

START

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THE MAGAZINE FOR PRIMARY AND PRE-SCHOOL TEACHERS



TEXTILES ISSUE

Indian inspiration

Indian puppet-making and
Bollywood film-making!

Silk painting

Textile artists Lizzie Weir
and Naomi Renolf

Magic Fish textiles

Plus

Poster – Accessories

Foundling Museum

Art therapy in primary schools

NSEAD **START** Summer School

Olly & Suzi

nsead

Summer School for Primary Teachers of Art, Craft and Design 17–19 July 2009

START subscribers get a discount!

Discounted rates:
Residential £260 (£300)
Non – Residential £200 (£240)
Book now to reserve your place

The two day Summer School is a wonderful opportunity to revisit or learn new practical skills, and explore developments in art, craft and design education that will have a measurable impact in the classroom.

The content of the weekend will be hands-on, creative and enjoyable in a supportive environment. By the end of the weekend you will have lots of ideas and resources, and have had time to reflect on your own classroom practice. Workshops will be facilitated by primary arts specialists, and professional artists and craftspeople all highly experienced within the primary classroom.

A selection of skills based workshops will include costume and adornment, sculpture and painting and new media, and delegates will also have the opportunity to consider thinking and researching skills for children, starting points for arts and cross curricular projects, use of sketchbooks, risk taking and the open ended brief.

For more information or to book please contact Anne Ingall. Tel: 01249 714825
Email: anneingall@nsead.org



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Number 31, 2009

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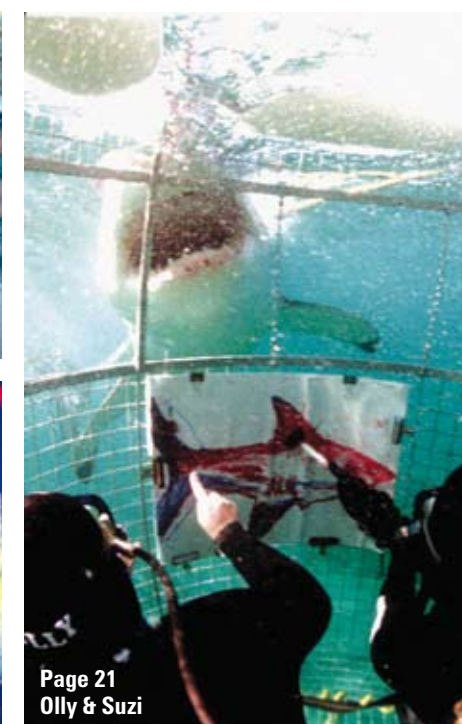
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Hands-on in the classroom

Cover image: Indian puppet-making

Please note: While every effort is made to check websites mentioned in **START**, some may contain images unsuitable for young children. Please check any references prior to use in the classroom. Please note that the username to access units of work on the NSEAD website has changed to 'gormley' and the password to 'drury'. See page 33 for further details.

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START THE MAGAZINE FOR PRIMARY AND PRE-SCHOOL TEACHERS OF ART, CRAFT AND DESIGN

START News

INSPIRING LEARNING EDUCATION EVENING

**Turner Contemporary Project Space,
Margate**
Monday 27 April, 5–7pm

Teachers, youth workers, community group leaders, lecturers, tutors and artists interested in education are invited to explore the exhibition *Sound of Music* with their peers, try out resources and develop ideas for related projects. It will be led by Audience Development Officer Karen Eslea and Helen Caddick, a composer who has written for theatre, film and a number of bands, including Shack and My Life Story. Helen currently teaches music at Goldsmiths College, University of London, and works with a number of primary schools in Kent. Booking is essential. Please call 01843 280261 or email info@turnercontemporary.org.

MOSAIC COMPETITION

The first MEGA MOSAIC-MAKERS competition, searching for the most exciting primary school mosaic work in the UK, was held in 2008. Entries for this year's competition will be welcomed in the autumn and entry forms will be available on the BAMM (British Association of Modern Mosaic) website from October 2009. Any primary school in the UK can enter; each mosaic can only be entered once. The competition is sponsored by Topps Tiles. To read more about the competition or to download an entry form, visit www.bamm.org.uk.

