interview 2). However, further data collection did not take place after interview 1, which was the study's main limitation. Nonetheless, it was possible to see some changes in the content and form of journal entries over the autumn term. Change and transition was a theme evident in a range of journal entries. For example, settling into course was considered in relation to meeting new people and making sense of the course content and expectations. Using the journal itself was also an initial concern, with most of the trainees mentioning a 'bank page anxiety' - this relates to Louise's quotation above. Settling into school placements also presented a new challenge and the frequency of journal use generally declined as the term progressed. In terms of future intentions for the journal, planning teaching and recording children's work were noted as possible ideas. Alex also thought that it could be useful to help with her written work and was interested in using the journal to record 'process' in both planning and academic writing, as she felt ideas in the planning stage were sometimes lost but would be useful to revisit. In connection with assignment writing she commented:

I feel like I also have a difficult kind of block of getting started and feeling overwhelmed by so much information and there are so many ideas and you want to keep them. So, I think if I use this alongside a process of getting into it a topic it might help soften the edges a bit.

This suggestion of Alex's might well have been received warmly by the other trainees, particularly those who preferred the practical side of the course compared to its academic requirements.

Several entries related to Elisabeth's school placement appeared in the latter third of her journal, corresponding with her time in school. Notably, she had more entries relating to school-based work than the other trainees. For example, Figure 7 was about Elisabeth's emotions on starting the placement and showed her connected to a 'confidence-o-meter', reflecting her worries, but in a typically humorous manner. The children had been making circuits in school and she explained:

It's just about being in school [...] having gone from being quite ... accomplished in my area of what I was doing to then suddenly be a complete newbie again and not knowing what on earth you're doing and having to learn everything and realise you know nothing! So, my confidence at the beginning of school practice was really low actually, and when things went wrong I really took it to heart [...] so writing it down was, and drawing it was, a way of recognising that and thinking - again, having a little word with myself. Yeah, that's why it was important to write it down.

The next entry was more positive, showing the 'lovely' journey from her home to the school, which she said contrasted to her journey from home to the university. A further entry showed drawings of 'all the kids in the class' and she said that drawing their faces was a way of recalling all of their names, which helped her feel more confident. This is another example of the importance of recording in the journal.

Figure 7: Elisabeth



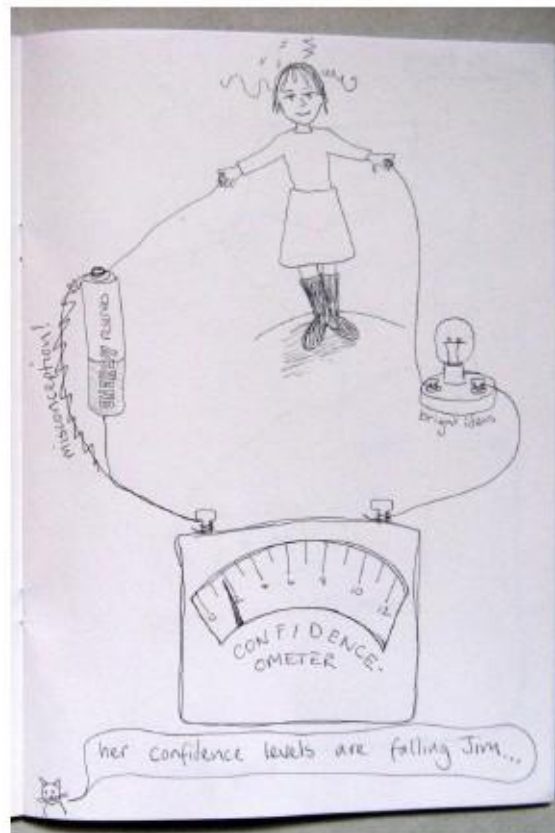


Figure 8: Iris



In contrast to entries connected to reflecting on the course, both from social and academic perspectives, many of Iris' other entries had strong links to her life at home. For example, she mentioned feeling a sense of homesickness and several of her entries symbolised this in various ways, such as a crayon drawing of a dog in the style of Franz Marc (Figure 8) which related to missing her pets. Most notably, she described her need to do something with her





hands and noted how the journal contents ‘got progressively more touchy feely’ the longer she had been away from home and her ceramics studio. It could be said that using the journal acted as a substitute for being not being able to make her pots and she noted how she had to stop herself from using the journal to plan designs for her future ceramic work.

What types of reflection are evident?

As widely-used reflective frameworks deal in the analysis of writing it was therefore difficult to classify the types of reflection evident in the visual journals. However, as interviews (verbal data) were used to understand the journal contents (visual data) it was possible to make some connections between the findings of this study and commonly understood types of reflection. Data analysis indicated that, generally, literal images were less reflective and seemed to correspond with definitions of descriptive writing (i.e., non-reflective) or descriptive reflection (Hatton & Smith, 1995). For example, entries recording specific learning activities did not always relate to rationales for such approaches; therefore they could be seen as solely descriptive. Perhaps unsurprisingly, metaphorical/symbolic images were more reflective and seemed to correspond with definitions of dialogic reflection or critical reflection (Hatton & Smith, 1995). For example, entries making connections between personal beliefs and others’ perspectives could be seen as dialogic reflection. Additionally, journal entries using metaphorical/symbolic images sometimes involved ‘framing’ & ‘reframing’ problems (Schön 1983, 1987), so the process of image-making helped to develop new understandings and a sense of achievement. Despite these apparent connections, it should be noted that the literature has been applied to the data here in a ‘loose’ sense, which others might disagree with. Also, the trainees’ thinking at the time of making the journal entries was not recorded in written form,

### Conclusion and implications

The findings from this study clearly show that the visual journal offered the trainees valuable emotional support. They all commented that they enjoyed using the journal, even when reflecting on negative experiences or issues. Importantly, the journal was a space over which they could take ownership and make personal connections (Sanders-Bustle, 2008). They liked that they had complete control over the entries and, as the journal was not formally assessed, they did not feel constrained by imposed criteria. Many of the trainees noted the value of making their experiences, ideas and feelings visible on the pages of the journal - this was in contrast to work, such as lecture notes, which had been put away in folders. The process of making entries was often described as relaxing and, to some, a welcome change to reading or writing. For those reflecting on challenges and frustrations, the journal had a therapeutic role, enabling problem solving. However, despite the importance of this problem solving, reflecting on positive experiences is also highly valuable (Janssen, de Hulla & Tigelaar, 2008). The journal was frequently used to record positive learning experiences and teaching ideas. Notably, making links between art and others subjects in the journals boosted the trainees’ confidence, especially in maths – a subject which many of them reported to have previously felt unsure about. Seeing these cross-curricular links also highlighted new possibilities for their practice in schools.

It is argued that in reflective activities professional and personal considerations are frequently intertwined (Moon, 2006; Stenberg, 2010) and this was evident in how the journal aided both professional and personal development. Interestingly, the dominance of non-academic interests as a theme perhaps helped the trainees in going some way to achieving the



satisfactory work/life balance that they all considered to be an issue, given the demands of their studies. All of the trainees reported using the journal less frequently as the term went by, but their ideas for the future use of the journal demonstrated that they could see its value in relation to their learning and wanted to further explore its potential. However, it is unclear whether these intentions were realised in practice. Unfortunately, as a small-scale - unfunded - study, resources were not available to collect data beyond the first term of the course. This was the main limitation of the research.

Although this paper offers just a brief insight into the use of visual journals with trainee teachers, there are some implications from the research worthy of note. Importantly, the most complex entries helped the trainees to make sense of challenges and frustrations through metaphorical/symbolic images. Also, the trainees tended to speak about these entries in more detail than when literal images had been used. It is suggested that in order to facilitate deeper reflection, there is a need to encourage the use of metaphorical/symbolic images. This could perhaps be addressed through some tutor input, such as a workshop, when the journals are first introduced. However, if journals were to be used in a more formal manner - possibly assessed - it would be essential to recognise individual artistic preferences, so trainees could feel that the journal was truly their own. Further research is recommended into this area.

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## Contemporary art education and creativity

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### Abstract

Recently, the trend of thought of creativity in contemporary art education is widely discussed by art educators again. From 2007 and 2008 World Creativity Summit to the recently symposia all around the world, creativity has been played an important role. How to cultivate the next generation of students in inspiring creating thought and performance of what the society needed is becoming one of the issues in contemporary art education. As it is, we make some possible art education instruction and combine the contemporary art educators' ideas to explore how to teach creativity. In addition, we also emphasize the students' learning reaction and performance in art-related curriculum. All in all, we provide lots of worthy references and suggestions and pointing out some ways of what it needed to be improved in art education through this study.

### Keywords:

Contemporary art education, creativity, creative process, creative thinking, imagination

### Foreword

Recently, the trend of thought of creativity in contemporary art education is widely discussed by art educators again. From 2007 and 2008 World Creativity Summit to the recently symposia all around the world, creativity has been played an important role. How to cultivate the next generation of students in inspiring creating thought and performance of what the society needed is becoming one of the issues in contemporary art education. As it is, we make some possible art education instruction and combine the contemporary art educators' ideas to explore how to teach creativity. In addition, we also emphasize the students' learning reaction and performance in art-related curriculum. All in all, we provide lots of worthy references and suggestions and pointing out some ways of what it needed to be improved in art education through this study.



### New era of creativity in Contemporary art education is coming

Art education in cultivating creativity and developing the position is rethinking when contemporary art educators focused on Children-based, Discipline-based, post modernism and visual culture art education; on top of that, they begin to focus on the field of creativity in the world and society development. Efland (2010) gives an opinion of creativity is far from the creative self-expression of art education before, he decides to discuss it from “creative class”. Efland brings up various questions and challenges in new era, such as bad environment, climate change, and economy competition, not only art field but also industrial countries face the same problems. By solving them, we need to make use of “society creativity” which is combined by new technology and new development in product. Especially in economy growth, the creativity is not a product of personality but an element made from specific society-creating activity. Parsons (2010) also talks about the education of creativity which is one of the hottest issues of the world, the main reason is public-recognition, it is also an incentive of economy development, and Parsons thinks it from creative self-expression to contemporary creativity is different in creativity value. The former shows it on internal-self and growth, and the value is personal not social material.

Nowadays, we still think the creativity plays an important role on solving many problems, mostly are social problems not personal ones and those are complex, the only way to solve that is to link creativity through various interaction of fields, concepts, processes. In short, creativity is a treasure made by society which can be exchanged from knowledge, opinion and concept. Because of social development and global phenomena, the creativity development and cultivation is valued again in art education. Contemporary art education and children-based art education are different in creativity opinions, how to cultivate children in creativity through art education becomes a main issue of art educators, the contemporary art educators need to find a new orientation of solving social and global issue on creativity.

### Definition of creativity in Contemporary art education

Recently, many important art education periodicals such as “International Journal of Arts Education” and “2007 & 2008 World Creativity Summit” are taking some issues regarding creativity. It makes many art educators rethink the new definition of creativity in contemporary art education. Arnold (2008) is taking another view to see visual phenomena that means we no longer see everything in traditional way but a brand-new visual-looking from contemporary art education eye. Boughton (2008) brings up an opinion in visual-art field. He finds out that creativity is a capability of finding and solving problems, he also points out finding and solving problems are two important elements in creating creativity and interest and curiosity also influence creativity. Day (2008) talks about creativity exist in artists’ thoughts and works, through their teaching process; it can enlighten students on creativity and enjoy them during learning time.

We can see some definitions from art educators’ eyes, they have some new definitions of creativity on solving questions and creating products, from their views, we can find creativity in not personal-oriented but social-oriented instead, they also think that is a social product made from creativity, most art educators have some opinions in common. They think people who have creativity should get some credits from their works of creativity. Csikszentmihalyi (1999) brings up an opinion, he thinks people can perform creativity variously; first of all, they need to enter a field, eager to learn, obey the rules of the field. Creativity is mutual





system in contemporary education and psychology, it includes interpersonal, process, product, social and cultural surroundings. (Csikentmihalyi, 1996; Feldman, 1999; Gruber, 1989) “Newness” is usually one of the imminent characters; another is practical-useful, proper, and social-valued. (Mumford, Reiter-Palmon, & Redmond, 1994) Art educators thought they has big different between creativity from social system and creative self-expression.

Creativity in contemporary art education is the creativity of social system. Individual has to cooperate with others, and offers ideas through interacting with different fields. Creativity is an outcome of the society, which is the solution to various problems and challenges the whole world civilization has been facing. Therefore, we need to cultivate students on finding and analyzing problems in the contemporary society and trying to seek and fulfill the solutions, which is our goal for cultivating social creativity in contemporary art education.

Kay (1994) defines the thought of creativity: a process of finding, defining an undecided thought or question. Most researchers think there is a connection between creativity and the key solution to the problem. Mumford (1994) views creative thinking is a form of solving problems. Feldhusen and Treffinger (1986) combine creativity and problem solving as a unitary complex thought, and they think creativity is an essential element but complex, practical problem-solving way.

Many researchers bring up problem-solving models, and call them the creative solutions, which are a step-by-step process. In general, there are four to six steps in model recognition from finding, recognizing, defining, looking for feasible solutions and assessing all kinds of solutions. Sometimes, we review the whole process or search for other ways just to pick out the best solution.

What ability of creativity is needed in contemporary art education?

Moreover, the process of creative thinking has correlations to critical thinking. Creative thinking is innovative, unlimited and unique, while critical thinking is focused and logical. The latter would be meliorated if creative thinking was well developed. Some experts suggest that we should make both of them in progress in the educational development. By integrating creative thinking and rational thinking, we can tell the behaviors of creativity and unwise respectively.

Above all, as it is focused by holistic development in contemporary art education that classes based on core-culture emphasizes broadness, criticism, creating process thinking, balance between creativity and rationality. In addition, Roukes, in 1988, brings up solutions; there are a few steps below:

1. Confirmation: make sure what are the real topics and questions
2. Analysis: categorize the intention of the topics
3. Imagination: produce creative solutions through the process of imaging.
4. Option: choose the best solution.
5. Completion: implement the creative idea through practical methods.
6. Assessment: assess the solutions till it achieves the best or go back to the step 1.

To sum up, we should notice the points below in addition to creativity in contemporary art education:

1. Assisting students on finding problems, especially in social and natural environment and



future development, which are what art educators care about. Art educators are trying to cultivate the students on interacting with the environment around the students themselves and facing the problems from global development.

2. In addition of creative thought and imagination, we also need to focus on the ability of criticism; it is an important theory of developing holistic education and helps individuals to understand their profession through social-basis creativity.
3. Scholars of creativity bring up suggestions continuously. When we help students face various problems, we should teach them how to find and analyze problems and pick out the best solution, however, it is needed to be planned and assessed. It has also been tried through visual culture media and various living issues to integrate students' thoughts and help students to explore problems.
4. The product of analyzing and imagining creativity, also the outcome of the society, needs to be censored by social organizations such as teachers on art performing, and then it can be positioned the good creativity performance.

Hence, researchers take the theories and results of analysis to bring up some points of what we need in contemporary art education:

1. Ability of distinguishing problems: the main ability is to get the solutions on social, environmental and future development issues. By differentiating these problems, we can efficiently solve them.
2. Ability of analyzing and criticizing: the ability is to bring up some opinion and criticism through understanding social, environmental and future development issues.
3. Ability of planning and choosing: the ability is to pick out some unique, creative and quality strategies through social, environmental and future development issues.
4. Ability of creating feasibility: the ability is to transmit the solutions or concepts through art performing on the issues.

In addition, we compare the creativity view on social-system and art education view on integrating. The researchers found four abilities from above views; they bring up another view, that is, whole performance ability. They see it as the composition of the above four views.

## Conclusion

We intend to explore students creativity performances through integrated Contemporary art education class so they need to understand the abilities required on creativity of contemporary art education. The abilities include individual characters, ways of thinking and product innovating. Besides, they bring up society-creativity, creativity under society-system on learning creativity. From those views, we can face global, social, natural, economic problems and so on. It appears that creative thinking and product innovating become more important. It is also the key to change the thoughts on creativity under contemporary art education.

On top of that, we need to explore what kind of teaching environment can influence student's creativity? Whether students change their thinking on learning art education? After that, we should go forward and discuss their abilities on thinking and innovating. If contemporary art education combines above two points with art education philosophy, it will gain the resources of what contemporary art education needs. Culture stems, living experiences, social issues, critical thinking, problems solving and reflecting it-self of art education concepts should all



be assessed from creativity.

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## Developing effective visual art strategies to promote young children's with autism interaction with their peers and teachers. An action research approach

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### Abstract

This research aims to develop, implement and evaluate the effectiveness of visual art strategies for children with autism, ranging from four to seven years in an inclusive reception unit in Greece. The investigation inquiries into whether or not certain kinds of modified visual art activities improve their communication and social interactions with their nondisabled peers and teachers. It begins with analysis of the current state of knowledge about impairment in autism and curriculum in art and special education so as to provide the theoretical basis for an educational intervention. Current observations of the visual art activities designed by the teachers, before my intervention in the classroom reveal a succeeding interest of the children with autism in visual art making. When special education teachers advise and collaborate with teachers qualified in general education, children along the spectrum have the chance to be effectively included in joint activities. Further findings will unfold within the curriculum intervention and inform improvement of early years and special needs teaching practices through visual art education.

### Key words

Visual art education, early years, autism spectrum disorders, communication, social interaction

### The Broad Problem Area

The present legislation of Greece does not require the attendance of all children with autism in mainstream schools. Although education for autistic children with severe difficulties is generally provided for in special schools, children with less severe difficulties into inclusive units in mainstream schools has created challenges for practitioners (Syriopoulou-Delli, 2010). While, integration into mainstream curriculum has been implemented to some degree, this has highlighted inadequacies in the training of both special teachers and generalist teachers and most importantly the lack of any official curriculum guidelines for inclusive units (Vlachou, 2006). Many Greek teachers have been either sceptical of the value of inclusion, especially for children with autism who require specific kinds of instructional skills.

Early years teachers in Greece try to integrate teaching autistic children in mainstream reception units into the current National Curriculum which has been established by the Pedagogical Institute of Ministry of Education. As suggested by the Centre for Diagnosis, Assessment and Support in Greece, special education teachers follow an individualised educational programme with each autistic child while their peers are occupied in other kinds



of activities with generalist teachers in classroom setting or have free assessed time in the reception unit (Lampropoulou, 2005). Although children with autism benefit from the one-to-one instruction in the special unit, they are not included in activities with their non-disadvantaged peers.

Another problem is that additionally, visual art education in early childhood in Greece in general is dominated by the model of child as individual creator. Art lessons in reception units tend to focus on the individual child experimenting with different art media, gaining knowledge and recognition of colour, developing a variety of drawing, painting and craft skills and learning to appreciate traditional and modern Greek art (FEK B'304/8.08.2003). Although art lessons have the potential to be used as a vehicle for collaborative practice, this does not happen. The lack of structured joint activities impedes children with autism developing their social interactions.

When children with autism are mainstreamed into reception units, the aim is inclusion in regular school activities. Early years teachers and teachers qualified in special education in Greece have yet to be persuaded to collaborate on reconsidering the organisation of their curricula, the structure of their teaching and new art education approaches that will meet the needs of all children better, including those with autism. Johns (2006) writing about children with social problems, refers to the need to provide support for generalist teachers and art educators to interact with special needs teachers so as to achieve the necessary modifications to the curriculum within art classrooms. Gerber (2011), advocates that special education teachers advise teachers qualified in general education and suggests that "A partnership between art educators and special educators - working together, planning together, and suggests that sharing information with each other can prevent the negative experiences of the children", (ibid, p. 10). Farrell (2005) also believes that collaborative projects that involve experimentation and reflection are needed to ensure that art based programmes meet the needs of all children.

## Literature Review

### Characteristics of Autism

In common with many other young children, autistic children show a lack of awareness of others in their school experience and refuse to share and co-operate due to the impairments of social interaction and communication, (Wing, 1996; Frith, 2003). Specifically, Wing (1996) states, that they face difficulties not only in understanding verbal and non-verbal communication, but also using it within their daily lives at school. Jordan and Powell (1995) confirm that they are deficient in developing the desire for communication and any kind of social interaction with others. However, children with autism have an acute visual apprehension and their way of thinking is principally characterised as visual (Ozonoff, 1998; Hermelin, 2001). Due to the characteristic of their impressive visual memories, children with autism sometimes develop strong interests related to eventual artistic processes, (ibid.; Pring et al., 1995). Because they are limited in awareness of and contact with their surroundings (Frith, 2003), a well planned art learning environment can be a safe and interesting way for children with autism to develop skills in social engagement. There have been cases, in which their interest in art making and participation in collaborative art activities has improved their desire for social interaction and communication. Many scholars have recommended modifying mainstream art activities so as to constitute a vehicle to facilitate reciprocal interactions between children with autism, their peers and teachers, (Stuart et al., 1995; Potter and Whittaker, 2001; Wall, 2004, Goodman and Williams, 2007; Howe et al., 2008).





Kellman's (2004) study of Sung, is a great example of how participation in a mainstream art classroom under the guidance of a specialist practitioner can be beneficial. It is reported that "she became familiar and comfortable with a busy art room atmosphere bustling with other children and young teachers" (ibid., p.15).

#### Education for children with autism in Greece

The academic year 2000 was defined as the year of dialogue about education in Greece and especially about special education. Although the first law concerning the education of children with special needs and children with autism spectrum disorders was passed in 1981 there was no reference in it to inclusive education. A law passed in 1981 dealt only with the separate provision for special education in special schools and institutions at primary and secondary level. The first attempts at forming inclusive units in mainstream public primary and secondary schools happened after 2000 and according to law 2817/2000 (FEK, A'78/14.03.2000). When this law was passed, a new pedagogical organisation called the Centre for Diagnosis, Assessment and Support (KEDDY organisation) was created to assess children with special needs and autism and decide on their placements in either inclusive mainstream public schools or special public schools (Lampropoulou, 2003).