FREE ANIMALS ASIA EDUCATION RESOURCE PACK

Do your pupils love animals? Would you appreciate a lesson plan on global animal welfare issues already sorted? Would your school like to set up links with Chinese schools? If the answer to any of these questions is Yes, then the brand new



Animals Asia Education Initiative is for you. And it's FREE!

Throughout Asia, many animals are exploited, abused and neglected. The Animals Asia Foundation, founded by Jill Robinson MBE in 1998, is dedicated to ending cruelty and restoring respect for all animals across the region. The organisation has just launched an education initiative with UK schools to offer a close, ongoing relationship designed to provide pupils with a unique insight into animal welfare issues in Asia. The focus is on Animals Asia's main project, the Moon Bear Rescue, which aims to rescue suffering and endangered Asiatic black bears (nicknamed 'moon bears' because of the crescent of golden fur across their chests) and place them in sanctuaries.

The Animals Asia education pack is aimed at children between the ages of 8 and 13. In full colour, it contains information, quizzes, fact sheets, a PowerPoint presentation and details about links that can be set up with Chinese schools. There are art, writing or music competitions, and speakers are available to visit schools and give illustrated, fun presentations to pupils.



Schools can also undertake fundraising projects to support this vital work or befriend a bear!

For further information or to obtain a free pack, please contact Nicky Vyvyan-Robinson on 07778 313250 or at nvyvyanrobinson@animalsasia.org.

THE MUSCULAR DYSTROPHY CAMPAIGN YOUNG PAVEMENT ARTIST'S COMPETITION

This is the first major art-based initiative to explore the relationship between using the pavement as a canvas and chalk as the medium. This year, the environmental and conservation theme is Endangered Species.

Natural history and wildlife presenter Steve Backshall, who is among the celebrities backing the event, said:

'Pavement paintings that wash away with the rain are the perfect way to represent the endangered species of the world. The survival of some of the world's most charismatic creatures is just as fragile as these images.'

Open to anyone up to and including the age of 19, the competition will have winners in each of five age categories, with one overall winner taking the prestigious title of Young Pavement Artist of the Year. The age groups are 4–5; 5–6; 7–11; 11–14 and 14–19 years.

The national winner will win the chance to discover and to see grey whale migration along the Canadian coast, courtesy of Earthwatch. Their chalk drawing will be

exclusively produced as a poster and distributed with National Geographic Kids Magazine.

For full competition details, visit www.muscular-dystrophy.org/pavementart.

CHILDREN'S ART DAY 9 JULY 2009

**Register now to take part in
Children's Art Day 2009**

Children's Art Day is a national programme encouraging children, young people, families and teachers to engage with visual art. It takes place during Shine week – a national festival celebrating talent in all young people – which on Thursday 9 July will focus on the visual arts.



All visual arts venues, schools and youth and community organisations are invited to take part. The first 150 venues registering events will receive a grant of £50 as seed funding for an event, which can be claimed after the event, on submission of a brief report. All participating venues will receive balloons and stickers with Children's Art Day branding, and will be offered support to attract media coverage for their events. For further information, please contact Laura Cherry at laura.cherry@engage.org, or on 020 7729 5858. To sign up to join Shine 2009 and start adding your work to the virtual 'wall of talent', please visit www.shineweek.co.uk. To register for Children's Art Day, go to www.engage.org.



From the Editor

I recently met a student I had taught in a Year 5 class, now doing her art GCSE. How exciting it was to see where she was going and how she had developed, and to hear that she had won a coveted art scholarship for sixth form! She asked how I knew that at age 10, she had a talent. At that time, she had little self-confidence and was very shy, but that was not what I was seeing before me now! With the school year fast approaching its climax, this may be a good time to stop and reflect on the impact you have had this academic year: you will no doubt have inspired many young artists in your school.

In this issue of **START**, our inspiration comes from textiles. A question that I am often asked about textiles is – is it design technology or is it art? I would argue that it is very cross-curricular in its nature, so you could say both and more besides. In this issue we look at a wide range of techniques that can be explored in the primary classroom, including decorative Indian textiles, silk painting and abstract collage.

Also in this issue: I was very lucky to have the opportunity to interview the artist duo Olly & Suzi and to share some of their ideas for collaborative art in the classroom, while members of the Readers' panel have been busy reviewing a wide range of books and materials.

FREE JANOME MYSTYLE 22 SEWING MACHINE WORTH £239...