With regard to the inclusion of children with autism spectrum disorders in mainstream schools, there is no requirement in Greece for any modifications to be made to the curriculum related to entitlement or to respond specifically to their needs. Although, autism was recognised in 1985 as a special category (N. 1566/1985) and the possibility of attendance in inclusive units in mainstream schools was legislated for in 2000 (N. 2817/2000), this applies to only a limited population of such children. According to Mauropoulou (2008) only 17 percent of autistic children attend inclusive units in primary education. Their inclusion is still contested and it is not clear whether they all benefit from being in an integrated unit or whether they need a special school infrastructure. For instance, Simpson and Myles (1993) state that, they require small structured educational environments and inclusion is not beneficial for them all. However, I believe a well-structured mainstream school with well-organised integration units that offers possibilities for learning in inclusive units and programmes, and is supervised by trained generalist and special teachers can benefit some autistic children. On the basis of my experience of working with such children ranging from ages four to seven, I am convinced they can benefit from an inclusive school environment. Integration at the early years stage is especially important because this is the first attempt at communication development beyond the family.

#### The Visual Arts in the Early Childhood Learning

The contemporary investigations in the field of visual arts in the early years consider a wide range of aspects that consists in the impact of visual arts on art appreciation and art criticism as well as art production that emphasize knowledge and artistic skills (Eglinton, 2003; Tarr, 2008; Brown and Deans, 2008). In this view teachers need to create an art learning environment that engages children with viewing and responding to art, as well as making experiences. Recent researchers and policy makers in the field of early years visual arts education still advocate placing the arts at the core of the curriculum but stress the crucial role of teachers in structuring children's art experiences in a way that will contribute to their cognitive and aesthetic development. They also advocate including art appreciation and using dialogue in more structured art programmes (Ji- Hi Bae, 2004; Loomis et al, 2007; Brown and Deans, 2008; Tarr, 2008; Eckhoff, 2008; Burkitt et al, 2010; McArdle and Wong; 2010). Tarr (2008) describes the ideal art room for early years children as an organised place, where group activities facilitate the expansion of relationships and interconnections between all



members. An assumption underpinning the proposed research therefore is that a carefully structured art based programme within a well organised school environment that encourages children with autism to express and communicate what they see to their peers and teachers, might assist them to develop relationships with other people. This is an extension of Barnes', (2002), assertion that all children need to be involved in art activities so as to complete their understanding of what they see and educate their visual senses.

### Methodology

The research is qualitative in nature and takes the form of action research defined as a set of actions conducted in a cyclical procedure of research conduct. Specifically, the researcher and the teachers collaborate so as to define the problem, plan the solution, act and observe and reflect upon further development (Somekh, 2006; Vogrinc and Zuljan, 2009; Robson 2002).

According to Kemmis and Mc Taggart (1992), "to do action research is to plan, act, observe and reflect more carefully, more systematically than one usually does in everyday life" (cited in Cohen et al. 2007, p. 297). Action research is characterised by cycles of problem identification, systematic collection of data, reflection, critical analysis and redefinition of the problem. The linking of the terms action and research highlights the essential features of this methodology and renders the action as a form of disciplined inquiry, in which collaborative attempts are made to understand, improve and reform practice. Specifically, Elliott (1991) alleges that action research studies coupled with reflective practice finally lead to the development of theories of education that are accessible to all teachers.

As both a researcher and a teacher, I embrace the notion of a research approach that can be undertaken by a group of early years teachers (Elliott, 1991; Somekh, 2006). The team consists of myself as the researcher, a head teacher and two early years teachers qualified in special education needs in the particular school where the research takes place. I adopt the three roles of researcher, facilitator and leader, (Blatherwick, 1998). I provide teachers with the information and knowledge I gain through background research and study of relevant literature to my research topic (e.g. recent theories about art education, communication and social interaction impairments in autism and educational methods of enabling communication for autistic children). I work in collaboration with them to refine the practical problems that they encounter in their classrooms and consider possible solutions. We have been working together on developing and finalizing a working hypothesis in the form of an art-based programme, then implement and evaluate it.

Data are being collected systematically by the team while the action is going on. The collaborative methodology will impact on the analysis, evaluation and reflection upon the programme and define the character of the whole research. I anticipate that using various methodological devices such as classroom observation, video recording and group discussions, all the members of the action team will have the opportunity to share views and increase their understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the intervention and of reflective educational practice. In line with Schon's (1987) view that "reflection gives rise to-on-the spot experiment" (ibid., p.28) reflexivity is embedded in the whole process of the research.

### Design of research

The action research is conducted at a public primary school in Aeghio city, county of Achaia in Greece. It takes place in an inclusive mainstream reception class. The research is organized



into 5 phases in accordance with the principles of action research (Cohen et al., 2007; Elliot, 1991; Robson, 2002; Somekh 2006), of planning, acting, observing and reflecting on practical action. Specifically the research phases are: 1) researching autism and theory and practice of visual art education, 2) defining and analysing the practical problem, 3) developing an art-based programme, 4) piloting and modifying the programme, 5) implementing and evaluating it. Thereinafter the conduct and findings of the second research phase is presented.

## Research Phase 2 February- March 2012

### Introduction and Aims

The conduct of the second research phase was particularly significant for me as a researcher to gain essential knowledge and information about the classroom situation and the new information that need to be adapted for change. According to Elliott (1991) teachers need to reform their practice in terms of adopting new information, materials and ideas so as to establish novel curriculum materials and strategies. Hence, the findings will be part of reflection and evaluation for the next Curriculum development phase, which will lead to the development of some experimental visual art activities for the children with autism. My observations of the lessons and the meeting with the teachers brought out important issues related to visual art development, that the teacher didn't think of before or even while observing extracts from the video recordings of the lessons. The aim of this phase was to observe and record three aspects of the autistic children's behavior. Specifically I focused on: i) their verbal communication and conversation skills with peers and teachers ii) their social interaction skills with peers and teachers (further analysis focuses on adult and child interaction, peer interaction and prompting interaction), and finally iii) their levels of enjoyment and motivation (the exact time that they were on/off task) during the visual art activities designed by the teachers, before my intervention in the classroom situation. Additionally, observations occurred during the children's free time, while participating in visual art activities of their preference so as to have a better understanding of their visual art skills. Their communicative and art learning processes and skills strengths and limitations of both formal and informal parts of the curriculum were analysed and specified, from studying their current performance and learning processes during visual art activities.

The art activities in the formal part of the curriculum were designed by the head teacher and the two special needs teachers according to their usual practice (table 1). The mainstream inclusive unit employs a thematic approach in the structure of visual art activities and in its curriculum planning. Every week the teachers in collaboration with the children choose a special theme within which emerge activities related to different cognitive subjects (Literacy, Maths, Physics and Study of the Environment) and Visual Arts. The strengths and weaknesses of the Greek National Curriculum for Early Years (FEK B'304/8.08.2003) the teachers in this school already follow with regard to provision of art learning for children with autism are assessed.

### My Role in Phase Two

In this phase of the research I adopted the role of non-participant observer (Bryman, 2008; Cohen et al., 2007; Robson, 2002). Specifically, my data collection instruments were researcher observation, using an observation checklist and video recording from a static camera applied on a tripod. Official permission for this video recording has been sought from the parents and guardians of the children and the teachers involved in the action research

(Roehampton 2010 and BERA, 2004). My six observations took place in the period of February 2012- March 2012 lasting 20-40 minutes each. Following the completion of the lessons two discussion meetings took place on the 20th and 27th of March, respectively. During the meetings between the teachers and researcher, extracts from the video recordings were observed in order to arouse a recall and achieve reflection and evaluation.

### Participant teachers and children

The head teacher and the two special needs teachers taught the reception unit in their normal way. Four of the eight children with autism aged 5-6 years, who are included in the mainstream inclusive reception unit, were selected as the main participants and focus of the research. All four diagnosed as autistic by the Centre for Diagnosis, Assessment and Support in Greece (KEDDY Organisation), were selected to be studied individually. According to their official diagnosis, they have better developed communicative and conversation skills and comprehension than the others, as well as some of the gross and fine motor skills that are important in most school activities. In each lesson only one or two of the three children with autism were closely observed each time, while they were placed in a group with four normal developing peers. Each time group (the one child with autism and the four normal developing peers) that was observed in every lesson was selected by the teachers randomly. The four children with autism are named by the researcher as child A, child B, child C and child D respectively and the four normal developing children who participate in the observed group each time are named as child 1, child 2, child 3 and child 4 respectively.

Table 1: Outline of Lessons

	Lesson 1	Lesson 2	Lesson 3	Lesson 4	Lesson 5	Lesson 6
-Date:	Feb 1	Feb 3	Feb 7	Feb 21	Mar 6	Mar 13
-Activity length:	30 min	40 min	30 min	40 min	40 min	20 min
-No of children	19 in the class:	21	11	20	14	15
	Child A and 4-Observed normal group: developing peers.	Child A and 4 normal developing peers.	Child B, child D and 4 normal developing peers.	Child C and 7 normal developing peers.	Child C and 4 normal developing peers.	Child B and 4 normal developing peers.
-Description:	Children separated into groups created a big joint image depicting an overwinter village. Each group created a different part of the village.	Children created animals that live in north pole using cloth material.	Children created animals that live in the forest, using plasticine. Afterwards they painted a joint image depicting a forest and they glue the animals on it.	Children painted a joint image depicting a figure of clown, using brushes and tempera.	Children pictured farm animals using colour markers and afterwards they glue them in a joint image depicting a farm.	Children separated into groups painted balls to represent a planet and they jointly made the planet system.

### Brief Description of the Lessons

The lessons took place in the inclusive reception unit and lasted approximately 20-40 min each. The head teacher taught the class and the one special needs teacher assisted the children with autism on a one-to-one base. Initially, the children sat at the “conversation niche” of the



reception unit, where they gather every morning before they begin their structured activities. The head teacher explained the process of the activity and then asked the children questions related to the weekly specific themes and activities. The materials used for the conduct of the 6 activities were coloured cardboard, scissors, glue, cotton, salt, white paper, tempera, brushes, plasticine and cloth. All the materials were selected and provided by the teachers. After the initial conversation the head teacher showed the materials and let the children to elaborate with them (table 1). The head teacher placed all the materials on a table and afterwards split the children into four groups. The children chose their materials and then sat on their seats to begin with the activity.

The special needs teacher used to prompt children with autism to follow their groups (observed group) and then she was drawing away. Each observed group's task was to follow the teacher's instruction and begin with the process of the activity. Children with autism sometimes were finding it difficult to begin with the task and elaborate with the materials. After five minutes from the beginning of the activities, the head teacher or the special needs teacher were trying to prompt children with autism to draw, hold the brush, paint, cut with the scissor and glue. Only then children with autism were participating in the activity process and ultimately creating their final product.

#### Discussion and Reflection of Teachers and Researcher

Upon the completion of all observation-lessons two meetings took place between the head teacher and the one special teacher, who participated in the activity and the researcher. The objective of this meeting was to engage in reflective dialogue and share ideas about the lessons content and outcomes. On reflection we all agreed that during the design of the activities more emphasis should be placed on children's with autism abilities, skills and apprehension. The activities should be designed in small steps with simple instructions for children with autism to follow. Specifically, the head teacher referred to her complicated instructions that potentially caused confusion and denegation of children with autism to engage with their task. For instance, in the first two lessons Child A seemed confused at the beginning of the task and moreover in the second lesson child A refused to collaborate with the teacher and peers. Children with autism needed extra instructions by the teachers during the whole process of the activities. Another point that was made specifically by the head teacher was related to children's collaboration. On response to this matter the head teacher mentioned: "I tried to develop unique visual art activities and did not emphasize on the significance of collaboration between the children".

#### Researcher Reflection and Evaluation

On reflection I perceived that the teachers had considered that there is a need for change so as to meet the specific requirements of children with autism, but they didn't emphasize on the need for change in terms of visual art practices and education for the whole classroom. Reflection helped me not only to fathom on the needs of children's with autism for communication and social interaction during their participation in visual art activities but also reflect upon issues of visual art skills, development, appreciation and discussion.

As I referred to in the beginning of this section, observations took place during children's free time as well, so as to improve my understanding of their visual art preferences. Findings from the observations of the informal part of the curriculum revealed that children with autism in their free time enjoy to be engaged in visual art activities that deal with tempera and brushes





or plasticine. Children with autism liked to feel the tempera with their hands and then apply it on their paper rather using the brushes some times. They were asking their teachers for such materials as well if they couldn't find themselves. So they had the chance to elaborate and amend their deficits in communication and interaction skills. Theory in the literature mentions that painting is far and away the most desirable process to children on the spectrum and the most likely to trigger regulation problems (Martin, 2009). Children with autism were on task when they were participating in visual art activities of their preference and they were elaborating a child and adult communication, when asking for help or materials.

Furthermore my reflections on the six lessons designed by the teachers aroused important issues that on one hand deal with the needs of children with autism and on the other hand with visual art practices in the early years. The reflective issues are the following:

- i) Children with autism have an acute visual apprehension and their way of thinking is principally characterised as visual (Ozonoff, 1998; Hermelin, 2001). So teachers could have cut down the instructions and apply them in visual cues and make them easier for children with autism to follow. In contrast all information was given at once and verbally. Additionally, although most of the final products seemed to be a big joint product, in fact each child created its picture alone using his/her material and finally glue or painted it on a big joint paper. There was no sharing of materials, interaction and painting in pairs or groups. As a consequence interaction deficits that children with autism deal with such eye contact, turn taking regarding the use of equipment and materials needed for the current visual art activity or give and take interactions could not be amended.
- ii) In Greece, the significance of visual arts education in early years, depends on teacher's orientation towards and knowledge of art, influences the place of visual arts within the curriculum. Early years teachers in Greece often lack confidence teaching visual arts due to their deficient knowledge (Sofou and Tsafos, 2009). Therefore collaboration with an art teacher would help them plan their lessons and include aspects of art appreciation and dialogue and art production that emphasizes in knowledge of techniques and artistic skills.
- iii) Additionally, findings revealed that the needs of children with autism were not thoroughly taken into consideration. All materials were prepared and provided by the teachers. A high stimulation classroom should have a variety of art materials within reach that the children are allowed to touch on their own (Martin, 2009; Gerber, 2011).
- iv) Finally, even though there was exposure of the final products in the classroom, there was no discussion about it. Consequently, children with autism did not have the chance to elaborate deficits in their communicative functions and show evidence of attention and speech comprehension, showing their products and talking about them.

#### Conclusion- Expected Contribution to Knowledge

A need has been identified to research and respond to the specific needs of children with autism in the early stages of education. The knowledge that will arise from the curriculum intervention in a special education unit will contribute to special education and visual art education theories regarding effective incorporation of autistic children into mainstream schooling. The development of an educational theory with regard to impairments of autism and visual art education and about how to utilise visual art activities to enhance communication and social interaction will unfold within the curriculum intervention. The early years stage of education constitutes the first vital step to further school socialization and development. Hopefully this research will inform theory and practice of special education in early years and result in the improvement of early years and special needs teachers'



knowledge of how to utilize visual art with children with autism. Finally, I anticipate that the research will facilitate the development of a framework for a visual art based programme in Greece with full entitlement to specific goals related to enhancement of social interaction for children with autism in reception units.

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Arts Education in the Crossroad of Cultures

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## **What do secondary art teachers from Cyprus think of creativity – as expressed in 41 children’s color linocut artworks from Slovenia (during and after evaluation)?**

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### **Abstract**

The purpose of this study was to find and to examine Secondary art teachers' from Cyprus – so called – working definitions of the criterion creativity, which they used when evaluating children's 41 art works (multiple color linocuts prints from one printing plate) from Slovenia. The aim of this "coincidental" study/research (we shall use the term study) was to see if the definitions of art teachers from Cyprus are either similar or different from the definitions – from the same study, given by art teachers from all around the world in the past ten years. The paper firstly examines some aspects of creativity from the theoretical aspects and some additional information regarding concerning historical and recent views on creativity in art education. Secondly, the paper describes the evaluation process. Finally, it was targeted to interpret gathered data – a very demanding task, comparing with results of the same study from different countries in last 10 years. Some conclusions and implications for art education are given and further professional development of art teachers are given, not only for Cypriot ones, but for the world ones too. The findings expounded below suggest that the responses gained by Cypriot art teachers are somehow similar to those gained by art teachers/educators from other countries (no matter if all are not published here in paper). Because of the longitudinal aspect of this unique study, there exist more versions of this paper, focusing on different national specific responses in different countries.

### **Key words**

(artistic) creativity, art teachers’ conceptions, children artworks, evaluation, art education

### **Scope of the study (the purpose and aims, background)**

The purpose of this study was to find, to examine current Cypriot art educator's conceptions of criterion/term creativity, when evaluating children artworks and to compare it with conceptions from abroad. The motivation for this study was based on expected divergent art educators’ conceptions about what creativity is.

I strongly believe most art educators worldwide share the belief that creativity is a very important, central concept/competency, which would have to be highlighted in every Art Curricula. The general belief expressed in our Art Curricula is that this high ideal – creativity – must be achieved and nurtured in the educational processes within different artistic practices. But how to “translate” ‘multi-faceted concept’ creativity into everyday art class reality (compare with Lindström, 2001)? How to cope with this concept when trying to evaluate it? Let us firstly examine some working definitions of general creativity.





## Theoretical Background

What is creativity? Can it be defined with words? Can it be taught in schools? And if this is the case, can it be measured/evaluated/assessed? Is it possible to evaluate creativity?

McLeod and Cropley (1989) identified five general elements which are necessary for creativity, even if they do not offer an exhaustive definition; novelty or originality, relevance, effectiveness, ethical desirability, and communication. The first element is decisive in distinguishing creativity from, for instance, facility, speed, accuracy, wealth of information, and so on.

According to Stratton and Hayes (1993) creativity is the ability to produce novel products or solutions to problems. Creativity has been studied as a counterpart to intelligence, represented by the capabilities of divergent and convergent thinking respectively. However, it is difficult to devise tests, as a creative response is by definition unpredictable, so the correct answers cannot be specified in advance. In fact, there is no agreed way of measuring how creative any particular achievement may be. The classic theory of creativity is that it requires preparation (doing the groundwork), incubation (a period of sub-conscious processing), inspiration (a sudden insight), and verification (checking if the solution works). The creative process often begins when one is inspired by an idea or faced with a problem. It can start with something as simple as "fooling around".

The term of creativity is applied to people, processes, and products (Barron & Harrington, 1981). Wallach (1985) concluded that a narrow definition yields the most convincing results, because results become less and less clear-cut as the definition becomes more general. By contrast, Simonton (1988) argued in favour of the general theory of creativity, as did the Soviet researcher Altschuller (1984).

## The criterion problem

In the light of criticism of the concept intelligence, if only we mentioned the success of IQ in predicting school success, the influence of new concepts, such as Gardner's seven intelligences (1984) etc., creativity has recently gained wide acceptance as an alternative to intelligence. But, here the problem arises: establishing a criterion of creativity. What is regarded as creative varies not only from society to society, but from age to age. In England, some centuries ago it was deemed necessary to expurgate Shakespeare's works. Similarly, the extraordinary creativity of the Slovene postimpressionist painter Ivan Grohar from the late 19th and early 20th century, or Dutch painter Vincent Van Gogh, was not recognized until many years after their death. A large number of similar examples exist worldwide.

However, it seems likely that creativity may manifest itself in a variety of styles. Creativity also ranges across a wide variety of fields, so that it is necessary to take account of creativity in science, mathematics, engineering, music ...

An approach which concentrates more on the psychological properties of the people involved, Sternberg (1988) distinguished six sides of creativity: "insight" (leading to effective selection of information), "knowledge" (which provides a stock of information out of which selection is possible), "personal factors" (e.g., flexibility, tenacity, willingness to take risks), "trust in one's convictions," "intrinsic motivation," and "relevance." According to these analyses, not only a recognised world expert or artist, but also a young child who showed knowledge of the appropriate material, insight, flexibility, and determination in producing a relevant idea could be said to be "creative", even if at vastly different levels (cf. Cohen, 1989).



Further difficulties arise out of questions such as, ‘‘For whom should some product or idea be novel? For the apparently creative person himself or herself, for a narrow circle of expert observers, for all of society, or ...? One way of dealing with this issue has been to speak of levels of creativity (Taylor, 1975). At the lowest is ‘‘expressive spontaneity,’’ which is to be found in, for instance, the uninhibited production of ideas often seen in young children, like basic circular movement drawings (added by M. P.). Originality and quality of the product are unimportant on this level. Higher levels included ‘‘technical creativity’’, characterized by unusual skill or proficiency; ‘‘inventive’’ creativity, which requires existing principles to be taken a step further; and, finally, ‘‘emergent’’ creativity, in which completely new abstract principles are recognized and presented.

There is no doubt that creativity is as fundamental to experiencing and appreciating works of art as it is to making one. Studies of creativity have described traits of people who have retained their creative attitudes, which we can also find in children during (artistic) creative processes and in their final products. According to several authors who wrote about and discussed this topic (e.g. Seltzey and Bentley, 1999; Zimmerman, 1995; Prevodnik), these include the abilities to:

- the right balance between challenge (of the artistic assignment) and skills,
- be persistent: to work for longer periods – perhaps weeks, months or years – in pursuit of a goal,
- be willing to take risks in the process of self-conceptualisation of the artistic assignment and during the process,
- the trusting relationships between the (art) teacher and (art) student,
- be able to motivate oneself as part of intrinsic motivation,
- question and be curious etc.

Creativity as a ‘‘style’’ (see also Cropley, 1992)

He claims that the term ‘‘creativity’’ is currently used in two senses. The first usage is very common (the everyday usage), also in the field of Art Education in Slovenia (my emphasis M.P.). Here, creativity involves the end products (a painting, drawings, prints etc.) hailed as creative by knowledgeable people. The word creativity in its general usage very strongly implies the existence of end products that meet some social, professional, or aesthetic criterion. Also, the term is used by (art) teachers to refer to the capacity to be inventive, original, and innovative (e.g., to think or to approach the artistic assignment/problem divergently). Children in art rooms or their artworks in the art competitions are said to be creative if they have many and varied ideas. Then, if they see relationships that are not usually noticed (e.g., between ideas and principles of design which can lay out artistic elements (line, colour, shape etc.) in a desired composition, and also, if they devise unusual solutions to artistic problems.

The quantitative (and qualitative) approach (see Cropley, 1992)

The next problem that concerned the research studies in the area of creativity has been that of whether it is something that is present in all people (children and students), albeit to an extent greater in some than in others, or whether it is something that persons either have or do not have. We are talking about two opposing views.



The first of these holds that creative children and students (in art processes also) differ from other youth in the qualitative sense – they are a different kind of person, with quite a different path of personal, mental and social functioning. The creative processes are then seen as magic or mystical, unknowable, untestable or spiritual.

The contrasting view is the view that creative people (children and students too) differ in quantitative way – that is, the processes and personal properties underlying the creative style are simple extensions of states and processes present, to some extent at least, in all people. Thus, the qualitative model implies that creative people possess something that others do not, and that, if any special attempt is to be made to develop creativity, it should concentrate on the members of the chosen group, (e.g. to choose only talented pupils in art and nobody else). The contrasting quantitative model against previous model assumes that all people are capable of adopting a creative style, and thus implies that society should try to bring out the latent creativity in all of its (young) citizens, if (artistic) creativity really is indeed important.

I think this latter position is much more productive from the point of view of everyday classroom reality, principles of equality and educational democracy. It suggests that the teacher has an important role to play with all students in the area of developing (artistic) creativity.

And what about the concept/term creativity in (Art) Education?

Usually people use the term creativity when considering Art(s) Education. It is usually viewed as the special province of the artist (why not also of the child and adolescent). In the public eyes, the artist possesses unique powers lacking in most people, such as originality, imagination, inventiveness. From the formalistic point of view, to be creative means to be capable of manipulating visual elements innovatively and in an original manner. Not all (young) artists are equally creative and some are very conventional as to hardly any outstanding tendency at all. Usually the ones (children, adolescents) attending special art classes are recognised as the most talented.

What does art education theory mean by evaluating creativity?

One of the most difficult problems in art(s) education is the issue of evaluating creativity.

We are constantly asking ourselves: are there any good methods of evaluating creativity? If creativity in all of its' aspects and types (see Eisner, 1997) is a highly prized and desired outcome, then it should be evaluated. Finally, there is a constant pressure for art educators to find good and measurable technics and instruments for the subject!

The evaluation of creativity is possible if we are able to define what it means for us within a particular artistic assignment (I know, understand and accept that some art educators may (not) agree with this). I even believe that art teachers should have to know, to express in words, what do they mean by creativity when evaluating children's art works. Here, theory is of help to everybody involved in this processes, if only we mention again Eisner's typology of creativity. He identified four types of creativity (Boundary Pushing, Inventing, Boundary Breaking, Aesthetic Organising).

Best (1981) was discussing creativity: 'For it is central to the meaning of (creativity) that to be creative is precisely to do something original which could not necessarily have been achieved solely by following the rules or satisfying the general criteria. It is only that of what



is achieved transcends or even changes the rules and general criteria that it could be creative.”

How is this problem of evaluating creativity treated in Art Education field, where assessment is still more based on the final product than on the processes? This is the umbrella question, which is to be examined to a small degree in this case study in this paper. Are the above-mentioned extracts from theories and terms of creativity in some harmony with the art teachers conceptions of that concept, represented in the children’s art work? Do art teachers mean by creativity several different concepts and meanings when used it in the evaluation period? What are nowadays a constitutive elements of the criterion creativity? This (inter)national study below, aimed at finding answers which could in a way reveal the ‘secrets’ of what are the ‘substances’ of the criterion creativity.

### Method

To highlight and make our previous theme ‘evaluating creativity’ more understandable and transparent, we established two (research) working tasks. Firstly, we have examined the key concept creativity (this was done in the first part of the paper). Secondly, we wanted to see a philosophy, which is behind the judges’ evaluation of the concept of creativity and why did they give such grades/marks as they did to the criterion creativity.

### Design

For both tasks, qualitative (descriptive) methods of gathering data were used. For the second task<sup>26</sup>, descriptive method was chosen in order to get several definitions and elements from theories of creativity etc (already done). For this second working task, an open-ended (qualitative) question was identified:

1. What do national (Cypriot) and international judges mean by the criterion creativity when evaluating/assessing/giving<sup>27</sup> grades or marks to 41 children’s multiple colour linocut prints?

### Description of the participants – judges

#### Group A – International level

Our colleagues (f-20) from the InSEA<sup>28</sup> field – art educators, art teachers, art advisers and art education students from different countries were kindly asked to judge/evaluate the 41 children prints – colour linocuts from one plate. Not all of this responses could be published in this paper. They were additionally asked, same as the group of Slovenian art teachers, to give a written response on the question: If you were evaluating this student’s prints, what do you mean by creativity in these prints? 41 children prints were from one Primary school from

<sup>26</sup>The first task was giving marks/grades from 1 (the lowest) to 9 (the highest expression of creativity) to all 41 children artworks exhibited. This first task is not a subject of this paper.

<sup>27</sup>

We could say that invited art educators were evaluating, assessing and giving grades, at least each of them a little bit. But from our point of view – regarding the context – we prefer to choose the term evaluating to assessing and grading

<sup>28</sup>

InSEA: International Society for educating through art (see web site: [www.insea.org](http://www.insea.org))



Slovenia out of eight school of same range, which were included in the research. The sample was 296 students of age 12-13.

#### Group B – National level

Cypriot secondary teachers of art education were invited to evaluate. They were kindly asked to judge/evaluate the 41 children prints – colour linocuts from one plate. They were additionally asked, same as the group of international judges, to give a written response on the question: If you were evaluating this student's prints, what do you mean by creativity in these prints? 41 children prints were from one Primary school out of eight school of same range, which were included in the research. The sample was 296 students of age 12-13.

#### Location of gathering data

The "international" responses were mostly gathered on two InSEA's European regional meetings (Poznan, Poland, June 2000; Porto, Portugal, November 2001 and in Wiena, Austria, Symposium on youth culture, 1999), some other national art education conferences (USA, 2002; Canada, 2005; Croatia, 2004 and 2008); Litva, Latvia, Estonia in 2005) and at the in-service art teacher training (Primary and Secondary) in Slovenia in the period from 1999 to 2002.

The national (Cyprus) responses were gathered in the in-service secondary art teachers' training in the Gallery of the Ministry of Culture and Education of the Republic of Cyprus (Nicosia), in October 13, 2010, when all 41 art works for (inter)national evaluation were exhibited. 29

#### Procedures to gather evidence from both group of judges

Firstly, the Cypriot judges saw 41 prints exhibited (picture 1).

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(picture 1 – Exhibition of 41 colour linocuts prints of children from Slovenia, as put on a show in the Gallery of Ministry of Education and Culture of Republic of Cyprus, October 13, 2010)

Secondly, they were given – without any explanation as to what researchers mean by the criterion creativity in these 41 prints - evaluation sheets to write grades/marks for each print. The judges were asked to give grades for all of the 41 prints arranged on the floor. The highest grade was nine (9), the lowest one (1). Judges of both groups decided on their own how to begin evaluating: either immediately evaluating each print, or, to take an initial overview of all the prints arranged on the floor and then give grades. When the international group (A) and national group (B) filled their evaluation sheet with grades for all 41 prints, they wrote their grades on three posters (taped to the wall, sized 100x70 cm), each grade in the appropriate numbered place. This part (collecting marks/grades from 1 to 9 is not a content of this paper, it is an additional explanation and to see one more dimension of this study/research.

What we were additionally interested for the purpose of our study, were art teachers' working definitions of the concept/criterion creativity, and what do they mean by 'it' at the moment of evaluating these 41 prints. Judges/teachers were given a piece of paper with a question: 'If you were evaluating this students' prints, what do you mean by creativity in this prints?' The judges then wrote their working definition of the criterion creativity on a piece of paper, which was firstly used for discussion and then gathered by the researcher<sup>30</sup>.

#### More explanatory details of research and evaluation process

41 prints (of children aged 12 – 13) were selected out of the collection of 296 prints, created during the research, made in 8 Slovenian Primary schools in the period from March 3rd to June 15th 1999. Twenty students' prints out of the total 41 (the one's chosen for evaluation) were taken from the experimental class, 21 prints out of the same 41 prints were from the control class, where teachers taught as they usually did.

<sup>30</sup> The researcher was Marjan Prevodnik



We didn't have an explanatory lecture and discussion with judges before the evaluation to explain what do we mean by the criterion creativity. Every judge was simply asked to write her/his term which reflects personal concepts of what creativity is, what they in their minds in the process of observing printsm or some minutes after that. We – the researchers - were aware of the judges' different educational, cultural and artistic background, their knowledge of graphic techniques – especially colour linocut from one printing plate, their knowledge about the children's developmental and technical abilities in printmaking. So was their plurality of their written responses expected and respected.

### Results and Discussions

A description of gathered evidence from two groups (A, B) and the interpretation of findings

#### Group A – international judges

The gathered evidence from the ~~international~~ judges after evaluating 41 prints

The judges were of different age, gender, professional background, but more or less were all experienced in evaluating children's art works. They were from Finland, USA, Portugal, The Netherlands, UK, Austria, Kanada, Croatia, Lithuania, Estonia, Latvia ...).

The question for judges was: When evaluating, what do you mean by creativity in this prints?

Individual written answers of ~~international~~ judges:

- "I try to evaluate the sensitivity and imagination of the visual concept as well as the skill and control with which the image is made. Of course, I would want to see other works that the student has made".
- "After having a global overview I started to compare the prints. Those prints that intrigued me most because of their (supposed) content and the nonconformity of the visual appearance got my highest scores. But: Is it fair to judge on creativity when the children were not informed that they would be assessed on this aspect"?
- "Impossible to answer. I need a broader context and more knowledge. I do like students to be ground-breaking, but one has to have knowledge of their personal development".
- "I think, that in very creative prints there are more than one 'perspectives' or ways to see the world around you. You can see that they have student ideas, environment, dreams, concrete things and things that they have experienced or just thinking about. I think, that the visual creativity is also very close to the artistic talent: if I find very stereotypic things in the prints, it can both mean the low talent or low creativity!"
- "Originality, transgression: breaking the rules, presenting something new and challenging".
- "The task was really difficult. My marks are given from the holistic point of view. Did you mean creativity in composition, colours, rhythm, movement, originality of the choice of the theme????, or how to connect the different elements together?"
- "As the criteria for creativity, I have used: originality in themes, in composition, in using colours, in structuring the picture area with lines, freedom in using moving lines, the movement; originality in choosing shapes. What I am interested in is the way pupils have transgressed their own borders, where they find their themes (e.g. sitting besides someone



whom they were leaning on) etc. My thoughts here are totally irrelevant as I do not know how you define the criteria for creativity: what did you look at”.

- “I first give a thorough look at each work of each class and made some relations between them. It’s obvious that I wasn’t evaluating them but soon I found out which I liked most and which I didn’t. Then I started to analyse the composition, the colours and the message”.
- “The way children are able to use their visual intelligence, to use and compare the stereotypes he/she collected around ...”
- “Looking for attempts to progress beyond the schemas possibly typical of this age group. Guidance of exploring the possibilities of the technique ...”.
- “If it represents some things in a different way, different but the other people can read it”.

Group B – national judges The gathered evidence – individual statements of national \_\_\_\_\_ judges (43 from Cyprus) after evaluating student’s prints.

The national judges were of different age, sex (female in majority), professional background etc. It was expected for them to be experienced in evaluating and assessing children’s art works.

The question was: When 'evaluating' this 41 students' colour linocut multicolour prints, what did you mean by creativity at the moment of writing marks/grades in these prints? Any additional comment concerning this 'EVALUATION TASK' will be helpful ...

43 individual written answers from Cypriot art teachers are gathered in the chart below (working sheet) with some additional data (sex, age, experience of assessing ... etc.), which could be of some use for Cypriot researchers, Inspectors and Consultants of art education and secondary art teachers too.

Working sheet responses – national judges (Cypriot), Table 1

Assessment of Creativity in Children Color Linocut Prints

Venue: Gallery of Ministry of Education and Culture, Cyprus, Nicosia, October 13, 2011

Participants - judges: Art teachers from Secondary schools in Cyprus; Number of participants with response: 43.

Data were gathered with a generous support of Mr. George Gavriel, Inspector of Art and Mrs. Tatiana Soteropoulos, Consultant of Inspector of Art, from the Ministry of Education and Culture, Nicosia, Cyprus).

Table 1

SEX	AGE optional	EXPERIENCE OF ASSESSING STUDENTS' ART WORK:	Did you do this printmaking color linocut technique (reduction)	43 written responses Cypriot (national) judges  Question: When 'evaluating' this 41 students' color linocut multicolor prints, what did you mean by creativity at the moment of writing marks/grades in these prints? Any additional comment concerning
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		YES /NO	technique on your own?	this 'EVALUATION TASK' will be helpful ... ↓
Female (F)				1. Creativity meaning originality in subject-matter, playfulness, composition and use of color
F	40	YES	YES	2. By creativity I mean several things: the willingness to try new things, love of experimentation, uncommon use of space/scale/elements and lastly – beauty, which may be the result of the above or entirely coincidental, but nevertheless should have value on its own!!! Unusual subject, unusual treatment at a
F	44			3. common subject, unusual placement, good use of color. Creativity means several things to me.
				4. Such as originality, good result, right use of positive/negative space and color. Creativity means a lot of things. Using correctly P/Negative space, having
				5. originality and having good composition. The truth is that when I started assessing, I forgot I have in front of me twelve year
F	42	NO	YES	6. old students. They were that good! Nevertheless, in order to give credit to some of my "9" (nine is the highest grade in judging – added by M. P.) I gave less marks to those I felt that were not as good. Creativity for me is a lot of things. Is the ability of one to create (with design and color) a very affective work. A striking, interesting design. Some of the works were more complex than others, but they were all very creative. Just marks/grades which are not content of this paper.
				7.
F	39	Yes		8.
F	31	Yes	Yes	9. Creativity is when you use your mind and imagination, when you are cooperative and doing something.
				10. Just marks/grades which are not content of this paper.
		Yes		11. Creativity is imagination, color combination and balance, harmony, freedom in expression.
Male (M)			YES	12. Intense personal elements and originality in the composition. Avoiding copying.
M	34	Yes	Yes	13. (no response, just judging with grades/marks).
F	31	Yes	Yes	14. (no response, just judging with grades/marks).
				15. How "crazy" or out of the "circle" the artwork is. How the artists escape



				normally.
M	33			16. No response, just judging with grades/marks.
M	32	YES	NO	17. The invention of a way to do something, present something in this case, that aids to a better result.
F		Yes		18. No response, just judging with grades/marks.
				19. No response, just judging with grades/marks).
F	49	YES	YES	20. Interesting forms in a composition, color combinations, ideas, concepts
				21. I observe the composition and the color
F		Yes		22. I evaluated the aesthetic result of each one of the prints keeping in mind the quality, the composition. My evaluation was less based on the subject and I didn't take in consideration of the prints was made by two or three colors, etc., which is certainly a degree of difficulty.
M			YES	23. I took in consideration the degree of difficulty and the mixture of colors. Also I took in consideration the composition
				24. Most important was the idea and the execution of it on the paper, in order to become a print. The feeling that I received through the choice of color.
F				25. Freedom, originality, understanding of the composition, technique.
				26. The difference in approach and the way that a message is being given, that has been seen before but yet it still can touch your feelings.
F		Yes		27. Creative work is the one that speaks to you, that touches you. Also how unique it is.
F		YES		28. Originality in composition, variety in the line, shapes and colors.
		Yes	Yes (one color only)	29. Originality in composition, variety in line, choice of colors.
F	32	Yes	Yes	30. Composition – color. Different graphics; composition – harmony – space – layers.
M	43	Yes	Yes	31. Creativity, personality, originality, composition, clarity of line, clarity of colors.
				32. /
F		YES	Yes	33.1. Concept + composition, 2. Execution, 3. Presentation.
F	59	Yes	Yes	34. / (no response, just judging with grades/marks).
F			Yes	35. Transmission of expression, idea; composition – the way subject is presented



M	38	Yes		36. It was hard to "seek out" creativity with a group of "strangers" because for me, creativity can only be measured with reference to the individual's character and personality. Therefore, I "evaluated" the works based on their complexity in respect to each other.
F				37. I was looking for composition in the sense of combination of colors and shapes.
F	42	Yes	Yes	38. No response, just judging with grades/marks).
F	28	Yes	Yes	39. I think that creativity is the feelings that the print give you! Make the visitor feel something from the painting, sad, happy, funny, it look 3D. The print can be unique.
F	31	No	No	40. Creativity is something that you can see fully in the room of the exhibition.
F		Yes	No	41. Colors, composition, balance, value, emotions
				42. Just marks/grades which are not content of this paper
				43. Composition – color imagination – texture – imagination – originality – creativity.
F	32		Yes	The first thing I paid attention was the structure of the composition and originality of the piece/creativity (the thinking the student put into the work). And finally the color/texture and pattern.
Results: ↑30 responses	Results: ↑18 responses	Results: ↑ 21 responses for yes; 2 responses for no	Results: ↑ 17 responses for yes; 3responses for no	

### Interpretation of the findings/responses of each group, international and national from Cyprus

Findings and results (written responses) from this study suggests – as expected - that the judges of both groups use some shared and some different conceptions of what they meant by creativity when evaluating children’s prints. Beside that, some obstacles were expressed by several judges concerning ethical aspects of such evaluation procedures (they didn’t know students, their other works, knowledge of their personal artistic development etc.). It seems that their “changing the mindset” of creativity followed their intuition, professional knowledge and background (including artistic practice), working experiences and their understanding of this phenomenon. Judges were aware of all kinds of variables (originality, uniqueness, composition, age, technical perfection etc.). As said, differences and similarities in responses were found, regarding the judge’s different approaches, philosophies in artistic or art education orientation ... It is important to note that these “improvised evaluation task” required a very skilful evaluator.



### Judge's written responses on the research question

After using the open code system for categorising informational units within the studies data, we identified 45 categories (alike and dissimilar) of written responses. Some categories can stand independently, some mean similar things. It is worth highlighting and stressing some categories, where the approximate frequency of responses is high (in both groups). E.g.: 'it is impossible to answer', composition, technical skill or execution, originality, and responses that could be categorised as originality, creativity in using colours, (creative) imagination, uniqueness, etc.

The above mentioned answers from judges are seemed to dominate in datas, gathered in this study. It is worth stressing some inovative judge's conceptions of the criterion creativity, e.g.:

- a) 'Originality, transgression: breaking the rules, presenting something new and challenging'; 'by creativity I mean several things: the willingness to try new things, love of experimentation, unusual use of space/scale/elements and lastly – beauty, which may be result of the above or entirely coincidental, but nevertheless should have value on its own!!!';
- b) From Cyprus: 'It was hard to "seek out" creativity with a group of "strangers" because for me, creativity can only be measured with reference to the individual's character and personality. Therefore, I "evaluated" the works based on their complexity in respect to each other.'

What we may conclude from data gathered is that our expectations were (somehow) confirmed. Many divergent and similar conceptions of 'creativity' in this evaluation task were found. It could be said the judges from both groups do not think/understand of criterion creativity in the same although many simmilarities were found.

It is hard to propose something very prescriptive for the future on the basis of this gathered data, but it could be said, that although many well known working dimensions and modalities of creativity were found, there exists some common denominators. They are derived from psychology and from the expressionistic and formalistic/modernistic (elements and principles of composition) paradigm, which were so pervasive in 20th century and are still present in the field of art education. In no way do we think of this paradigm in a pejorative sense.

We need to admit that comparing conceptions of 'creativity in the process of evaluation' of national and international judges, as expressed above would be a daunting and almost impossible taks. Anyway, what they wrote is an invaluable information that speaks for itself. Data were gathered immediately (and also during) after observing this 41 artworks, with no time for perhaps individual or group reflection and with no any explanation at all. Very demanding task also because they did not know the children! But the latter was part of the methodological approach. If this approach could be said to be unique must yet to be confirmed by all involved and by all that will read this paper.

### Conclusions, implications for art education

To summarise the responses from the two groups – from Cyprus and from abroad – it could be said, that it was not too difficult for the majority judges to evaluate prints according to the criterion creativity. It is worth to mention that one can find in written responses implicit and



explicit remarks, concerns and expressed needs of judges in order to need some additional information regarding 'how to evaluate creativity'. Among them were: to know more about students and their personal development, to see other works students has made – to know before beginning to evaluate, what did the researchers mean by the concept creativity in this artistic task of printmaking, etc.

Our expectations were not confirmed in an absolute way, but we could say, that many art teachers 'think' of them – of elements and principles of design – as main substances of creativity, which are not always clearly seen and recognizable in their written responses above. More investigation instruments, maybe a sort of triangulation (written responses, interview with art teacher before and after the evaluation ...) would be needed to made this issue more clear, valid and reliable.

It is somehow obvious that good, old elements and principles of design are the substance of the criterion creativity – when evaluating children artworks – but not the main one.

These findings support the 'art class and in-service art teacher training reality', which is in constant dispute over: either the ease or difficulty of evaluating (the signs of) creativity in children's and youth's art works. Certainly, additional research investigating the concept 'evaluating (artistic) creativity' is needed – especially in the 'unexpected judging situation' as was ours. We hope the content of this paper will be of some use for secondary art teachers and educators from Cyprus in their creative teaching, advising and researching practices in future.

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## Feeling a success in one' own drawing as one of the key factors of motivation of elementary classroom teachers of art

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### Abstract

The "underlying" content of this workshop is based on the motivational concept of "Self-efficacy beliefs" by Martin Bandura. The chosen content – a drawing assignment, is one of the strategies used in the professional development of elementary teachers. It is still targeted at raising their motivation for art practising through their personal involvement in art activities in order to be more skilled, motivated and confident for their future art teaching. One of the purposes of the workshop is to see the Self-efficacy beliefs theory can be applied in the context of professional training of elementary/classroom teachers of art.

The participants were given ten sheets of A4 size papers and a pencil of softness B2 - B8. They then follow the moderator's instructions in order to create 10 short drawing assignments (either 40 seconds or up to 3 minutes maximum for each of the tasks).