...plus 200 universal needles worth £29.98 (100 x size 70, 100 x size 90), and 50 reels of guterman 1000m thread in assorted colours worth £97.45. This sewing machine is perfect for use in secondary or primary schools for textiles. It's hard-wearing, easy to service, robust and fit for purpose in an educational environment.

All you have to do is join or re-join the Readers' panel and email the editor

We are very grateful to Heart Educational Supplies for providing exciting and inspiring textile materials and some of the books for review. If you would like to be involved in reviewing books or materials for future issues, please do get in touch by email.

Looking ahead: the **START** summer school 2008 has been inspirational to many of our readers, and on page 29 you can read all about out why you should think about signing up this year.

Things are going to change – well so they tell us. The Primary Review is reporting back as we speak; we will try to cover the issues in art and design education in future editions of **START**. In the meantime, if you want to share your thoughts on this topic, please do get in touch.

The next issue has a '**sculpture**' focus, while future themes include 'design', 'history', 'maths' and 'printmaking'. Please get in touch if you would like to share a project, a resource or an idea.

Michèle Kitto
Editor

Michèle

michelekitto@nsead.org

explaining why your school should win this sewing machine package, by 25 May.

Kindly donated by Heart Educational Supplies as they launch their new 200-page catalogue.

www.heart-educational.co.uk



Gallery round-up

ORIEL MYRDDIN GALLERY, CARMARTHEN, WALES

Crafted: contemporary craft

4 April–16 May 2009

This exhibition, celebrating the materials and processes involved in the making of extraordinary objects, will encourage contemplation of creative originality, and a sense of wonder at the processes of making. Whether through technology, inventiveness, virtuosity, the rhythms and repetitions of making, or the time taken to make, the nature of these objects will engage and fascinate. In *Crafted*, the use of ordinary materials, which can be confounding and transformative, alerts us to the potential of the 'everyday' material. The selected exhibitors use a diversity of materials and processes, but each is singularly preoccupied with just one, a 'specialist' in a given material and method.

Many of those involved in the show consider themselves to be craft practitioners; others are 'artists'. *Crafted* intends to blur the boundaries between these two fields – fields that historically have been entrenched in their differences. Here is a common preoccupation with the physical and the material, and in how it can be turned into something enchanting and captivating. It is this that unifies the whole: the making of something, the 'craftedness', as a way of holding our attention, and stimulating our thoughts so that they journey on from the making, and encourage us to delight and ponder at the ability and the imagination of an extraordinary collection of creative minds. www.orielmyrddingallery.co.uk



SAATCHI GALLERY, LONDON

Unveiled: New Art from the Middle East

30 January–9 May 2009

In October 2008, the Saatchi Gallery re-opened in the 70,000 sq. ft. Duke of York's HQ building on King's Road in the heart of London. Offering free admission to all shows, the gallery aims to bring contemporary art to the widest possible audience.

Unveiled: New Art from the Middle East, presents the work of 19 of the region's most exciting artists. Dedicated to the flourishing contemporary Arabic art scene, the exhibition offers a cutting-edge survey of recent painting, sculpture and installation. Despite a long-standing visual tradition going back several centuries and a fiercely independent creative mindset, new artists from the Middle East have been largely overlooked internationally because of the widespread political conflict that dominates the region. However, in recent years the contemporary art scene in Cairo, Tehran, Beirut, Jordan and Dubai has become more vibrant and active than ever before, and artists from the region are shattering tidy preconceptions to present an extraordinarily diverse range of artistic expression. In about five years, it is predicted, Abu Dhabi will be the home of one of the densest concentrations of cultural resources in the world. *Unveiled* introduces some of the most gifted artists from the Middle East, showing their work in the UK for the first time. Admission free www.saatchi-gallery.co.uk



TATE LIVERPOOL

Colour Chart: Reinventing Colour, 1950 to Today

29 May–13 September 2009

At a time of unprecedented interest in the role of colour in graphic design, fashion and interior design, Tate Liverpool will be presenting *Colour Chart: Reinventing Colour, 1950 to Today*. The exhibition looks at the moment in 20th-century art, when a group of artists began to perceive colour as 'readymade' rather than as scientific or expressive.