The workshop participants had an excellent opportunity to test themselves in a series of drawing exercises/tasks and then (voluntarily) evaluate their drawings with regard to the progress they made (if they did!), the feeling of success and motivation for further (artistic and pedagogical) activities. They have an opportunity too, to discuss the usefulness and applicability/adaptability of this task in the real school art drawing practices with students. Art consultants and researchers may have found this drawing method (of motivation and raising drawing skills) as challenging for their work with elementary teachers of art.

### Key words

Drawing, motivation, teaching, elementary classroom teachers of art, professional development

### Instead of an introduction

There are three ways of learning to draw, but, (un)fortunately, they have not yet been discovered.

Marpre

### Introduction

Drawing is one of the basic human activities. Drawing has various functions and purposes that match the age, psycho-physical, professional of students and adults and artists. With its »cognitive, emotional, motoric, motivational, therapeutic and other specialities« drawing activities (as a part of art education, education and other contents of interest) can be very useful in education. In this paper, drawing is used as a means of feeling a success that a class teacher experiences during the drawing process. Drawing thus functions as a motivation for teachers and as a content for their further learning and teaching.





The paper focuses on the possibilities of causal-consecutive connections of the motivation theory and pedagogical practice at the elementary class teaching level. Our attention was centred on the social cognitive theory of Martina Bandura, which deals with studying the concept of »self-efficacy beliefs«.

The main purpose of this motivational drawing workshop was to inform and encourage classroom teachers to think more about drawing problems. The paper is divided in two parts. After a brief presentation of the theory an example of its potential transfer to practice is illustrated – of how the drawing workshops was conceptualized and done.

Theoretical background of the motivational concept of «self-efficacy beliefs«

In pedagogical theory and in teaching practice it is known that teachers (in this paper we focus on classroom teachers) are more or less worried or absorbed in thinking about their own (in)capacities to successfully tackle (drawing) and other teaching tasks. They are concerned about whether they have sufficient knowledge to be efficient (for example in drawing a human head); they wonder what will happen when they start teaching drawing, etc.

Explanations of different expectations of individuals and their beliefs in success/failure can be found in the theory of motivation. Some motivational concepts are saying that the majority of individuals, who expect failure in advance will not gladly cooperate or will even refuse to take part in a certain future (art drawing) task. Individuals might be interested in a (certain art) task and attribute it some value. However, if they try and fail (again), they will not get involved. In short, the task will not attract them. Also for this reason the creation of optimistic working atmosphere is crucial with positive motivation and with the expectation of success.

We kept asking ourselves – these are a kind of internal dialogues – about our own (in)capability and (in)efficiency, such as “I really do not know whether I will ever be able to draw in such a way that the model and my drawing will be alike”. Such statements as well as this one “I will manage since I have drawn from the model several times and have done well and therefore I will be successful this time as well”, regularly accompany us. We continuously assess our abilities and skills (not only in art), potential situations and experience. We are constantly deciding whether we are able to carry out a certain task (art or pedagogical) successfully. These judgements and self-(in)-efficacy beliefs have influence on our decisions in various situational contexts.

For the purpose of this paper and deepening understanding of problems encountered by class teachers – artists in a drawing workshop – we will focus on the social cognitive theoretician Martin Bandura who studied “self-efficacy beliefs” concepts and constructs. In the context of cognitive psychological theories, motivation depends on the way an individual accepts, decodes and digests information (Radovan, 2000, p. 115). Social cognition is a social process of reshaping the information that is characterised by intercultural and interpersonal differentiation. According to Bandura (Radovan, the same publication) “an individual with the system of ego establishes the control over their own thinking, feelings and activities.”

Of all the beliefs with which an individual assesses the control over own deeds and environment where one lives, the most powerful are the images of one’s own performance and self-efficacy beliefs respectively. This involves – as we have mentioned before – self-efficacy beliefs that imply the feeling of personal competence carrying out a certain activity. Bandura (Radovan, p. 119) says that an individual’s self-efficacy is formed on the basis of four basic sources of information: (1) direct experience, (2) substitutional experience, (3) belief and (4) physiological and affective reactions. An individual’s opinion of self-efficacy



also has impact on other forms of cognitive regulation of behaviour such as causal attribution, expectation of results and goal setting.

If we sum up the information above, it can be said that Bandura was developing some specific aspects within the social cognitive theory. It is the so called the concept of “self-efficacy beliefs”. Our intention was to see how this motivational construct echoed in specific educational situation. We chose to make an application of this construct in the field of art education (Table 1).

Before deciding to (actively) take part (for example in drawing), we form expectation of how we will carry out this (drawing) task – very successfully, successfully, less successfully or any other way. Such expectations derive from various sources of which the most frequent are:

Table 1

SOURCES	APPLICATION IN ART EDUCATION FIELD (applies to pupils as well as their mentors)
1. How successful were we when dealing with a similar task in the past	1. How successful were we when drawing a human face/head in the past (recent or distant) or when teaching art education?
2. What do we attribute the success/failure of such activities/performance in the past, etc. to	2. What do we attribute the success/failure of such drawing tasks in the past (drawing a face/head) to: modest art competences (abilities), the efforts made/not made or insufficient efforts. Are we unsuccessful in pedagogic sense due to a lack of the knowledge of drawing or are there other reasons?
3. What is the opinion of individuals, classmates, teachers of own teaching	3. How do pupils assess their drawing abilities and how do teachers assess their abilities to teach?
4. What level of risk do we attribute to a certain task (in the past, present, future)	4. What level of risk do we attribute to a certain art task (for example drawing of a human face/head with the stress on plasticity)? What level of risk do we attribute to teaching in certain art fields (drawing, painting, sculpture, etc.)?

Applicability of the motivational construct of “self-efficacy beliefs” in a drawing workshop within the professional development activities of classroom teachers of art

Teachers of art are creators of more or less demanding learning situations. These can be the cause of uncertainty and unintelligibility in some pupils whereas in others this can cause increased/decreased level of motivation or even a challenge to solve problems.

Self-efficacy beliefs (in drawing) as a part of the motivational network can refer to the opinions, events and situations in the classroom. A special type of motivational beliefs refers to the pupil's or teacher's evaluation of some activities, events and similar. For example: a teacher named Kopac frequently says: 'Drawing does not make any sense. What can I learn?',<sup>31</sup> whereas a teacher Jakopic is of different opinion and says: 'that drawing is still interesting nowadays. Besides, pupils like drawing. Drawing is very interesting'.<sup>32</sup> Or the words of two female teachers, Mrs. Kobilca, a teacher beginner without the professional teaching certificate: "I simply do not know how to calm down the pupils let alone teach them certain proportions", and Mrs Čadež, an experienced class teacher, saying: "/.../ I have my own system of teaching drawing and thus there are no problems with discipline. I can motivate each pupil irrespective of the gender, age, background and from what school one comes. I know it is hard. However, I do absolutely everything to make pupils feel good and learn something new. /.../'"

Motivational beliefs also refer to the teacher's opinions of the efficiency of learning, teaching and learning method selection. A teacher, Janez Koritnik: "Why is pedagogical counsellor advising meba more efficient method for drawing a face? My drawing pedagogical methods are better! "Self-efficacy beliefs are also opinions, assessments that teachers have of their own abilities in drawing. A teacher, named Franci says: "/.../ This drawing is all too difficult for me. I prefer copying from books. I am better at playing cards and volley-ball. This is what I am really good at."

Motivational concept of the "result expectation" are beliefs in failure with a certain activity/art task. A teacher Franci is saying: "/.../ I do not like drawing. Never have I been good at drawing. In particular drawing of a face has not been my cup of tea. Drawing after observation simply confuses me. /.../ We need to take into account the proportions. /.../"

There are some concrete cases of the applicability of the Bandura theory in pedagogical practice. The survey has indicated (Bokaerts, 2002, p. 8) that (motivational) self-efficacy beliefs are the result of:

- Direct learning experience – in our case the evening classes of drawing (for example a teacher, Miha Jakopic: "/.../ I am of the opinion that freehand drawing is still appreciated nowadays. Just go to an art exhibition. My drawings are quite good. I feel I am a good drawer since my friend who is an artist always praises my drawings drawn at the course. Maybe I will even decide to continue with another evening class of a drawing course!"<sup>33,34</sup>;
- Teacher's detailed observation of the drawing learning process: 'A pupil named Andreja always gets angry when her classmates do not help her in creating, but is never satisfied with the teacher's help;

<sup>31</sup> Another class teachers with the same negative attitude/belief might say: "I do not want to go to the art gallery with the pupils from the 4th grade since they are indisciplined and I myself see no reason to go there on my own. Everything can be learnt at school."

<sup>32</sup> Another class teacher with a positive attitude/belief: "I really admire pieces of sacral baroque architecture in Slovenia that are exhibited in the National Gallery in Ljubljana. This is what my pupils need to see!"

<sup>33</sup> If the findings of the survey (Pintrich, 2001, Stipek, 1988 etc) can be applied to teachers, it can be assumed that their self-efficacy beliefs are a part of their motivational structure and are the result of their direct experience in the period of graduate studies and the experience from direct art pedagogical practice and, what is also interesting, from permanent professional training.

<sup>34</sup> Art pedagogue: 'Planning art tasks in the field of drawing is still too difficult for me. This is why I will obtain more knowledge: I will attend a seminar organized by the National Education Institute, for our library I will order two drawing manuals; at the seminar I will talk about this to an experienced teacher.'



- More or less (well) considered utterance of parents, other teachers, such as: 'Art education in school is wasting the tax payers' money; mathematics and computer science are much more important.'<sup>35</sup> and
  - Comparisons with other teachers, for example: 'Why does the headmaster always criticize me and not my colleagues?''<sup>36</sup>

(Motivational) beliefs are a part of one's personal structure that directs the thinking, feelings and activities of an individual in a certain (subject) area.

It is known that beliefs (in our case in the drawing ability) of adults (in our case elementary teachers of art) vary a lot. They range from those with favourable attitude to repulsiveness and this has impact, or maybe not, on the character of the learning climate in a pedagogical situation. In the light of these beliefs in their art capacities and skills, teachers decide how much energy, will power and efforts they will intend for certain contents in the syllabus.

There are significant differences among individual teachers<sup>37</sup>. It is important to be aware of the fact that the beliefs of an individual teacher can be very favourable or very repulsive to pedagogical work. It is repulsive when a teacher does not like drawing and his beliefs are repulsive in their orientation, meaning that he will not teach these contents or will teach using some templates or simple schematic tasks. Such a teacher is hard to convince of the opposite.

If the beliefs of teachers about their own performance in teaching art contents or drawing knowledge are extremely negative (valence), it is the reason for concern.<sup>38</sup> The orientation of beliefs (optimistic/positive or pessimistic/negative orientation) determines an adult's not only personal and physiological characteristics but also professional capabilities and «the manner and approach to pedagogical activities». Finally, there are beliefs of teachers and educators of their self-efficacy that direct them to take further steps in the field of permanent professional training. They will choose training sessions that will enable them, to acquire new knowledge, the feeling of success and motivation for work. This is why we prepared for them a number of professional trainings in a form of specific art workshops. Within such workshops teachers can obtain new knowledge of art, competences and skills as well as didactic knowledge in a manner that generates motivation and the feeling of success and builds confidence in one's own abilities.

#### Drawing workshop with ten exercises

One of such art workshops aims at achieving the above listed objectives (motivation, feeling of success, acquiring skills for pedagogical work...). It includes ten short three-minute exercises which follows certain logic n planning. The participants – for instance - are not informed about the purpose of the workshop in advance. They are offered drawing paper (10 sheets of A4 format) and soft pencils. The participants are told about the workshop purpose at the end of it, after last exercise number 10. Final evaluation is done at the end of workshop by

<sup>35</sup> An art pedagogue may say: school policy favours mathematics, mother tongue and science and much less or nothing is done in the field of art education in primary school or art education in secondary school".

<sup>36</sup> Other art teachers might complain: " Headmasters always criticize the mistakes made in instructing art but never criticize those made in physical education".

<sup>37</sup> Some will teach drawing with some dislike but they will be more motivated to use clay and vice versa.

<sup>38</sup> The teachers who are not confident of their didactic knowledge and are not creative in this field could be added; and those who think that art education is only fun or an activity that makes time pass. If in addition to art education they need to teach other subjects (like class teachers), they do not instruct art education as required in the syllabus.



teachers volunteers. The participants were never forced to offer their drawings for group evaluation. The performance and resultus of these workshops are more than expected. As a rule, more than 90% of participants are satisfied with the progress achieved in drawing (although in a very short time period). There – after the workshop – are many very motivated teachers for learning and teaching drawing. They have positive self-efficacy beliefs about their drawing skills and see that they can improve if decided to do so.

An example of ten exercises as followed in a certain sequence:

1. drawing from memory (first time),
2. drawing from observing the model,
3. experimental exploration of the technical and expressional characteristics of a pencil,
4. drawing from imagination,
5. observation drawing of a hand,
6. drawing of a reproduction turned upside down,
7. representing sounds with artistic signs, finding visual form for sounds ... ,
8. drawing, enlargement three times of the details (ear, nose...),
9. drawing of an innovative product (an invention),
10. drawing from memory (second time).

The primary purpose of this set of short exercises is to demonstrate to participants that almost everybody can make progress in drawing from memory and other art capabilities. The only condition is that they are creatively active in all of proposed ten drawing exercises. According to our assumptions, their last drawing from memory (No 10) should be, in comparison with the first one (talking about two completely identical tasks), of better quality (more details covered, better placement of a motive into the format, more appropriate proportions, improved observation,...). This is also the working hypothesis of the workshops of this kind with the same sequence.



Below are examples of drawings number 1 and number 10 (see the list above) of three teachers (A, B and C) who went through the set of exercises explained above. It is suggested that the readers themselves establish how the two drawings of the same author differ and see whether we are right when claiming that the drawing No 10 is of better quality than the drawing No 139.

Teacher A



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<sup>39</sup> All your comments and questions can be addressed to the author: [marjan.prevodnik@zrss.si](mailto:marjan.prevodnik@zrss.si).



Drawing No 1 (drawing from memory)	Drawing No 10 (drawing from memory)
	

Teacher B

Drawing No 1 (drawing from memory)	Drawing No 10 (drawing from memory)
	

Teacher C

Drawing No 1 (drawing from memory)	Drawing No 10 (drawing from memory)



#### Some of the workshop findings in brief

All above examples of drawings (No 1 and No 10) by three different classroom elementary teachers clearly indicate the progress they made in drawing number 10. The readers should identify the differences themselves. In fact, the work – drawing from memory – was carried out the same way in both cases (n1 and n2), namely, the “model” left the classroom and the teachers had to draw him from memory. Our working hypothesis stated the expectation, that with the exercises - in between 1 and 10 (from 2 to 9) - teachers will acquire more drawing competences and skills. This assumption has been confirmed in our work with more than 300 class teachers in more than 85% success rate.

#### Conclusion

This contribution sheds light on and demonstrates useful (applicative) possibilities of the concept of »self-efficacy beliefs« from the social cognitive theory of motivation in artistic pedagogical contexts. We believe that the content presented will open new potential applicability in art education practices as well as it points out ways of potential research approaches. This article presents an example of a workshop for classroom teachers (two drawings) as a proof of success of such a workshop in dimensions of motivation and drawing skills and competencies.

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## Intercultural art education a dialogue between the members of the society

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### Abstract

Even though immigration has long been part of the human history, however, the state and situation of immigrants has been a theme of study for only a few decades. It has only been in the recent years that the importance of an education system that would facilitate and assist the children of immigrants, to assure them a better future and help them to integrate into the society and help to build a more successful multicultural society has been realized.

### Key words

Immigration, globalization, intercultural education, ethnic minorities

### Introduction

The history of migration goes back to the history of mankind. People have constantly been on the move, from one area to another, either over long distances, or in large groups, sometimes voluntarily and sometimes not. People migrate for different reasons, such as for work, better social security, for political reasons, wars, or just for chances of a better life. However, in the second half of the twentieth century we see an increase in the number of immigrants searching for new opportunities in life. According to Castels\ Miller, 2009 there have never been so many people world wide because of wars, environmental catastrophes, and civil wars and other forceful threats and technological limitations forced to change their work or living place for certain period or longer time. We are living at the time of migration. In a report published by the International organization for Migration, the number of international migrants in 2010 was estimated at 214 million.<sup>40</sup>

Since World war II, many immigrants and groups have settled on the European continent, including France, the Netherlands, United Kingdom, Germany, Sweden, and Switzerland Figueroa, 2004. Some of these immigrants, such as the Asians and West Indians in England and the North Africans and Indochinese in France, have come from former colonies. Many Southern and Eastern European immigrants have settled in Western and Northern European nations in search of upward social mobility and other opportunities. Groups such as Italians, Greeks, and Turks have migrated to Northern and Western European nations in large numbers. Ethnic and immigrant populations have also increased significantly in Australia and Canada since World War II Allan & Hill, 2004; Joshee, 2004. One of the countries struck by high immigration in Europe is Germany. At the end of 2006 in a report published by Frankfurter Allgemeine the number of foreign residents was given as high as 6.75 million in Germany. However, Mecheril, 2004, gives this number as high as 7,3 million by the year 2000; according to him already in mid last century Germany was an important immigration

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<sup>40</sup>World Migration Report 2010- The future of migration: Building capacities for change, International organization for migration, 2010, 11-30.





destination in Europe. von Bebenburg/ Thieme, 2012 state the number of immigrants higher than 7 million and Frankfurt with 42% next Augsburg with 39% and Nurnberg and Stuttgart with almost 38% as some of the cities with highest number of immigrants in Germany.

Children of the immigrants make part of the above statistic, and regardless of how people see or feel about immigrant policies, these children make part of the present study force in the countries as well as the work force in the future. How these children are educated and treated plays an influential role in the future of the guest countries, where many of these children are already citizens. Shields/ Behrman, 2004, p.4 emphasis on this point, they add "Who these children grow up to be will have a significant impact on our nation's social and economic future. Will we have a cohesive society or one rife with intergenerational and intercultural conflict? Will we have a prosperous economy or one struggling with a labor force dominated by low-wage earners? ".

Frick/ Wagner, 2000 in their study of children of immigrant families concluded that even though the situation for integration of foreigner's children shows some signs of improvement however, the majority of this group still lives in rather poor conditions. They point to some hindering factors, such as citizenship. "Due to the specific German regulations on granting citizenship, children born to foreign immigrants in Germany are considered 'Immigrant children' regardless of their respective place of birth (abroad or within Germany after their parents immigrated). Children born in Germany do not automatically receive German citizenship. They receive the nationality of their parents. This in turn has lead to so-called second and even third generation immigrants" (ibid, p.3). They also point out that households of foreigners are affected most by unemployment which then leads to further problems and disadvantages for the family and the children.

#### Challenges faced by children born to immigrant families

(Banks, 2004) points out that the problems faced by immigrants in general are all the same no matter in which country or part of the world they chose to reside. Most of the immigrant and ethnic groups in Europe, Australia and Canada face problems similar to those experienced by ethnic groups in the United States. Groups such as the Jamaicans in England, the Algerians in France, and the Aborigines in Australia experience achievement problems in the schools and prejudice and discrimination in both schools and society at large. These groups also experience problems attaining full citizenship rights and recognition in their nation-states (ibid, 2004). The children with migration background apart from having to deal with the difficulties common of childhood or puberty have many other complications or even hindrances on their way.

Children in immigrant families are far more likely than children in German born families to have parents who have not graduated from high school. Frick/ Wagner, 2000 "... the educational level of immigrant parents as well as of foreign parents living in Germany is still clearly below the population average, although there are some signs of improvement. As a result of the low educational level of their parents we find children born to immigrants and foreigners in Germany to be on less favorable educational tracks more often than native born children. Hernandez/ Charney, 1988 observe that, the lower level of parental educational attainment in immigrant families has major implications for child well-being and development. Children born to these families face many problems, they can not turn to family for help or support with school work, they are left on their own to strive through the school program. Frick/ Wagner, 2000, p.2 Point out that this factor plays a crucial role in society and the economy, because "the long-term problem arising from this will be a persistently high



share of rather poor qualified persons in the future work force, who will face severe labor market problems and as such will be a problem for the German economy as a whole".

Immigrant parents mostly find themselves on the bottom side of this wage gap. They are among workers who are paid the least, and are most in need of training to improve their skills and earnings. They are most likely to have part time or partial-year work. Since immigrant parents usually come from very low income families themselves, with little education and naturally very often no knowledge of the host countries language this makes it very difficult for them to find well-paid jobs with social security. They do not have much or any financial ability to set up a private business. There are even many obstacles for many highly educated immigrants to get into the right job market due to language barrier or job permission laws in many host countries. Low incomes common amongst most immigrant families forces them into many unfavorable situations and often deprives their children from having access to extra school activities such as sport or music and arts or extra tuition for school subjects.

Poverty rates for children in immigrant families are substantially higher than for native children (see Frick/ Wagner, 2000 , Shields/ Behrman, 2004). Poverty often means lack of access to quality health care and education resources Shields/ Behrman, 2004, p.7.

Immigrants who have come to the host country with great hopes and dreams for a better life, overwhelmed by the difficulties on the way and busy to deal with the problems of the everyday life also need to find ways to make ends meet. Immigrants usually have large families which makes it difficult to support the whole family with the low incomes, the parents are often out of home for long hours and the kids are left on their own, no real supervision, no support and the difficult circumstances at school for the children. Frick/ Wagner, 2000 also emphasize that poverty can result in malnutrition, drug abuse, crime intensity, etc.

Exclusion or more specifically social exclusion is described by D'Ambrosio et al., 2002 as "the inability of an individual to participate in the basic political, economic and social functionings of the society in which he/she lives". Haisken-DeNew/ Sinning, 2007 describe social exclusion further in the manner that when an individual can not participate fully in society, not because he has chosen not to but rather because it was beyond his reach, whether due to budget restrictions or institutional restrictions, he or she is considered to be "excluded". Eurostat, 1998 states that social exclusion is considered a dynamic process, best described as descending levels: some disadvantages lead to some exclusion, which in turn leads to more disadvantages and more social exclusion and ends up with persistent multiple (deprivation) disadvantages. Many immigrants for example are excluded from having the possibility to vote a right wholly seen for citizens, this deprives them of many decisive chances for deciding for the country they are living in.

Rubio-Marin, 2000 states that, "inclusion in the realm of civic equality refers to the sharing of a space in which political equality is preserved by the equal recognition of freedoms and rights to political participation, as well as of those other rights (e.g. civil and social) and duties recognized as relevant for that purpose. Clearly the causes, but also the degrees and kinds of exclusion of non-national residents differ largely from case to case. Generally, non-citizens are not totally excluded from the sphere of civic equality. They enjoy many of the rights that national do. In spite of this, full equality is every where reserved for national citizens only" (p.1). Rubio-Marin, 2000 further insists that giving the immigrants the right of social membership is the path to inclusion. "The basic idea is that membership is first, and above all, a social fact, determined by social factors such as living, working or raising a family and participating in the social and cultural life of a community. The moral relevance of this social fact and what implies (dependency on society for the protection of rights and the



development of a meaningful life project, as well as subjection to the decisions collectively taken in it) is the fundamental basis for the claim of full inclusion" (ibid, p.21).

#### Integration a democratic challenge for a thriving society

Liebig, 2007 insists that "for migration to play the role expected of it ..., it is necessary that the current group of immigrants and future arrivals be integrated into the labor markets and societies of the receiving countries, and to be perceived by the native population as contributing to the economy and development of the host country" (p.8). Liebig, 2007 describes the concept of integration as follow: "at one end of the spectrum is the notion of an economic or social convergence between the immigrant and native populations with respect to a number of statistical measures, such as the unemployment rate, the employment/population ratio, average earnings, school achievement, home ownership, fertility rates, voting behavior, participation in community organizations, etc. without this convergence necessarily implying any abandonment of home country culture and beliefs. At the other end is the much broader notion of integration as assimilation, i.e. acceptance of, and behavior in accordance with, host-country values and beliefs, including similarity of economic and social outcomes" p.9. Through social integration the minorities or the immigrants move towards the dominant culture and way of living, adapting to their norms and thus gain access to the opportunities, rights, and services available to the natives or the majority. However, Liebig does not take into consideration that immigrants are no white canvas, they bring with themselves, their language, culture, religion, hopes, dreams, stories of success or tragedies, they leave behind families and relatives dear to them and all these connections and ways of living as well as abilities, the language that the immigrants speak, their skills or education can not be ignored. Liebig sees the integration as a system that forces the immigrants into predefined positions like robots assimilating without influencing. Integration seen by Liebig is not a social movement that strives for a harmonious heterogeneous society exchanging as well as accepting and respecting each member for its race, language culture and etc but as one that forces all its members to follow the same pattern.

Bosswick/ Heckmann 2006 describe integration as the process of inclusion of immigrants in the institutions and relationships of the host society, they further add, "integration can be viewed as a process- that of strengthening relationships within a social system, and of introducing new actors and groups into the system and its institutions. The integration of immigrants is primarily a process: if this process succeeds, the society is said to be integrated" (p.2). It can be concluded that the process of integration is not wholly the responsibility of the immigrants and the steps they need to take to integrate into a society, even though a lot is expected of the new comers, or the minorities. However, the host country and the natives are also expected to make some new adaptations. For the immigrants to reach the so called "successful integration" level mentioned by Bosswick/ Heckmann 2006, it is important for the host countries to also take some steps in guiding and supporting the immigrants in integrating into the new society, culture, work environment and etc. Some multicultural organizations for example try to support the immigrant groups by organizing, cultural programs, such as music, dance or exhibitions, and film festivals with the intention to help the immigrants feel at home as well as giving them the message that their culture is also respected; and that the intention by integration is not degrading any certain culture or race, but to bring more unity in society and helping the society to function through one main language as well as set standards and values. Bosswick & Heckmann have a more democratic interpretation of integration even though they also fail to see that immigrants or ethnic



minorities also have a right to practice their culture, language, religion and this should not just be limited to festivities or social events which in the end tend to be more of a carnival as a social or cultural exchange. In our globalised world, where children can be influenced by the culture, music or language and religion of other nations while sitting in their parents living room, integration should not be seen as a process of integrating immigrants into the host countries culture but integrating all citizens into a new society which not only tolerates others for their language, culture, ability and religion but also respects them for it. Integration of all the members of a society into the new globalised societies with high number of immigrants can not be achieved if we do not strive for the right education system that will bring the future generation into respectful dialogue with one another. We are living in the age of migration as well as globalization, never before in the history of mankind were people so much influenced by music, language, ways of living, culture, food, arts, dance and etc of other nations. To gain understanding for all these diversity, to be able to respect and to adapt ourselves to all these flood of information we need to plan and design the right education system.

### Intercultural Education

Even though immigration has long been part of the human history, however, the state and situation of immigrants has been a theme of study for only a few decades. It has only been in the recent years that the importance of an education system that would facilitate and assist the children of immigrants, to assure them a better future and help them to integrate into the society and help to build a more successful multicultural society has been realized. Education is the most important and basic procedure that provides the ground for achieving a work force capable of dealing and working up to the requirements of modern technological world. However, education can most importantly facilitate formation of tolerant multinational societies. "Auernheimer 2007, Krüger\_Potratz 2010 Banks 2004" all insist on intercultural education system, an education system that not only is based on the moral recognition of the other person as the member of a group representing a different cultural way of life, but also facilitates interactions between the language and abilities of the ethnic-cultural community. Mecheril 2004 stresses on migration education system, he further insists on the recognition of the immigrants, if we do not recognize the members of the other ethnic groups, for their language, their culture, their tradition, we can not open the way for their self expression and make it possible for them to become an active member of the society they live in. Lang, 2008 adds that recognition point out to two other principles: understanding and dialogue. For an intercultural education system is important to accept and respect differences. It is of highest importance to bring the cultures and people into dialogue with one another and strive for equal chances for every one, regardless of their origin.

Intercultural education aims for a society, where people can be given a feeling of inclusion and membership, where heterogeneity is accepted. Mecheril, 2004 atones the need to shift the way people are given the feeling of membership "The principal of equality can not provide a satisfactory intercultural perspective, when it only emanates from cultural difference perspective and does not affirm these differences. Because then the limitation on equality turns into a disadvantage through equal treatment. Justice and recognition approaches should be attentive of differences, because then who ever that does not belong to the dominant living form will be disadvantaged" (p.215). Social membership is the right of citizens of any society Rubio-Marin, 2000. For a democratic society it is a challenge to allow for the full membership of its citizens. Mecheril, 2004 the need for a "cultural sensibility" can be realized for the development of social membership. Of course this does not only focus on the issue of immigrants but in a much broader view could also be applied for other ethnic minorities





living in every society. Mecheril, 2004 speaks in favor of migration education or a pedagogy system that just like in the intercultural pedagogy insists that, the participation of immigrants should not just be limited to having the right to take part in an education institute that represents and offers the main culture; but rather the need to change the education system in a different direction and promoting arrangements that will bring the migrants also into the foreground. He points out to multiple membership, and how the children with immigration background do adapt themselves to various cultures and are influenced simultaneously by them. Goglin /Krüger-Potratz, 2010 stress that intercultural education is the understanding of heterogeneity, with respect to different living ways. "These differences could be due to social or economical grounds, they could be dependent on the individual aspects such as the sex of a person or his health situation, they could be due to cultural matters, like language" (ibid, p12). Goglin /Krüger-Potratz, 2010 further stress that these different situations or states have great influence on each child's development, they are just as relevant to his education and living chances as his innate physical ability and opportunities (p.12).

The challenge on the way is to design and plan an education system that is able to foster developmental possibility for each individual child by encompassing heterogeneity as well as promoting self worth, recognition and feeling of social membership. An intercultural education system is the solution to creating a harmonious heterogeneous society that not only celebrates its diversity, but also strives to create a living and learning environment that opens possible paths of discussion and exchange between its students. Intercultural education, while facilitating the path for children to integrate into society and the educational system, should make it feasible for all children to learn, to understand and to respect the language, culture, religion or living ways of the members of their society. It should not only be considered as an educational system planned or designed for foreign students or ethnic minorities but as an educational scheme that while having practical methods and solutions for minorities or children with immigration back ground can also help to bring the native children closer to understanding and respecting all the individuals in their society as well as the diversity of the social community. An intercultural education should smoothen the progress of mutual interaction between students with different cultural backgrounds and help to create a respectful mutual understanding between the citizens of a society. Intercultural education should create a platform for a dialogue between its members no matter what their origin. An intercultural education should function as a catalyst for the minorities to express their identity, gain self worth, as well as finding mutual grounds with national culture for further collaboration. Goglin /Krüger-Potratz, 2010 atone, "intercultural education focuses its attention on the diverse consequences of social heterogeneity for the individual training and educational opportunities" (p.12). Mecheril, 2004 also believes that intercultural education system should not only be limited to the right of participation of migrants in educational institutions which focus on the dominant culture, but rather the necessity of changing the educational system in a way that it would have a differential orientation and makes it possible to bring the migrants also into the foreground.

Intercultural art education should be part of this new educational development. It would not be false to say that art loans itself better than many other subjects and in many ways to individualistic expressions. If we agree on the fact that intercultural education endeavors to create equal educational opportunities independent of students origin and ability and help to bring the migrants and ethnic minorities into the foreground as well as giving them the possibility to feel themselves as part of the society by giving them recognition, we can then conclude that well planned intercultural fine arts education due to the open flexible characteristic of art in general can provide the ground so well for this educational





development. Intercultural art education should create the possibility of dialogue between the students.

### Art values attribution

Artists all through the world history of art have benefited from the arts and cultures of other nations. Art, literature, calligraphy, language, and music of one tribe or nation has been the source of great inspiration for different artists. We should keep that in mind and realize a well designed intercultural art curriculum, not only can make it possible for students to learn about the arts and cultures of other nations, but it can also help natives to become familiar with the culture and arts of the migrants or minorities. An intercultural art curriculum can provide the ground for self expression and self development in art lesson based on personal experiences and familiar culture as well as providing all the students disregard of their origin a vaster and broader means of artistic expression. An intercultural art education helps the students with migration background to move back and forth between the two cultures and arts they know. Children with migration background or ethnic minorities, live between and within the two cultural worlds, one the culture of their origin and one the culture of the host country (please also see Mecheril). Also not to forget children of non immigrant families are also under an extreme influence of other cultures, whether it be music, new trends in clothing, food, or even literature and specially media. All the students would strongly benefit from an education system that opens up their horizons while creating dialogue between all its participants. Children need social contact for their development. What is at first provided by the parents and later the close family members has to be broaden later in society and educational institutions. Society and educational institutions play a crucial role in bringing the community members closer and in providing a fruitful, communicative environment with understanding and respect for heterogeneity. It is important to keep in mind that intercultural art education aims for inclusion of the students regardless of their origin and brings every student and culture into foreground.

Intercultural art education not only provides an advantageous space for the self expression and artistic development of children of immigrants or ethnic minorities but also for the native children. Goglin /Krüger-Potratz (2010), point out that, children and young people are living in a world today that offers them great choice of ways of living and expression whether it be for music styles, or other artistic practices or fashion and even new forms of sport, or languages, speaking styles, cultures, traditions and even faith and religion. In such a world we have to prepare our children for this enormous mass of information as well as flexibility, tolerance, understanding and respect. Intercultural art education should move towards a set of curriculum planning that not only makes it possible for the children of ethnic minorities or immigrants to feel self worth and confident, but also will provide the cradle for all the students to acquire the power and knowledge to analyse, to understand and accept differences and to even use them for their artistic expressions. Intercultural art education should provide a fresh space open to dialogues between all cultures. Naturally it is not expected for the art teachers to know and have a deeper and thorough knowledge of the worlds art and culture. However, it is expected for the art lessons to be so planned that provides space for cultural and artistic exchange between students and offers enough space for free culture based artistic expression. Art teachers should plan the lesson so that it would offer open space for dialogue, exchange and acceptance. It is important to have and to introduce activities in every art lesson



that promotes cultural understanding. The benefits are quite valuable for all groups of children whether natives, immigrants or ethnic minorities quite. Such activities help to open up a door into children's world and to understand them better, they provide the children with a deeper understanding for the visual arts and gives them a chance to learn and a deeper comprehension for culturally influenced artistic expressions. Such activities also help children with the immigration background to gain information and insight into the interpretation skills of the host country and for the teacher to make connection and understanding into her or his students cultural background. It helps to raise students level of acceptance of diversity and aims for the inclusion of ethnic minorities or immigrants in society. It promotes respect for interculturalism in societies. Intercultural art education is the door to achieving a more flexible, reflective, respectful, tolerant society that not only aims for the inclusion of all its members but also promotes diversity, and heterogeneity.

#### The difficulties on the way

Usually teachers come to teacher education with very little direct intercultural experience or we see due to lack of intercultural training during the years of teacher training it is mostly tended to view diversity as a problem rather than resource. The teachers often have very little knowledge about different ethnic and racial groups in their society, their cultures, achievements, histories, their contributions, or sufferings, or the discriminations they face as minorities.

Mostly art curriculum is so designed that it grants no chance to the minorities for self expression. It is mostly focused on the culture and traditions of the host country. Art curriculums often focus on teaching skills such as drawing, design and painting while totally overlooking an important factor such as interculturalism. Principles of western art are focused upon while totally ignoring the arts and cultures of other countries special Asia and Africa. Art curriculums do not create dialogue between the students and do not inspire a thorough and deeper understanding of arts of other countries. For example, camera changed forever the way we should look upon visual arts and the teaching of this field. We have realized that through painting we can visually express much more than the naturalist visual depiction of the objects. However, we see that the art lessons in so many countries still comprises of drawing competence instead of igniting creativity. For example in Germany a country with a high migration ratio we see Uhl Skrivanova, 2010, 2012 in her observance of the art lessons in Bayern mentions how strongly the lessons are focused on elevating students competence in drawing and artistic methods and techniques. Perry (1998) in his explanation of the art education system in China, point out to the fact that all education in China is controlled by the Central Government. This is also mentioned by Winner, 1989, p.47, "The Chinese educational system is governed by a uniform curriculum and national textbooks which all teachers, even art teachers, must use". China with a population over 1,347,350,000 is one of the countries with fifty five ethnic minorities.

The content of art education in primary schools in China consists of three parts.

1 'Admiration' or 'appreciation' of art works

- pieces or works on children's topics (created by children or adults),
- traditional folk toys,
- arts and crafts, including 'carving', 'architecture', painting,
- foreign art works (amongst which are included the Sydney Opera House).



## 2 Painting

- experience with ‘fine art material’ to ‘enlarge the children’s vision’. (This means giving children experiences with traditional Chinese painting techniques. In practice, this is not too many, unless children attend an out-of-school ‘Children’s Palace’)
- ink and water
- colour block painting

The syllabus states that different emphases have to be paid to students at different levels. For example, children in years 1–3 are encouraged to create ‘according to their imagination’ and to ‘express life’. For children in years 4–6, it is expected that teachers will ‘train their abilities and techniques in painting’.

## 3 Arts and Crafts

The curriculum includes:

- use of paper for different activities –cutting, folding, etc.
- use of different paper figures for teaching purposes,
- use of coloured clay to make figures. (Perry, 1998 p.312-313)

Even though societies are comprised of many minorities (national and international) however, lack of consideration for this fact has made many hindrances in the teaching systems world wide. It is vital to realize that a successful educational system should be planned and designed not upon the needs and goals of a single society but in our globalised world upon the needs of a harmonious global community.

## Suggestions

For a successful intercultural art education program, it is important to:

- Conduct world wide research on education systems specially on the teaching of art in different countries.
- Promote the value of art and art education in the society.
- Invest more in art education research.
- More international collaboration between the researchers of this field and the schools.
- Intercultural training for the art teachers.
- Constant reassessment of the educational programs, whether intercultural or national.



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## Categories of teaching through arts activities in elementary school. Educators' reactions

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### Abstract

This paper rests on the hypothesis that the teaching-through-the-arts process can present differences depending on the educational role ascribed to the arts. It was investigated if the educators felt that the teaching situation in which art was used as a teaching medium was different to that in which art functioned as an aesthetic approach of a subject. Two activities were designed in which art plays the role of a teaching medium (TMA) and two activities in which art is the teaching approach (TAA). Final-year pre-service preschool and primary school teachers were trained to use these activities. The trainees used the TMA and TAA with pre-schoolers or children in the first grade of primary school. Following the completion of every activity, the implementers answered the questionnaire developed for the purpose of this study. The questionnaire consisted of 24 closed-ended questions in which the subjects were called upon to grade various aspects of every activity on a scale of 1-5 (Likert). Thus, the TMA and TAA were examined and compared in terms of their objectives, processes and results. As the results show, when the role ascribed to art is that of a teaching medium, the technical characteristics of art are taken advantage of more, whereas when the role of art is that of a teaching approach, then teaching functions more as an aesthetic process, through which the children are given the opportunity to deal with the taught subject in an original manner and produce new knowledge about it.

### Key words

Arts activities, aesthetic teaching, elementary school

### Introduction

Within the context of formal elementary education, arts education is not limited only to the hours of “arts” classes in which the arts function as distinct cognitive teaching subjects. In accordance with a tendency that has appeared in the last decades known as “arts integration” (Burnaford, Brown, Doherty, & McLaughlin, 2007), contemporary studies have turned to the “effort to build a set of relationships between learning in the arts and learning in the other skills and subjects of the curriculum” (Deasy, 2003, p. 3). Thus, during the teaching process, art is frequently ascribed the role of a teaching tool (Bamford, 2006; Catterall, 2002b; Deasy, 2002; Rooney, 2004; Walker, Tabone, & Weltsek, 2011; Winner, & Hetland, 2007). In other words, given that involvement in the arts is an attractive activity for children, there is an effort –frequently successful– to create a more pleasant and effective learning environment. Based on this, “teaching through the arts” is becoming more and more popular, particularly among generalist teachers. Within this context, scholars are seeking either broader benefits (physical, social, emotional or intellectual), or a positive influence on other school subjects. It is indicative that theatrical activities were found to improve verbal skills (Catterall, 2002a; Kelner, & Flynn, 2006; Walker, McFadden, Tabone, & Finkelstein, 2011; Walker, Tabone, &



Weltsek, 2011), while music contributed to a fuller understanding of certain mathematical concepts and improved spatial-temporal perception (Bilhartz, Bruhn, & Olson, 2000; Jausovec, Jausovec & Gerlic, 2006; Scripp, 2002). Given these encouraging results, it seems fitting to explore the qualitative characteristics of activities that correspond to teaching through the arts. This paper rests on the assumption that the process of teaching through the arts can present differences depending on the educational role ascribed to the arts. In teaching-through-the-arts activities in current curricula art usually plays the role of a teaching medium. That is, most times, art helps create an attractive learning environment, and the educational focus is not on art itself, but rather, on the subject that is being taught. What follows is a study of the possibility of discovering new and more benefits of teaching through the arts if, during the design process of such activities, art is given another role, that of an approach to the taught subject. This issue may be linked to serious changes in arts education policy (Sotiropoulou, in press), insofar as it has to do with the methodological basis upon which the pre-school and primary school teachers stand to utilize the arts as part of their teaching work.

## Methodology

### Objective

What follows is a look at and comparison of arts activities in which art plays the role of the teaching medium and arts activities in which art functions as a way with which to approach a taught subject. The hypothesis is, that depending on which of these two roles is ascribed to art during the designing of an activity, a different teaching situation emerges and leads to a different level of arts integration. In fact, we hypothesize that when the role ascribed to art is that of a teaching medium, the technical characteristics of art are taken advantage of more, whereas when the role of art is that of a teaching approach of the taught subjects, then teaching functions more as an aesthetic process. Based on this hypothesis, an exploratory study was designed, aiming to show if the educators who used teaching activities through the arts felt that the teaching situation in which art was used as a medium of teaching was different to that in which art functioned as an aesthetic approach of a subject.

Two types of activities were designed: those corresponding to the first case will henceforth be referred to as teaching medium activities (TMA), while the others will be referred to as teaching approach activities (TAA). After the activities were used, they were examined as corresponding to the two types of activities, and compared in terms of their objectives, processes and results.

### Design of the study – Means of collecting data

The study was carried out in four stages.

In the first stage, arts activities were designed to teach “the correspondence of phoneme-grapheme in lowercase letters /o/, /i/ and /a/”. Two activities were designed for each category, i.e. two TMA (in which art plays the role of a teaching medium) and two TAA (in which art is the teaching approach). For example, TMA were designed in which the visual arts and physical expression mainly serve the learning of phonemes and graphemes. These arts were used to create an attractive environment in which to teach the subject. In one of these activities, the teacher handed out plastilene and asked children to make one of the three letters being taught /o/, /i/ and /a. Afterwards, the teacher put a scarf around a child’s eyes and placed before him the grapheme one of his classmates had made. With his eyes closed, the



child felt the plastilene forms to find the grapheme he had in front of him, while his classmates looked on. Taking the scarf off, he looked to see if he had correctly identified the grapheme. The same was done with all the other children. In another TMA, children were called upon to find various ways in which to form with their bodies the graphemes being taught: with their extremities (hands, fingers) or with all of their bodies, or in pairs (that is, two children working together to form the grapheme) etc. TAA were designed whose goal was for children to express the manner in which they connect the knowledge they have about each letter with their personal experiences. On a practical level, in TAA children were called upon to deal with the taught subject as an aesthetic stimulus. In one of the activities tried out as TAA, the educator asked the children what a person enunciating the sound /a/ could be feeling (e.g. surprise, fear, pain). Afterwards, the children were called upon to suggest how /a/ can be called out in each of these cases, and how their facial expression would change. Based on their suggestions concerning the phonemes, the children created small collective stories which they then went on to present as skits. The same was done with the phonemes /o/ and /i/. At the end, each child chose one of the three letters, printed it on a piece of paper (in whatever size he wanted) and made a picture based on the story the group had created around this letter, or independent of the story.

In the second stage of the study, final-year pre-service preschool and primary school teachers were trained to use the activities.

During the third stage of the study, the trainees from the second stage used two TMA and two TAA with pre-schoolers or children in the first grade of primary school. There was thus the opportunity to repeatedly investigate isolated cases (Christensen, 2000). The time in which the activities were used was chosen to coincide with the time the particular subject would have been taught normally. The sessions were recorded and transcribed. Directly after the implementation of each activity, each of the trainee teachers wrote their notes in the form of a diary.