This rich and vibrant exhibition is the first major exhibition devoted to the significance of colour in contemporary art and will include works by more than 40 artists, including Ellsworth Kelly, Andy Warhol, Gerhard Richter, Frank Stella, Yves Klein, Richard Serra, John Baldessari, Dan Flavin, Damien Hirst, David Batchelor, Jim Lambie, Angela Bulloch and Cory Archangel.

The exhibition has been created by the Museum of Modern Art, New York, in collaboration with Tate Liverpool.

www.tate.org.uk/liverpool/



TATE BRITAIN

BP British Art Displays: Turner/Rothko

Monday 23 March–Sunday 26 July 2009

In March 2009, Tate Britain will bring together two of the world's most iconic and influential painters, JMW Turner (1775–1851) and Mark Rothko (1903–1970) in a unique exhibition of works from the Tate Collection.

The links between these two artists are well documented. After visiting an exhibition of Turner's works at the Museum of Modern Art in New York in 1966, Rothko reportedly commented that, 'This man Turner, he learnt a lot from me'. A few years later, Tate's renowned Turner Bequest was a major influence on Rothko's decision to donate nine of his *Seagram* murals to the Collection.

Six works from Rothko's *Seagram* series will be on show, as will a selection of other works by the artist. These will be accompanied by a series of rooms that focus on correlating aspects of Turner's work, such as the expansive late seascapes in which Turner's images are reduced to their bare essentials, and the unusual group of darkened interior scenes he painted in the early 1830s.

Admission free
www.tate.org.uk



THE DRAWINGS GALLERY, WINDSOR CASTLE

Henry VIII: A 500th Anniversary Exhibition

8 April 2009–18 April 2010

This April, Windsor Castle will mark the 500th anniversary of Henry VIII's accession to the throne with a special exhibition. The exhibition will bring together items from the Royal Collection and the St George's Chapel Archives, including works by the King's painter, Hans Holbein the Younger; the only known portrait of Henry's illegitimate son, Henry Fitzroy; the earliest surviving view of the Opening of Parliament; and the Black Book, a magnificent register of the Order of the Garter, which includes scenes depicting Henry VIII with the Garter knights.

Windsor Castle was one of a number of the King's residences, between which the court moved during the year, and is the only one of his residences still in use by the Royal Family today. St George's Chapel at Windsor is the burial place of both the King and his third and favourite wife, Jane Seymour.

www.royalcollection.org.uk



Kader Attia, *Ghost*, 2007, Aluminium foil, Dimensions variable, Courtesy of the Saatchi Gallery, London © Kader Attia, 2008

Ellsworth Kelly, *Spectrum Colors Arranged by Chance II*, 1951, Cut-and-pasted colour-coated paper and pencil on four sheets of paper, 38 1/4 x 38 1/4" (97.2 x 97.2 cm), The Museum of Modern Art, New York. Purchased with funds given by Jo Carole and Ronald S. Lauder © Ellsworth Kelly, Digital Image © 2009 The Museum of Modern Art/Scala, Florence.

JMW Turner, *A Pink Sky above a Grey Sea*, circa 1822, Gouache and watercolour on paper, Support: 188 x 227 mm © Tate. On display at Tate Britain as part of the BP British Art Displays

Mark Rothko, *Red on Maroon* 1959, Mixed media on canvas, Support: 2667 x 2388 x 35 mm, Tate © 1998 by Kate Rothko Prizel and Christopher Rothko. On display at Tate Britain as part of the BP British Art Displays

Anonymous, *After Hans Holbein the Younger, Henry VIII*, c.1580, Royal Collection © 2009, Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth

Indian inspiration

Naomi Renouf, textile artist and art and design coordinator at St Lawrence Primary School in Jersey, shows how Indian textiles can inspire textile and mixed-media art projects for Key Stage 2.

India is a topic studied annually in Year 5 at St Lawrence School and art always has a high profile. This has led to a variety of related art projects, most of which involve textiles in some way, being developed over a number of years.

Background: Gujarati patchwork wall-hangings

Gujarati wall-hangings are colourful and highly decorative. They are made of sections of clothing that has been worn for special events such as weddings, religious ceremonies and festivals. These may be family heirlooms, passed down from generation to generation until they are eventually replaced by newer garments. Sections of these garment are then 'recycled' to make patches in beautiful wall

hangings. These wall hangings can be used in school as a stimulus for children to produce their own interesting textured work using a variety of media.