In the last stage, the trainee teachers answered a questionnaire devised for the purposes of this study. In it, they recorded their views of the activities.

In total, all the subjects of the sample using the activities submitted the transcription, diary, the work the children produced if this existed in a form that could be submitted (e. g. drawings), and the questionnaire for each of the activities.

### Sample

The implementation of the activities was assigned to pre-service preschool and primary teachers. Fifty-seven students in the Faculty of Education at the University of Crete (3 groups of 18, 19 and 19 students, in the spring term of the 2009-10 academic year, and the winter and spring terms of the 2010-2011 academic year respectively) were trained to use the activities. The training was carried out as part of a seminar on "Arts in Education" which was conducted in the Department of Preschool Education of the University of Crete. The students in the sample used the activities with a total of 688 children in kindergarten and the first grade of primary school. The trainee teachers were not informed, until after the collection of the data, about the design differences between TMA and TAA, nor about the goals of the study.

## Questionnaire

Following the completion of every activity, the implementers answered the questionnaire developed for the purpose of this study. The questionnaire consisted of 24 closed-ended questions and 24 open-ended questions. All the questions had to do with various qualitative characteristics in using each activity. In the closed-ended questions, the subjects were called upon to grade various aspects of the activity on a scale of 1-5 (Likert). Each of these closed-ended questions was accompanied by an open-ended question of “why”, in which the subjects were given the opportunity of arguing their assessment in words. While the questions could be organized along three axes (the goals, process and results of each activity that was used), in the questionnaire they appeared in a different order so that one answer was not influenced by a previous one. The content of some questions was similar, but worded so either the basic hypothesis of the study could be confirmed by the higher grading of an activity, or so that it could be confirmed by the lower grading.

## Results

This presentation contains the results from the answers of the pre-service preschool and primary teachers to the closed-ended questions of the questionnaire. The results are organized and presented on 3 axes: those that have to do with the goals, the process and the outcomes of every activity. Based on this organization, a comparison is carried out between cases in which art is used as a teaching medium, and cases where art is used as a teaching approach. In the following bar charts, the first column indicates the answers that have to do with TMA, while the second indicates those that have to do with TAA.

In order to test if there are any significant differences of the means between the two sorts of activities, the non-parametric Wilcoxon Signed Ranks Test is used.

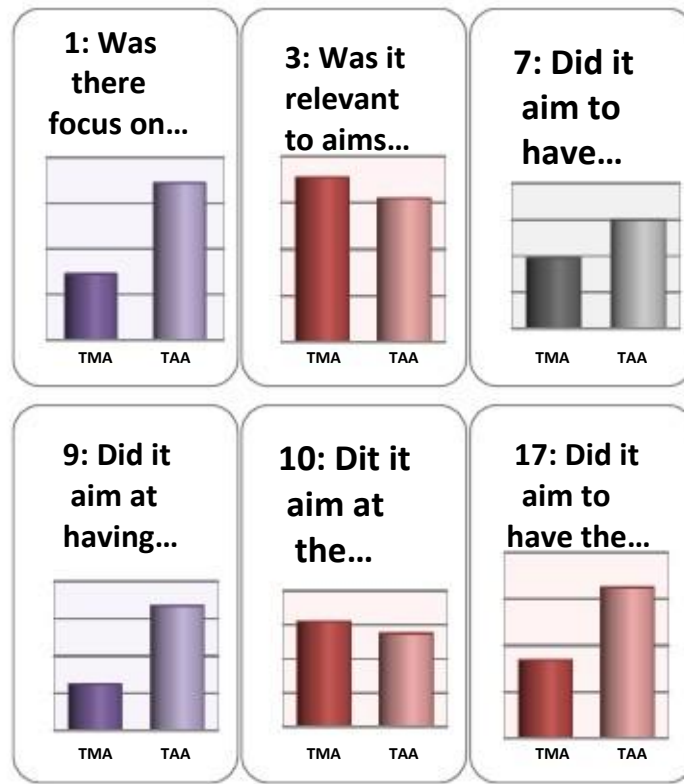
### Results in terms of the objectives of the activities

The questions posed to examine the objectives of TMA and TAA were the following:

1. In using the activity, were you more focused on the aesthetic than the language objectives?
3. Was the activity relevant to a subject and aims that are included in the curriculum?
7. Did the activity aim to have the children interpret the subject they were taught?
9. Did the activity aim at having the children express themselves emotionally?
10. Did the activity aim at the children’s intellectual development?
17. Did the activity aim to have the children to function holistically (intellectually, emotionally and physically at the same time)?

The results from the comparison between TMA and TAA concerning these questions appear in Picture 1.

Picture 1: Barcharts on the objectives of the activities



As it seems, with a difference that is highly statistically significant, the subjects using the activities stated that when applying the TAA they were more focused on the aesthetic objectives than they were when using the TMA (question 1). They also believed that TAA aim more than TMA at the emotional (question 9) and holistic (question 17) development of the children. In fact, in all the three questions, they gave highly statistically significant higher scores to TAA. Furthermore, they believed that TAA aim to have children interpret the taught subject (question 7) at a statistically significant higher level than TMA. In terms of whether the activity was relevant to the subject and the goals included in the curriculum (question 3), and if the activity aims at the intellectual development of the children (question 10), both types of activities received high scores, but the TMA scores were marginally higher and not statistically significant as opposed to the TAA.

#### Results with regard to the procedure of the activities

The questions having to do with the characteristics of the procedure of the activities used as TMA and TAA were the following:

5. Did the activity give children opportunities to design and decide their own actions?
6. Did the activity constitute a creative process?
12. Were the children actively engaged during the activity?
13. Did the activity keep the children interested?
15. Did the activity elicit humor from the children?
16. Did the activity constitute an innovative process?



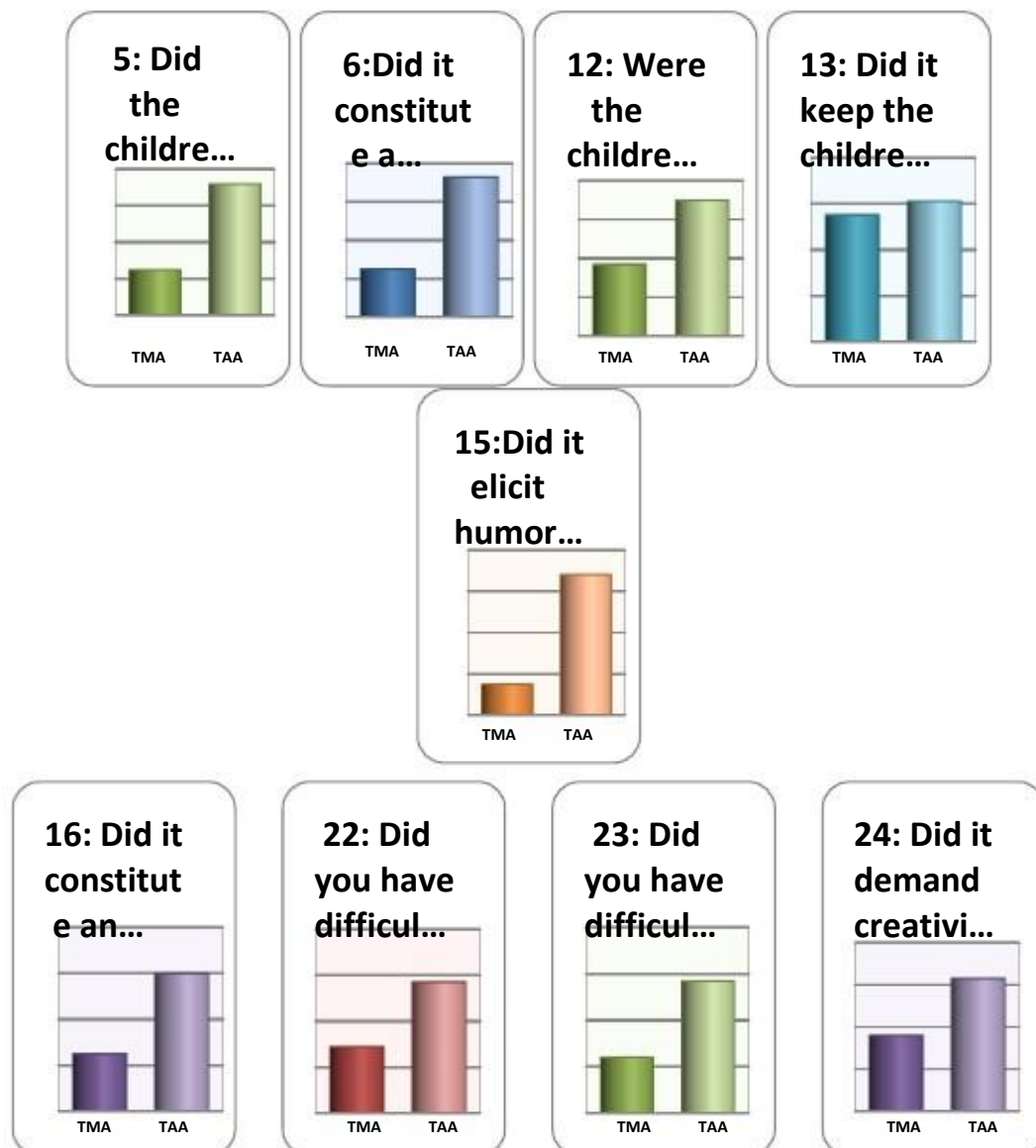
22. Did you have difficulty preparing the activity?

23. Did you have difficulty using the activity?

24. Did the activity demand creativity from you?

The results from the comparison between TMA and TAA concerning these questions appear in Picture 2.

Picture 2: Barcharts on the procedure of the activities



As can be seen by the bar charts representing the activities, the teachers deemed that in using TAA as compared to TMA, children decided on their own actions to a highly statistically significant degree (question 5), and that they were actively engaged most of the time (question 12). Also, the TAA with an equally great difference from the TMA, were

considered to constitute a creative (question 6), and innovative process (question 16) and elicited humor from the children (question 15). Also, both the preparation (question 22), as well as the implementation (question 23) of the TAA were difficult to a highly statistically significant degree for the teachers and required their own creative activation more (question 24) than the TMA. In contrast, there were no statistically significant differences between TMA and TAA in question 13, as the subjects indicated that both the TMA and TAA kept the children highly interested.

Results on the outcomes and learning results of the activities

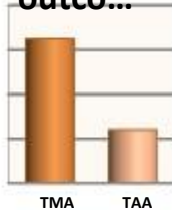
The questions posed as to the outcomes and the learning results of TMA and TAA were:

2. Did the activity lead to outcomes that were predetermined by you?
4. Did the activity lead to emerging outcomes on the taught subject?
8. Did the activity help children gain knowledge about the subject?
11. Did the activity bring about homogeneous outcomes?
14. Did the activity make the children create unusual/original outcomes with regard to the taught subject?
18. Did the activity cause the children to reproduce something given?
19. Did the activity cause the children to create some kind of artistic work?
20. Did the activity contribute to the children's aesthetic development?
21. Did the activity contribute to the children's intellectual development?

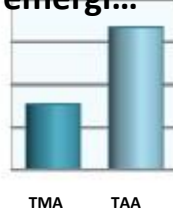
The results from the comparison between TMA and TAA concerning these questions appear in Picture 3.

Picture 3: Barcharts on the outcomes and learning results of the activities

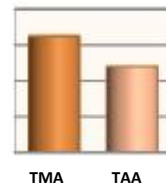
**2: Did it lead to outco...**



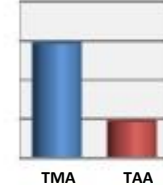
**4: Did it lead to emergi...**



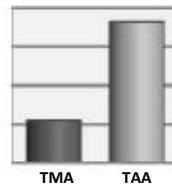
**8: Did it help childre...**



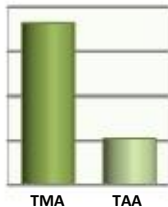
**11: Did it bring about...**



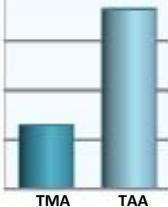
**14: Did it make the...**



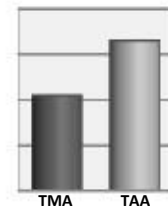
**18: Did it cause the children...**



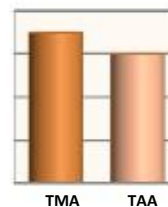
**19: Did it cause the children...**



**20: Did it contribute to the...**



**21: Did it contribute to the...**



After processing the questions in terms of the outcomes and learning results of TMA and TAA, it seems that according to the subjects, TMA with highly statistically significant differences brought about more predetermined (question 2) and homogeneous (question 11) outcomes with regard to the taught subject, as they caused the children to reproduce something given (question 18). In contrast, TAA were different by highly statistically significant means, as the subjects felt that the outcomes the children produced with regard to the taught subject were to a greater extent emergent (question 4), unusual/original (question 14) and constituted the creation of an artistic work (question 19). Furthermore, in their answers for the TAA, the subjects gave highly statistically significant means in terms of whether they contribute to the aesthetic development of children (question 20). Regarding the contribution to the intellectual development of the children (question 21), both types of activities received high scores.

## Discussion



In the exploratory inquiry described above, the idea was examined that when the arts are integrated in the teaching process, they can be used in two ways, which lead to two different teaching situations. On the one hand, art can be used in the teaching of a curriculum subject as a teaching medium, constituting an attractive framework for children for the subject being taught. Activities referred to as TMA were used to study this case. On the other hand, the arts may function as a field for the aesthetic approach of a taught subject and give the children opportunities to discover the aesthetic dimension of this subject (Sotiropoulou, 2012). This case is the TAA used in the inquiry.

As the results show, these two cases lead to two teaching situations in which those who applied the activities, for the most part, observe highly statistically significant differences in terms of the goals (Picture 1), process (Picture 2) and results (Picture 3).

More specifically, the pre-service teachers who applied the TMA focused more on the subject they were teaching than on the aesthetic nature of the activity. Furthermore, they felt that TMA furthered the aims of the curriculum, attempted and succeeded in helping the children develop intellectually, prompted children to reproduce given works, and produced relatively more homogeneous outcomes. Also with regard to TMA, it is interesting that the trainees who applied them felt that they were simpler, both in terms of preparation, as well as in terms of application, and they stated that these activities do not require their creative participation to a great degree.

On the other hand, it seems that the subjects who applied them ascribed to the TAA more child-centered and creative characteristics. They felt that these activities were more focused on aesthetic-artistic goals. They also felt that TAA, much more so than TMA, encouraged the children to interpret the taught subject, to act holistically, to decide on their own actions, to function with humor, to create emerging and original outcomes with regard to the taught subject, and to develop aesthetically. The implementers also characterized TAA, to a greater degree than TMA, as creative and innovative. At the same time, they stated that TAA were more complex, both in preparation and utilization, and more demanding in terms of the educator's own creative ability.

Finally, it is worth emphasizing that art has the ability to increase children's interest in the learning process as, in answering the relevant question, the subjects who applied the activities, gave high, and statistically non-differentiated scores to both TMA and TAA.

Given that in existing curricula educators are usually encouraged to use TMA, while TAA appear rarely, it is possible that TAA constitute the content of a new version of arts education, one with a vividly creative and aesthetic nature. Specifically, the results of the pilot implementations presented above argue in favor of the fact that TAA can lead to creative and aesthetic teaching of a taught subject, through which the children are given the opportunity to deal with it in an original manner and produce new knowledge about it. It seems that the condition created by TAA balances between "teaching arts" and "teaching through the arts", thus combining the benefits offered by both of these ways of using art in education. That is, with TAA children can experience the intrinsic value of the art, while they are also receiving the positive benefits of art on learning and academic achievement (Amadio, Truong, & Tschurennev, 2006). I suggest that this teaching situation be termed "aesthetic teaching" (Sotiropoulou, 2012; Sotiropoulou in press), based on the contents ascribed to this new term in recent literature (Granger, 2006; Macintyre Latta, 2004; Pike, 2004). Further research on the two categories of teaching through the arts activities studied is necessary. However, based on these pilot results, future research may take on a new orientation, as in "teaching through the arts" it is possible not only to implement curricula, but also to extend them.



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## Re(forming) knowing: reconceptualizing the role of creativity in knowledge-based economies

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### Abstract

In Adorno's letters to Walter Benjamin concerning his Arcades study, Adorno critiques his treatment of the dialectical image, concluding that his study lay in the crossroads between magic and positivism, and only theory could break the spell (Adorno et. al, 1977: 129). Benjamin's dialectical image emerged as a new research method to develop a 'the critical moment' that would expose an alienated subjectivity and awaken a critical consciousness for change. Drawing upon this critique in relationship to art education's juxtaposition of itself at the cultural crossroads, if theory can break the spell of an image's immanence, as Adorno suggested, then only epistemology can break the bonds of its implied catastrophe.

Addressing the dialectical crossroads in art education, this paper presents an epistemological case for the reformation of knowledge and how it is developed in the arts. In spite of the field's sophisticated advances in the past fifty years, the arts remain educationally marginalized. Expectations for knowledge-based economies in the European Union, however, are driven by policies supporting innovation without addressing creativity's fundamental role in its development. Arguing that creativity has been mystified as unteachable and thus neglected instructionally, this paper advocates reforming 'knowledge' through the teaching of creativity through arts and cultural education and not solely the subject matter of art. By developing instructional design theory and supporting models teaching creativity, knowledge-based outcomes through arts and cultural education are (re)cognized, establishing protocols for innovation without marginalizing the arts. Should arts and cultural education's own slogan be, 'teach creativity, not art'?

### Keywords

Creativity, innovation, knowledge-economy, educational reform

### Introduction

Culture has traditionally been defined through the development of fine arts skills and narrowly aligned with its disciplines. Not enough is known about other forms of culture, including popular culture, and how they operate today through social networks and uninstitutionalized environments. The purpose of this paper is to move this topic out of the margins of discourse by asking how can aspects of arts and cultural education contribute to the development of creativity and innovation and become recognized as an element of school reform through educational practice? I make the case that educational systems supporting knowledge-based economies need to attend to the development and funding of the creative industry through an integrated approach for the teaching and learning of creativity as a



component of all forms of knowing. Thus, I advocate for the reformation of epistemology about knowledge through the teaching of creativity and not solely the subject matter of art.

To do so, I draw upon a research methodology from Walter Benjamin's (1940) unfinished *Arcades Project* of the Parisian Arcades from the mid-1800's. The study intended to show that the means of production behind the Arcades, arguably the world's first shopping malls and the social practices that they spawned, supported the marginalization of social groups in urban spaces. He theorized that all objects of history contain contradictory interpretations that are unlocked by experiencing the objects without possessing them. This was achieved by the use and interpretation of dialectical images, which were created as intentional juxtapositions in order to reveal the fragmentation of historical narratives and their ideologies. As a new research methodology, Benjamin's dialectical images were grounded in his argument that from the time of Descartes in the 17th century, object and subject had been divided theoretically and a new approach was needed in order to unite them. His intention was to demonstrate how previously institutionalized conceptualizations about 'others' abstracted them in such a way as to become physicalized into actual geographies and contributed them being confined to certain neighborhoods in urban spaces. Benjamin's purpose was to reveal the ideological content of the historical narratives behind these abstractions in order to bring the possibility for new relationships into everyday living practices. Dialectical images intended to produce a 'critical moment' where embedded ideologies were punctured and their latent catastrophe – the catastrophe of capitalism - was revealed, mobilizing the awakening of to a critical self-consciousness about existing social conditions. However, in Adorno's letters to Walter Benjamin concerning his *Arcades* study, Adorno critiqued Benjamin's treatment of the dialectical image as immanent, concluding that his study lay in the crossroads between magic and positivism, and only theory could break the spell of its bewitchment (Adorno et. al 1977: 129).

Using Benjamin's research methodology of juxtapositions across dialectical images in regards to 'knowledge' and its development through schooling practices within the critique of immanence, I draw upon information from EU-27 initiatives for school reform mandated under various policies and laws adopted since 1999 in order to produce an EU knowledge-based economy and juxtapose it against discourses about arts and cultural education. Using these domains for dialectical juxtapositions, I argue for reformulations of both knowledge and creativity within schooling practices. Following upon Adorno's critique of Benjamin, I argue that the discourses of arts and cultural education have been instrumentalized as 'added-value' in service to all other disciplinary outcomes and contribute to a form of the discipline's own mystification. Thus, if only theory can break the spell of the dialectical image's immanence as Adorno suggested, I argue that only epistemology can break the mystification of education's own ideological structure so that multiple forms and modalities of knowing can be taught, for which creativity has a fundamental role.

### Contemporary knowledge production

'The Innovation Union' for EU's Europe 2020 campaign to develop a 'smart, sustainable, and inclusive economy' ([http://ec.europa.eu/europe2020/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/europe2020/index_en.htm)), follows earlier initiatives to develop a knowledge-based economy across national borders and support transnational mobility. Knowledge-production is a contemporary enterprise whose premises in the EU are based beyond the development of reason, individualism and science to the creation of new financial markets rewarding the entrepreneurial development and management of intellectual property and patents. Structurally, the premises for developing knowledge-based economies in the EU are encoded into research frameworks largely funding science and technology



initiatives, higher education partnerships and institutes, industry collaborations, and entrepreneurial innovations. The academic disciplines of the social sciences and humanities, on the other hand, have not yet been equally or adequately represented with funding for reform, nor investments in the research and development of their qualitative systems and forms of knowledge.

Since 1999, the mandate for educational reform in secondary and higher education in European Union states under the Bologna Accord has produced more emphasis on standardized curriculum assessing cognitive aspects of learning demonstrable through standardized testing. Prior to European and American accountability schemes such as PISA and No Child Left Behind, former models of learning based on the ability to construct or repeat propositions based on binary logic and its refutations, were already inadequate to navigate within dynamic systems of change<sup>41</sup> (Abbott & Ryan 1999; Shor & Freire 1987).

Since 2000, reforms initiated under the Bologna Accord (1999) and the Lisbon Treaty (2010) for all schools of the EU have emphasized strengthening core competencies in mathematics, science and language. In addition, a formidable challenge to the integration of diverse forms of knowledge pedagogically is the constraint from national curricula and accountability criteria for measurable outcomes tying the achievement of educational benchmarks to public and private funding. While the valorization of cultural education has been extensively studied, argued, and researched internationally for the last fifty years<sup>42</sup>, schooling practices remain entrenched in the development of competencies favoring science, mathematics, technology, and written and spoken language.

The creation of the European Higher Education Area (EHEA) in 2010 for coherent and compatible higher education across Europe (<http://www.ehea.info/>) has contributed in further emphasis on the foundational efforts of educational reform to ‘tune’ to these objectives. Representing a growing trend for influencing other non-EU-27 countries, standardizing knowledge production by ‘tuning’ educational structures to pre-set competencies may well become a new Lisbon Strategy agenda. Rhetorically, the EU’s Tuning Project at the higher education level intends to encourage educational and degree programs to look for reference, convergence, and common understanding through defined competencies ([www.unideusto.org/tuningeu/](http://www.unideusto.org/tuningeu/)). Practically, the standardized European Qualifications Framework has already defined and allocated credits and competencies to academic sectors.

Knowledge from art - of which culture is a part, (for which the term ‘art and cultural education’ is used here), remains on the periphery of institutional acceptance and practice (Sullivan 2005). Since 2008, cuts to arts and culture sectors amount to a reduction of 25-35% of their budgets (Tuning 2012), affecting EU cultural operators and school programs alike. It should be stressed however, that budgets for culture from EU programmes were already below the EU’s own policy studies’ recommended levels (Jácomo 2012), pointing to a larger problem that is conceptual as well as structural, and not just financial.

Current EC cultural programmes stress their purpose as the enhancement of the common European cultural area and to encourage the emergence of a sense of European citizenship

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<sup>41</sup>See also Sternberg, 2003; Atkinson, 2006; Hernández, 2000; Smith-Shank (1994 and 2004) and Cultuurnetwerk Nederland, 2002.

<sup>42</sup>

Harvard’s Project Zero created extensive research on the impact of the arts in educational development including longitudinal studies from Goodman, Gardner and Perkins, amongst others. For a more complex analysis of the transformative power of cultural arts education, see Bamford, 2006; Chapman, 2003; Duncum, 2001; Gardner, 1990; Greene, etc.).



(Cultural Programme 2010: 41), both of which are concepts that lack common consensus. In policy and in practice, the universalizing discourse of producing a common cultural area and European identity lacks both definition and practice for what and how a common identity of 'Europeanness' would look like and be educationally. Without the practical reality of how they function and come to be realized, they, too, are contemporary ideals. Instead, the EU's current emphasis on 'social cohesion' as a pressing need for a rapidly diversifying population, has positioned arts and cultural education into yet another kind of instrumentality, used to experience cultural identity and teach multiculturalism for citizenship education.

The result is that EU driven school reform efforts have not given adequate investments and resources to teach the diverse languages of arts and cultural education, upon which creative competencies are based. Contributing to the further marginalization of arts and cultural education as 'non-essential' language development is the way in which culture as a term has been narrowly interpreted through the fine arts. In EU cultural policy, culture is still defined through classical and romantic ideals in language that uses "...'cultural sensibility' and '...the awakening of a curiosity regarding the arts and our cultural inheritance', and 'the development of taste and a sense of quality' [1]. Enculturation, in this manner, as a goal of EU cultural education policy and programs, however, is increasingly being correlated to measuring its enhancement of economic growth and development. At the same time, school-based arts and cultural programmes are not considered 'productive' in terms of economic outcomes or impact and across the EU-27 are being further reduced in schools. Thus, there is a fundamental mismatch rhetorically and practically between these positions and their ensuing educational mandates.

Art and cultural institutions have come under growing pressure to demonstrate a new public role to a growing number of stakeholders. However, EU policies are being implemented in this domain without school systems intentionally producing creative competencies to support them. It is important that the basis of innovation be reformed within a plurality of perspectives and positions, integrating creativity, innovation and social competencies within arts and cultural education practices. After twenty-five years of international attempts to manage educational outputs for professional preparation in jobs, 45% of which the EU has recently determined don't exist yet (Europe 2020), framing predefined professional outcomes structurally can act as a deterrent to innovation, spontaneity, and flexibility.

Missing in discourses for comprehensive school reform across the EU is the recognition that other forms of knowledge exist and occur from other kinds of languages (e.g. visual, media, kinesthetic, interpersonal, etc.), which would open the possibility for integrating competencies for creative industries across schooling practices. The missing but common link between these discourses is creativity and the need to teach it instructionally.

### Socializing knowledge through creativity

The agenda to educate individuals in service of the knowledge industry must be critically examined to understand how representations for the individual, subject, and identity are formed on the imaginary and symbolic levels by the influence of language, visual representations and ideological apparatuses (Fulková & Tipton 2011). As the role and function of knowledge in the overall educational system has yet to be fundamentally reformed, is knowledge itself sufficient for developing an answer?

Knowledge emerges and is formed structurally through the negotiation of meaning-making processes of signs and symbols in active social interaction. Knowledge is not just produced, it is created. Brazilian educator Paulo Freire explained that deficits of comprehension, (to which





the current knowledge agenda for measurable student learning outcomes is tied), are related to misunderstanding about the gnosiological cycle. By 'gnosiological cycle' he meant the distinct moments in the cycle of knowing, which has separate phases related to each other. (Shor & Freire, 1987: 7). Freire describes this cycle as two moments: one when knowledge is produced and one when it is known. By seeing these moments, we can better understand what happens when we try to teach or to learn. (Shor & Freire 1987: 7) "What happens generally is that we dichotomize these moments; we make them separate...we reduce the act of knowing the existing knowledge into a mere transference of the existing knowledge." (Shor & Freire, 1987: 8).

It is important to inquire into how the gnosiological cycle functions today. What Benjamin began to develop and our current digital landscape complicates is that language is now 'seen' through cultural interfaces that may entail virtual interactions and not just social ones (Manovich 2001). Under the mimetic influences of new digital media in the 20th century, a dominant cultural interface was cinematic artefacts that brought movement into space and transformed it temporarily through narrative (Rodowick 2003). This influenced the development of sensory-perceptual systems and intellectual experiences no longer tied solely to language. Rodowick argues that through the context of digital media culture, sense became a kind of presence without signification (2000:11). Presence is no longer form-based, time-based, or place-based (Manovich 2001). Through digital media platforms, new forms of cognition originate within spatial forms of understanding, confronting previously ideas about representation and reality.

Today's students experience multimedia stimulations from sound, image, and text through interactive, virtualized spaces as participants, not just viewers. How imagination enters into and engages the experience of learners within multiple contexts through digital media is greatly changing the way perceptual and intellectual abilities are achieved and demonstrated. It is possible to say that today knowledge is transmitted as much through media as it is through schooling practices. Language is also 'seen' through cultural interfaces (Manovich 2001).

Hayles (2003) posits this as a new field of dematerialized embodiment within a rapidly morphing field of electronic data 'flickering' through electronic, digitized, and computerized interfaces. Virtualized embodiment has led to an uncoupling of formerly, linearly conceived materiality and its concomitant, but slower, evolutionary patterning, into the instantaneous and real-time tele-presence of the 24/7 camera switched on, observed and commented on in a global perturbation of unperceived, virtual and 'real' observers. Mind interacts experientially with these different simulated, recorded, and telecast environments, not just gaming inside prefabricated corridors of interactive software programs, but pushing previously constituted borders of what was previously considered versions of 'reality' to which knowledge has corresponded.

Currie & Ravenscroft (2003) argue that when something is imagined but not directly perceived, there is still a bodily response as if the event, object, or person were actually seen. The content of imagining through virtual worlds is closely and systematically tied to the content of the perception without being part of direct perception itself. Thus, imagining becomes a form of visual experience, from which visual intelligence emerges. To understand how this is relevant to the production of knowledge and the teaching of creativity, digital media is greatly changing the way perceptual and intellectual abilities of students are developed and demonstrated. It is important for educators to attend to how imagination enters into and engages the experience of all forms of learning. Digital media and the mass arts (Chapman 2003) provides the platform for functionally teaching creativity, developing



culture, supporting intercultural communication skills and structures, and critically work with images through multimodal forms and languages.

### Reframing knowledge as a movement of becoming

Elaborating on the movement of attention which is involved in all our sensory perceptions, and in the act of understanding the whole of perception and thought, the Nobel-prize winning physicist David Bohm emphasized (*italics the author's 1998:79*):

By considering the primary significance of movement in this general sense, which includes art, inward experience at the psychological level, and what is to be meant by life, we can perhaps indicate at least the germ of a different world view, which can function to call attention to our outward perceptions and inward feelings in a new way, so that we can be free of the habitual and automatic function of the traditional view that this movement is meaningless, without some thing that is 'doing the moving'. (1998: 80).

Bohm elaborated that inner movement not only creates and maintains structure, but can also dissolve it. "There is nothing known that does not ultimately dissolve into movement in this way." (*italics the author's 1998:78*). As belief systems and knowledge systems sometimes operate invisibly, systemic change requires the integration of dialogic processes to plumb the system of thought as it is constructed and used (Bohm, 1994). To study thought's movement of becoming is to study how change processes are enacted and affected by the flow of thoughts.

Favareau (2002) argues that the intra-psychic and inter-relational aspects of cognitive development are context-dependent, relational and negotiated, forming the conditions through which cognition is situated. Considered through digital media, knowledge is emergent and fluid, occurring in dynamic systems where information does not function solely as input and output but as autopoietic processes through which complex systems interact and change (Luhmann 1999). Knowing develops within flexible and creative structures through which the emergence of wisdom, not just knowledge, can occur. Shifting the emphasis from knowledge as product to knowledge as a movement of becoming allows for meaning to be negotiated and represented interculturally as a social pedagogy. Negotiating shared agreements is a complex but essential process within increasingly conflicted multicultural and transnational environments, for which it is also important to build a moral imagination (Lederach, 2005).

### Problem-finding for teaching creativity

Over the past twenty years, research in creativity has exponentially increased, especially through psychological theories and their experiments. Its appearance in cognitive psychology has emphasized empirical experiments in the study of creative cognitive processes applied to task-specific cases, especially in design and industrial education. Recent studies tend to lend support to earlier cognitive approaches to creativity (e.g. Gardner 1990, Perkins 1981) by using brain-imagining technology to test neurological pathways and activity in the brain and to measure the effects of mental imagery for the completion of task objectives (Ellamil et. al 2011). Current theories from neuroscience and new disciplines such as 'Connectomics', study routes of neural impulses in order to develop models and theories about creativity, such as processes of creative thinking (Sutherland, Ward 2007; Ward, Smith, Finke 1999), and generative and evaluative phases (Finke,1996).

Nevertheless, many educational and social assumptions about creativity remain rooted in an 19th century Enlightenment paradigm that individuals are born innately creative (or not), and that aesthetics, if it is still taught at all, is rooted in learning about the authors of philosophical systems who argue for various systems of perceptions and beauty. Both remain pervasive. Educational policy continues to narrowly correlate learning to evidence of production, whether artistic or conceptual. Creativity remains demonstrable through the individual and is objectified as a quality or property that is possessed (or not).

Rhetorically, there persists an attitude that creativity is a psychological trait or cultural product, impeding its inclusion in the language of educational competencies generally and arts education in particular. Creativity is still being defined as producing novel ideas that are useful (Sternberg 2003), thus obscuring what could be considered creativity's subject matter if it were taught as a discipline.

The idea that individuals are born innately creative is further mystified by the educational belief that creativity cannot be taught. The reflexive conundrum operates like a lemniscate: if creativity cannot be taught, it cannot be measured; what cannot be measured means there is no evidence of it. Within accountability schemes for outcome measures in schools, this caveat has meant creativity cannot be claimed to be produced, it appears, except in cognition studies, using experimental designs, as a tool furthering industrial design thinking. The outcome is creativity's near absence from core competencies and their supporting curriculum in EU schools.

On the other hand, Wilson's (2010) idea of developing social creativity as a discipline risks confusing practice with process. To subject the teaching of creativity to its social and economic dimensions is also problematic. Does teaching creativity mean that teaching 'art' no longer happens or that it becomes rhetorically 'the art of being creative'? But more importantly, can the teaching of creativity as a subject be adequately enacted through the current system of measures indicated by grades and academic achievement? Is supporting the current system of 'meritocracy' as the world's new financial elite are built upon (Hayes 2012), a 'sufficient' enough of a strategy to give art and culture its value? To emphasize what creativity and culture can produce economically, is missing one important dimension: if culture is produced, it also needs participants, users, and consumers, for which social creativity cannot develop without the foundational skill dispositions created from art and cultural education. In this realm, teaching creativity as a subject can encourage public spaces for civil processes to develop and be shared. Creativity has an integrative role to play, to weave and knit knowledge together.

If creativity is understood as "the use of cultural resources as an intermediate consumption in the production process of non-cultural sectors, and thereby as a source of innovation" (KEA 2006: 2), let us call attention to how it is nurtured in schools. If culture can adapt itself to new forms of economy, schools need new economic investments to produce successful cultural operators and creatively cultivate the dispositions, attitudes and behaviors of cultural participation as audiences, advocates, ambassadors, organizers, philanthropists and volunteers. Schools have an additional role to play in supporting networks within communities and schools by connecting experts across regional platforms and sharing resources. As Cope and Kalantzis (2000) explain, it takes more than situated practice and overt instruction to create cultural understanding. It requires both critical framing and the application of meaning-making practice to another context or site (Cope & Kalantzis, 2000:35).

Supporting this development, the EC's Green Paper (2010: 18) states, 'Art and culture have a unique capacity to create green jobs, to raise awareness, challenge social habits and promote



behavioural shifts in our societies, including our general attitude to nature.’ Yet, in spite of the EC’s own statistics that cultural industries contribute 2.6% to the EU-27 GDP with 5 million jobs (cite), ironically the same EC web text continues, ‘However, there are no reliable and comparable statistics at European level that could fully underpin and provide evidence of their actual contribution to European economic and social development.’ ([http://ec.europa.eu/culture/our-policy-development/eurostat-essnet-culture\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/culture/our-policy-development/eurostat-essnet-culture_en.htm)).

Such uncertainty is not just from the use of disjunctive statistical formulas through which cultural impact is numerically proven. In spite of the EU study (2006) documenting that the cultural sector is developing faster than the rest of the economy, the Lisbon Strategy for reforming education supports the knowledge economy with its largest investments in ICT, science and industrial technologies. In EU cultural policy, while the arts are arguably a part of culture, the way both terms are used remain a conundrum through which both domains are financially overlooked.

As Benjamin would argue, there is a hidden ideology here. Underneath the need to assess a sector through measures for which quantification and definitions are elusive. Reformation processes must be supported as well by imaginative new epistemologies that bring these various strands together into study as well as practice. This means that transforming instructional design systems to support the development of what Ray and Anderson (2000) called ‘cultural creatives’, is not solely for economic productivity. It means that by inquiring personally, socially, and culturally into what creativity is for, and how it can be taught and nurtured, the individual must be given opportunities to discover and decide what the cultural and economic roadmap of their own purposefulness will be and how it will be realized. Ultimately, creativity must be discovered within the act of being creative.

In a bold move that addresses the shortcomings in the EU approach and establishing a framework for identifying and teaching creative competencies, Singapore’s Ministry of Education (2010) launched a framework program for creativity education and is infusing it into all levels of public schools through art, music and physical education. Initially developed by MIT and integrated with design thinking, Singapore’s Ministry of Education adapted their own integrative framework Conceive-Design-Implement-Operate (CDIO), the framework is currently under implementation in order to strengthen the creativity, innovation and enterprise dispositions, one of its core competencies, for all students at all levels ([www.sp.edu.sg](http://www.sp.edu.sg)).

Reframing knowledge through creativity offers the opportunity for the plurality of visual knowledge and their languages to be recognized and taught within the culture of education itself. Thus, the role and function of creativity in the overall educational system can be fundamentally re-formulated through models and networks. To accommodate the contemporary spatial context of creativity, its various skill sets need to be defined and examined beyond psychological or behaviorally-based theories and research paradigms. Teaching creativity as a discipline involves engaging students in process-based forms of knowing that are already emerging. Creating the networks that tie public and private investments together into functional productivity for the new systems of formation in arts and cultural realms needs visionary cultural policies, using international research studies and their recommendations.

Puncturing the mystification of even our own rhetoric requires a critique of how knowledge functions without conscience. Collectively we must look at what the evidence from what our current knowledge systems and societies have produced: a global system borrowing more than one billion euros a day to sustain its dependencies, dumping toxic waste into the worlds’ water systems and destroying the planet’s living ecosystems without nurturing their sustainability. We do not need more of what brought this knowledge into form. We need



creative new discourses from those who have been excluded from both the dialogue and the profits to help us make connections to what is already known so that something new and as yet unimagined, can still be conceived of and born. We need to create a culture of creativity that will interact across disciplinary dividing lines to face a crisis that is not just economic or social, but is fundamentally one of the lack of creativity, a failure of consciousness itself.

Neither can the state of the world be obscured by promoting hegemonic discourses valorizing scientific progress through the development of new technologies and new knowledge without recognizing the cultural life through which societies develop (Max-Neef 1992). Castells goes further in arguing that ‘...networks may constitute the new morphology of societies which substantially modifies the results of logical operations and production processes, experience, power, and culture itself’ (2005: 605).

Our future cannot be addressed by knowledge alone but by shifting our relationship to meaning-making processes and becoming responsible for the profound importance of nurturing our relationships not just to knowledge but also to each other. Knowledge, economics, and technology alone have failed to produce this formidable and urgent task. If we are to truly change our commitments to what learning is for and why, it will not be to put knowledge or intelligence to better use but to epistemologically recognize that we are all here, sharing this fragile planet together, trying to find creative solutions to balance between material science and the culture of our lives.

## Conclusions

When Benjamin brought his methodology into discourse, like the angel of history of unimagined catastrophes, a future now past. As the 2010 and ongoing BP oil leak in the Gulf of Mexico demonstrated, in spite of the impact of the world’s largest ecological disaster, the question of how to creatively solve the problem remains beyond the know-how of the company and the worlds’ experts themselves. New forms of knowing are needed.

Today’s learners need to know how to discover probable information, negotiate meaning-making processes within rapidly changing environments, and apply creative imagination to problem-finding as well as problem-solving situations within multi-disciplinary teams. a negotiated process in communication between perception, reception, experience, and cognition. Creativity needs to be taught intentionally as a subject through an educational framework that recognizes the unpredicatability of its mystery as well as the certainty of its production, contributing an understanding that both aspects are necessarily connected. Both process-based and product-based learning modalities and realize contributions, not all of which can be represented by written language.

Educational systems supporting knowledge-based economies can better attend to the development and funding of the creative industry through an integrated approach for the teaching and learning of creativity as a component of all forms of knowing. Arts and cultural education can innovate from their state of uncertainty, with new educational practices that develop creativity as a field of study and support its research, not just for creative thinking, that functions not solely for economics but through the economy of our social relationships and the synergy of collective imagination.

The various initiatives, policy studies, research reports, and statistics across the EU-27 and beyond, need to be tied together in new ways so that real support can be given to the teaching of creativity and not just expecting the educational system to produce graduates who are creative. The reformation of educational epistemology through the teaching of creativity





recognizes that while creativity is multimodal, phasic and dimensional, across territories and cartographies, it remains itself, no less a mystery than science, which we still teach in spite of its own uncertainties.

Cultural policy can be further informed by including international research findings and work with committed institutional partners through self-studies, needs assessments, and to vision new possible futures. Cultural development through education requires the institutionalization that new policy develops and is needed at all levels of EU-27 educational reform efforts. More than ever, we need new models of creativity that function within the local context through both formal and informal schooling practices. For this to happen, educational and cultural policies and the discourses behind them must move beyond homogenizing discourses where creativity and culture are strategies for actualizing social and economic development; we must activate their movement of becoming.

Acknowledging that creativity can be taught as a subject opens the possibility for integrating social competencies from creative activities across schooling practices and subjects. By drawing upon Benjamin's methodology, it is my hope that the awareness and motivation for needed reforms within art and cultural education will be awakened. The hope for systemic transformation lies within the imaginative potential of schools to integrate and use different kinds of models and their paradigms in service of creative knowledge production, not only for the benefit of entrepreneurs but for the benefit of all. The inclusion of adequately funded programs developing creative competencies and multimodal visual literacies is essential to this reform.

Preparing for future societies today lies within our potential to use new media platforms for a different kind of knowing through the culture of spatial models where relationships to former boundaries of materialized embodiment can be unframed and reformed through new languages, some of which unspoken and unseen, can only be felt. The question remains, how can creative and cultural knowledge be integrated and taught through instructional practice in schools and contribute not just knowledge production but to community development and innovation itself? Knowledge after all, is not just for economic development; it is for community development as well. With a chronic and continual disinvestment of cultural arts education in many national educational budgets for more than forty years and seemingly more to come, should the discipline's own slogan be, 'teach creativity, not art'?

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## Born to Be a Teacher? A narrative of becoming an art educator-artist-researcher

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### Abstract

This article deals with one way one may end up being an art educator-artist-researcher. I reflect on my professional path by analyzing an autobiographical text I wrote for a book dealing with the question “what also made us teachers.” As tool for analyzing Seya’s text, I used Uusiautti’s (2008) categorization of the process of becoming a top worker.

When it comes to “Curves and byways,” Seya’s story reveals a search for the right profession throughout almost her life. Only when she worked as an art teacher for prospective teachers for grades 1-6 was she satisfied with her work. Her experience as a professor helped her learn what she wanted. Art seems to have become a must for Seya during the course of her life.

Seya’s “Downhills and road signs”—factors having supported her career—were similar to those of top workers: Seya was willing to accept new challenges and keep her professional knowledge up-to-date. She made her work more interesting by making art and exploring new possibilities in international areas. She also stressed the importance of her family, friends, and hobbies, such as sports and arts, for her accomplishments.

When facing “Uphills and obstacles,” such as a non-working relationship in the workplace, Seya acted like the top workers: she did not give up. Most often she found a solution to her problems in making art.

“Reappraisals and crossroads”—pondering choices one has made —were many, as Seya wrote a lot about her values and the factors affecting them, including her childhood surroundings and the early death of her mother. Seya seemed to be sure she has “a calling” to fulfill in her life but remained open to changing her profession.

According to this study, teachers could benefit from using Uusiautti’s (2008) model as a tool in their identity-work. When pondering the ethics of a study that does not guarantee anonymity for the people mentioned, it is important to remember the narrative and subjective character of the original text.

### Key words

Professional development, art, educator, teacher, artist, researcher, narrative, self

### Introduction and autobiographical research methodology

In the summer of 2010, I was asked to write an article—a biographic text—for a book dealing with “what also makes us teachers.” It was to be a personal story dealing with significant events, important facts and relationships. In my original text “Art of Becoming – The daily re-birth of an art educator” (Ulkuniemi, in press), I memorized my past, trying to focus on it from the perspective of being “an art educator-artist-researcher,” even though I also noted



there is no one way to define myself. I wrote the story from my subjective view with many intuitive ideas but in the third person. For this article, I changed my text to first person. I call the person whose text I am quoting “Seya.” The quotations are in italics.

Here I distance myself from the biographical text and analyze it using the classification created by Uusiautti (2008). Uusiautti’s (2008; see also Uusiautti & Määttä, 2011) research is about the phenomenon of success at work. She concentrated on workers chosen as top workers of their professions but, important for me, focused on well-being at work and beyond (Uusiautti & Määttä, 2010, pp. 54–55). Uusiautti (2008, p. 224; see also Uusiautti & Määttä, 2011) named four process factors that influenced people’s success: curves and byways, downhills and road signs, uphill and obstacles, and reappraisals and crossroads.

### Curves and byways when finding one’s occupation

Uusiautti’s (2008; Uusiautti & Määttä, 2011, p. 72) category “Curves and byways” refers mainly to finding an occupation that fits. Sometimes people get education for a different career from what they end up doing. Referring to Snyder and Lopez, Uusiautti states values from one’s upbringing often reflect the life values we acquire, and that career choices are influenced by one’s parents. This also applies to Seya, who chose her first profession (teacher) mainly because of her upbringing. After describing herself as the eldest, responsible child of a middle-class teacher family, she stated:

I was the one to fill my dad’s dream of being the successful one at school. This maybe is why I became a “multi-talented” person: I never knew what path I should choose, as I seemed to be pretty good in almost everything. This led me to choose a career as a classroom teacher as my Dad had recommended; though I tried my best to resist it. I wanted to be rebellious at least in this but did not manage to find another better-fitting career. Well, I considered applying to the faculty of medicine, but found myself InterRailing during entrance examinations period.

Seya’s text includes much spiritual searching connected with her pondering what work she should devote herself to. She refers to her Christian upbringing and a belief that provided the foundation for her being: that convinces me that I do exist as a soul and as a person. And this person is something unique. However, Seya defines herself a doubting Thomas yet believes she has a call: I am sure my life has a purpose. I just have to find it. But to find it again and again, every day! The main question for me is, how can I serve others in the best way with the gifts I have been given?

Seya enjoyed her first job as teacher in the university’s practice school (for grades 1-7) because she got to know her pupils well. However, she also felt she did not have enough freedom: Only there were - - so many various components I needed to consider, that I felt my hands somewhat tied. When she had a chance to work as a teacher in a “normal” Finnish school, she started to enjoy her work fully: I felt I could find the flow of “teaching as art.” I could try to make each week a theme; I could stop dividing the days into disciplines etc. I found the freedom of teaching.

An important turn in Seya’s career came when her hometown university started educating art teachers. She was surprised to get in, maybe more due to pedagogical than artistic skills. Studying empowered her: I was at a busy time in my life: raising a child and working in a school as a substitute art teacher, but as I could concentrate mostly on making art in my studies, I felt the studies energy-giving. Working at the comprehensive and high school levels was interesting and had its disadvantages: But I lacked the deep knowledge of my pupils, as I





saw them only a couple of hours a week, and there were so many... But I could apply the skills and knowledge I had just been gaining in my own studies, so I was lucky. Seya worked for five years at the same school, always just a substitute with one-year contracts that were renewed but hoping to get a permanent job. Then she made a crucial decision that changed the path of her career: But then I applied for a three-year job as an art education assistant to have a little bit more continuity in my life, got the job, was not happy with that dog job, and reapplied for the art teacher job—but did not get it. Thus, I was “condemned” to become a researcher.

In Seya’s clear byway, as an art education assistant, doing research was a must. Seya found her topic partly due to her current family situation: at that time with a family of two little kids, I found family photography interesting. Her theoretical licentiate work was about the genre of family photography (Ulkuniemi, 1998). Research had value for her mainly as a tool to achieve a job she was interested in: I could finish it mainly as it was obligatory as I applied for a vacancy as a lecturer in the faculty of education. Seya became a senior lecturer in art education at the University of Lapland to educate prospective teachers for grades 1-6. This work suited her extremely well: I was really happy. Now I could fully use my wide education and experience. I worked hard, a lot, and with a great deal of enthusiasm for many years.

Seya took the next step in continuing her career as a researcher for reasons other than scientific interest: But then, as one of the two referees of the licentiate happened to say that my work could almost have been accepted as a doctoral dissertation, I started to ponder whether to continue my studies. Soon after finishing her doctoral degree, Seya worked for a year as a professor in art education in the faculty of arts, after hesitatingly applied for it. She was amazed at the consequences of this little byway. She had understood she wanted in the first place to work in teacher education in the faculty of education (see Ulkuniemi, 2007b), but in one year lost her previous position: I could not convince my boss anymore about my will to work at a basic level... I felt much more comfortable trying to motivate students who lack good experiences in art. But I had no way back. I had to study further to feel surer with my new job. The new position was teaching art as a minor subject in teacher education. Seya thought she needed to teach new courses, such as media, which led her to study digital photography.

When it comes to Seya’s path as an artist, she considers herself an amateur: Yes, I have always been keen about photography. But my approach has been more conceptual than aesthetic or technical. I play with ideas, almost in all of my work. And the realizations of the ideas, my exhibitions, have been made more or less with amateur skills. Art seems to have become essential for her: I have found an inner need to construct them. Even in the times of haste, I have struggled to find time to get them done.

In Uusiautti’s (2008, p. 196) study, most of the top workers experienced detours mainly in their youth, like studying for an occupation that later turns out to be unsuitable. Seya’s story reveals a search for the right profession throughout almost her entire life. Only when she was working as an art teacher for prospective teachers was she satisfied with her work. Her experience as a professor helped her learn what she wanted: “misjudgements can also be considered valuable experience thanks to the new perspectives gained” (Uusiautti & Määttä, 2011, p. 73). Art seems to have become more important—a must—for Seya during the course of her life.

Downhills and road signs supporting one’s career

Uusiautti (2008; Uusiautti & Määttä, 2011, pp. 72–73) calls “Downhills and road signs” the



factors that enhanced top workers' careers the most after the individuals started working. Seya also clearly stated some events were very important for her decisions.

During her school years, Seya was a hardworking student but with no specific interest in arts. When she was studying to become a teacher for grades 1-6, she chose music and visual art as her special subjects, without explaining why. She reveals two reasons for her growing interest in visual arts. First, she learned to use various new materials and understood how multidimensional the world of art is, especially via studies in art history. Another important factor was the intellectual kick she got when she understood how she had misinterpreted van Eyck's Arnolfini Portrait, which her teacher had shown: I also clearly remember the interesting shock as I realized how easy it was to incorrectly interpret works when you don't know anything about their background. From her studies, Seya also mentions art history lessons given by an enthusiastic professional: Sometimes I did not really remember what the lecture had been about, but I was taken by the spirit of it. Virtual travels inside the pictures! In addition to her work as teacher in a comprehensive school, this experience probably encouraged her to continue art history studies.

Seya had many troubles on her road as a researcher. For becoming a doctor of arts, she gives credit to the women studies research group that helped her believe in her own way of doing research: I had lost my faith in any objective research and started to value openness and positioning instead. Having finally got her dissertation with installations accepted (Ulkuniemi, 2008), Seya felt she had been able to create something new: I guess I somehow invented a new method of research, call it artistic or what: my installations were also used in collecting data, as I asked viewers to comment on them and analyzed their responses.

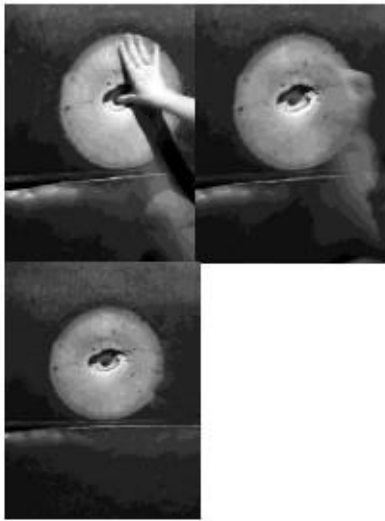
A turn in Seya's artistic/professional skills took place when she started studying digital photography in 2009. She thought she needed these skills to teach media courses in my new "position." Interestingly, the opposite happened: even the tiny media courses she had had were taken away. Despite this, Seya decided to continue her studies to become a professional photographer.

Seya praises the support from her family and friends in her career, especially in making art: I give special thanks to my husband and my father, who both have not only stood beside me but also actively helped. I also have three kids, who all have been part of my art and life, and in addition I have some close friends. I know I would never have accomplished all the things I have without their help. Seya lists what friends are for: for support ... to share ... to accept each other as they are and to be truly happy when the other is happy. Most of Seya's friends are outside her own profession and give her a wider perspective on society. She dislikes inside groups that favor members: I have seen too often how friendships at work make the situation unbalanced. People are not treated equally. However, Seya mentions one encouraging professional group, the people of InSEA. She praises the importance of people who share something essential with her from personal and professional perspectives: it is hard to say if it is a common approach to art or more a harmony of souls, but it makes a difference. At international congresses, I have learned a lot about the various ways to accept and use the paradigms of art education.

Seya's good congress experience in Istanbul where she visited the Hagia Sofia church led her to create an artwork (photos 1-3) whose theme is the meeting of different life views.

Photos 1-3: Photograph-Triptych Faith, Hope, Touch (2006).

In Istanbul  
in Hagia Sofia -church



at the borders of eastern and western faith  
one may make a wish and roll one's finger  
in the deepening hole of the eternally damp wall  
shaping the figure resembling the sun  
together with one's predecessors  
by touching them  
indirectly

Another important factor enhancing Seya's professional skills is her participation in an international university teacher exchange. She puts its impact in a nutshell: This has taught me to appreciate education in other cultural settings, and given me some self-confidence. I will always remember the words of a Spanish surgeon who claimed that the work of a teacher is one of the hardest: with one false word you can make a wound that is almost impossible to cure.

Seya's attitude concerning developing herself and her profession is positive. She is constantly searching for things that could improve her teaching: Well, I read this and that, newspapers, magazines, and am, as most of the teachers I know, all the time gathering inspiration from all of the possible sources. She is also interested in using her personality at work, especially her bodyliness. She wants to enhance her students' well-being: I also try to make the sites of my teaching comfortable, and often start my classes with exercises connected with relaxation and other "tonings."

Seya does her best to keep herself in good condition. She has several hobbies that help her remain an effective worker: I run along the river and swim throughout the year. I find balance in yoga and exercise self-discipline in karate. I sometimes participate in meditative weekends in silence, and make students give space to be in silence as well.

When comparing Seya's downhill with the ones mentioned by top workers (Uusiautti, 2008, pp. 164–192; Uusiautti & Määttä, 2011, pp. 72–73), she seems willing to accept new challenges, although sometimes with some doubts. Seya is willing to keep her professional knowledge up-to-date with in-service education. Similar to some of the top workers, she does not aim at a higher position in the hierarchy—not even with her doctoral studies. Instead, she seems to make her work more interesting by making art and exploring new possibilities in international areas. This probably increases her work motivation and coping.

When it comes to solutions for combining work and family responsibilities (Uusiautti, 2008, p. 176), Seya did not reveal exactly the division of housework for her and her spouse, for example. However, she clearly stated the importance of her family and friends in her accomplishments.

The rewarded employees of the year emphasized the significance of having a good hobby. Seya mentioned some of her hobbies counterbalance her work, but similar to the top workers, she found her hobbies—art making in the first place—also provide resources for work. (See

Uusiautti 2008, pp. 173–175.) Drawing on Carruthers and Hood, Uusiautti (2011, p. 73) also stresses the importance of leisure-time activities for people’s physical, psychological, and social health. In Seya’s story, sports, art, and friends are very important.

Uphills and obstacles confronted as challenges

According to Uusiautti (2008, pp. 192–195; Uusiautti & Määttä 2011, p. 73), the most special characteristic among employees of the year was their positive attitude: When facing conflicts, these employees did not give up. In hard situations, the employees wanted to reassess their occupational skills. They saw conflict situations as problems that had to be solved. What interested me most when I was analyzing Seya’s text was a similar pattern: Almost every time Seya described some obstacle she had had, she continued by mentioning an artwork she had created. Art has obviously become important for Seya as a means of dealing with problems.

Many of the obstacles Seya describes have to do with contradictions. When Seya described her hobbies, such as reading, she mentioned two books that shook her thinking, Donald Broady’s book about hidden curriculum in schools and some of Alice Miller’s books. These caused confusion contradicting the ideals with the reality of school teaching and parenting: I felt myself being part of several “black pedagogies” when working at school, not finding good solutions to avoid it. As a mother, I have also found my shadows as an educator when not being able to behave in an acceptable manner. Seya became a mother three times in 1990s, but in 2000 first made an installation (photo 4) about the uncountable number of choices people have to make in education and in encountering others. The work asks for the right way of acting: What supports growth?

Photo 4. The Growing House -installation with texts “Will you water me?” and “Don’t water me!”



Two important conflicts in Seya’s art teacher studies influenced her thinking. First, a conflict with her way of thinking and her professor’s ideas: a professor was convinced about the Discipline-Based Art Education method. She tried her best to convince us students about its superiority. But I remember having a lot of empathy for the ideas of Lowenfeld and Read; so I wrote essays defending them even though I knew that would lead to a bad grade. Second, Seya discovered many conflicts among the university teachers. She listened to lectures given by a man who introduced postmodern ideas: His lectures were interesting, but I also remember feeling conflicted, as a professor sat there in the room with her body radiating with a critical attitude.

When Seya decided later in life to continue her path to become a doctor in the arts, she faced



some problems. First, it took her many years to write her dissertation, partly because she had a third child, but also because she started having problems at her workplace: I was almost burned out, and the demands at all levels of my work did not give me time to think. Due to her exhaustion, in 2004 she created an installation (photo 5) and placed it in the main hall of the university.

Photo 5. A Place for Rest -installation. Embroidered “words of a Granny” on the shawl: “Sit and let the haste pass you by.”



Another problem on the researcher’s path occurred when Seya’s ideas were not accepted in her discipline. She wanted to include her installations in her doctoral thesis, but was not supported by her professor:

But to give credibility to the new discipline, the sitting professor demanded works in art education to be done in the old scientific manner, not in any “artistic” way. So when the professor had passed away, I finally defended my dissertation “Exposed Lives” in 2005 (see Ulkuniemi, 2005; Ulkuniemi, 2007a).

When Seya was teaching prospective teachers for grades 1-6, she felt she had found her place: I was happy and almost confident being a “missionaire” of how to educate prospective classroom teachers in art. The great misfortune Seya then faced was a conflict with a colleague. Lack of trust made Seya’s work difficult and caused her mental problems: I had a colleague who for some reason resisted communicating with me. The colleague clearly wanted to avoid me by all means, was often absent, and had several substitutes. This made my life a mental hell. I had found my calling, my mission, my place in life, but was not capable of fulfilling it because of the inflamed relationship with my colleague. When things were at their worst, I became depressed. Only with the help of therapy and medicine was it possible for me to continue working.

Seya had always felt her feet belong deep in the flowing Kemijoki-river, so she found walking



along the river her rescue. Her experience made her create an empowering installation in 2006 (photo 6). The visitor was offered a seat in an old wooden boat while listening to river sounds and looking at riverside photos.

Photo 6. FLOW! For the castaways -installation.



The bad work situation strongly influenced Seya's belief system: I had to abandon my belief that I had found my destination; otherwise, I could not stand the consequences of the situation. I was forced to quit teaching my most successful courses, basic courses in art, and was given more advanced courses without having personal responsibility for them. In this process, Seya lost her belief in justice. She wrote she had to become humble, ready to take what was given. She also felt such an outsider. As she was not accepted by the leading social group at her workplace, she needed to make a statement. Thus, in 2008 a photo-triptych was born (photo 7).

Photo 7. A/The Black Sheep -photograph-triptych. Original texts handwritten in Finnish on both sides of the work.

<p>10th April 1977</p> <p>My Dear Diary, grandma came from church today with tears in her eyes, 'cause no one had said hello to her. 'Cause she did not have the "right faith."</p>		<p>8th April 2007</p> <p>Today I went to communion. The priest declared the sins of the <i>one on my right forgiven;</i> <i>As well as those of the one on my left. But not mine.</i></p>
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After Seya returned from a one-year professorship in the faculty of arts to the faculty of education, she felt her life was pretty surreal. She had studied and worked a lot but lost the job she loved. Due to her nightmares, Seya constructed an installation in 2009 (photo 8). She played with the photos by putting them in old frames and giving them names with the associative method.

Photo 8. From the Hiding Space for the Consciousness: There Is Something behind Everything.



On her art/photographer path, Seya also had problems. She failed the first tests in digital photography. She then found out the course aim was to make professional photographers. She also learned how it feels to fail. This was new to her: I had always been successful at school and in my achievements. Now I learned how it is not to know, not to have “know-how.” But I also found my resilience. I will try again. Study more. And try again.

The top workers found conflicts in the workplace to be their major obstacles (Uusiautti, 2008, pp. 194–195). This was revealed by Seya’s story, too, as the main misfortune she described had to do with a non-working relationship in the workplace and its consequences. Another



type of failure familiar to top workers was her failure in the photography test. She confronted it similarly, “with an optimistic attitude” (Uusiautti & Määttä, 2011, p. 73), not giving up.

Reappraisals and crossroads – pondering choices one has made

In Uusiautti’s (2008, pp. 196–200) study, “Reappraisals and crossroads” in top workers’ lives had affected the workers’ choices and especially made them ponder their choices. Seya also examined her values. They seem to affect her work whatever she does.

Seya started by describing her roots and how important her childhood surroundings been to her course of life in general and her thinking in particular. Soon after finishing her studies to become a teacher for grades 1-6, she moved back to Lapland: I was born in Lapland in a tiny village close to which I also lived my adolescent life. My life has always been filled with trips to the wood... I returned to my roots valuing the character of the area. Seya stresses the impact of the place she grew up on her teaching: experiencing quietness and untouched nature are an essential part of my art education. Every year I take my students to the woods in the name of environmental art education. Seya’s art has also been influenced by her concern about the environment: I think there is a need to make people aware of their surroundings so I made an installation called “Rubbish!” (1998). I picked up and photographed all the rubbish I found on my daily jogging path and put it on display in the library gallery of my village.

There was a crossroads in Seya’s life when her mother died when Seya was 20. Seya describes the meaning for her: Mum left me not only a sense of loss but also a sense of being unconditionally loved... I also learned to value every single moment in my life. Maybe because of her mother’s influence, Seya has a strong desire to be in harmony with all people, if possible without rejecting her own values.

Seya mentions situations when she noticed she had changed her old way of thinking. For example, studies on the sociology of art gave her a new perspective: I became more critical; I stopped believing in the myth of genius; and I had problems receiving art in museums without thinking of the circumstances of their making. Due to her art history studies, Seya had felt she had no personal opinions about art left or right to those [!]: I thought I should understand, accept, and maybe even like all I would encounter. Finally, she states she has gradually found a more personally open way to look at art.

When Seya was teaching at the university level, she had problems adjusting to the idea of giving lectures. She had learned in her childhood Dewey’s idea of learning by doing counts, and she believes in hands-on methods. She criticizes the traditional way of giving lectures and recommends problem-based experiential teaching. She also ponders about if her preference for poetry over research literature is suitable for a university lecturer: I have always liked open texts that do not explain too much. Texts with several interpretations. I am waiting for the time Elliott Eisner once predicted: when a dissertation could be written in the form of a poem.

As a university teacher, Seya also struggles with the university’s approach to knowledge. She often felt there was something, the heart, missing in the search for knowledge. She dealt with this theme in her installation “Y2K – a Millennium Manifest” (1999–2000): One theme was to challenge the superiority of information and info technology. But it was even more about the concepts of knowledge and wisdom. The work consists of a book with handwritten words from the Bible (1. Cor. 13:2) talking about wisdom: “but I have/no love,/I/am/nothing.” Opposite, on the computer screen, are words “I have been given all the knowledge.”



Seya is open to the idea that she will not teach forever. She mentions the healing effect of an installation with religious singing and finds music is one of her top interests if she needs to reconsider her profession: I think I might start studying to become a voice/sound therapist, if I did not continue working as an art educator. She ends with words that reveal she currently has no intention of quitting her process of becoming an art educator-artist-researcher: But at the moment, it seems, I still do [work as art educator]. I continue my search to fulfill the words of Finnish poet Tommy Tabermann who recently passed away. He gave a general aim for a person's life: "To become firm; to stay soft." I will continue my becoming.

Conclusions – looking back

This study showed teachers could use Uusiautti's (2008) model as a tool in their identity-work. Reflecting Seya's professional path using Uusiautti's categorization presented facts about Seya's identity. Her teacher-identity is very strong, but the researcher-identity much weaker. Her artist-identity has grown a lot, surprisingly partly due to obstacles. The significance of making art for her well-being was obvious.

Seya had a lot in common with the top workers, especially when it comes to dealing with misfortunes. Maybe this partly explains why she has continued teaching at the university despite disappointments.

What can be criticized is that when using autobiographical text it is not possible to guarantee people anonymity. One also needs to consider that the original text was written for a certain purpose. This reminds us of its narrative character: it was a subjective story, told from the perspective of the author who believed she was born to be something—maybe a teacher?

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