Mixed-media textured pictures

Learning objectives

- to consider pattern, colour and composition in decorative Indian textiles
- to create pattern and texture using a variety of media



Preparation

Show the children a suitable hanging. These are widely available in markets and shops in the UK and on the internet. Look carefully at the construction and the layout, and at the patterns made by the embroidery, beads, sequins and mirrors. The children can draw some of these patterns in their sketchbooks in preparation for working on their finished pieces.

Painting the paper

Give the children pre-cut paper and ask them to divide it up in a similar way to the wall hanging, using a pencil. Once they have done this they can paint each area with acrylic paint. Let them choose and mix their colours, and encourage variety – they don't need to be the same as the hanging. Once the paper is completely covered, leave it to dry.

Decorating the surface

Pattern and texture can be created in a number of ways, but it is a good idea to outline the painted patches of colour first. This can be done with 3D paint or paint mixed with PVA glue in a plastic bottle with a nozzle (it gives a thicker line than 3D paint but is much cheaper). It can also be done with string or similar thread, or even with a line of glue with coloured sand sprinkled on it. Patterns can then be built up within the coloured areas in the same way. Pipe cleaners can be twisted into suitable shapes and stuck on (don't use the brightly coloured chenille ones as they are very difficult to stick on). They can be

painted with metallic paint afterwards. Beads, sequins, buttons, pieces of lace, textiles and threads can all be used to build up the surface and create something richly patterned and interesting.

Resources

cartridge paper (calico could also be used), acrylic paint, PVA glue, 3D fabric paint, string, sand, textiles, pipe-cleaners, metallic paints, plastic applicator bottles, e.g. washed out hair-dye bottles (for thicker lines), beads, buttons, sequins and other suitable bits and pieces

Bead and sequin work

For this next activity, you can use a Gujarati hanging, embroidered sari fabric or other examples of Indian textiles. Other shapes could be used, but the motif that we now call paisley is particularly suitable. This shape was originally a representation of the teardropped-shaped leaf of the Chenar tree and was found on Kashmiri shawls.

Learning objectives

- to look at pattern and shape
- to stitch objects on to a surface
- to look at typical patterning in Indian textiles
- to create an individual interpretation of part of a pattern

What to do

Show the children examples of Indian textiles with suitable patterns and beadwork. Get each child to draw a simple outline shape on their piece of fabric. A

length of thick decorative thread can then be couched in place on top of this outline shape by stitching over the top of the thread at intervals along its length. Beads and sequins can then be arranged and stitched around it. To keep sequins in place, stitch up through the fabric and sequin, then stitch through a small bead and back through the sequin and fabric.

If you don't want to sew, you can do the same activity using 3D fabric paints. While the paint is still wet, you can place beads and sequins in the paint and they will remain in place when it dries, or they can be attached afterwards using PVA glue.

Resources

Small pieces of coloured cotton, thread, needles, needle-threaders, beads, sequins, thick decorative threads

Block-printed fabrics

The art of making Indian block-print textiles has survived from ancient times to the present. The three main tools used in this process are the wooden blocks, the fabric and the dye. It takes carvers days to create an intricate design in a block of teak for use as a printing block, but blocks are available to buy and are great for using in school. If you want to create your own, lino-cutting is a good alternative.

Some good examples of Indian block-printed fabric can be seen at www.gamthi.com.



Learning intentions

- to consider pattern, colour and design in Indian block-printed fabrics
- to create repeat patterns

What to do

If you are going to print with a wooden printing block, put a layer of absorbent cloth into a flat-bottomed container and pour paint or ink over it so that it soaks into the cloth (if using cold wax, paint this on to the block with a brush). Dip the printing block into the paint-saturated cloth before pushing the block down on to the fabric or paper that you want to print on. Repeat



until all of the printing to be done with that block is finished. Leave the work to dry, then print with other blocks or colours.

If you are going to print with lino, roll printing ink thinly on to an inking tray, then roll the ink on to the cut lino. Normally, when printing from a lino cut, you put the surface to be printed on top of the lino, but this won't work with a repeat pattern. Instead, you need to push the lino down firmly on to the surface to be printed. As you will not need to use large pieces of lino, this method will produce clear prints.

Resources

Cotton fabric, paper or card, printing ink, acrylic or fabric paint – you can use indigo, turmeric or henna if you want to make authentic Indian colours, cold wax (if you want to make resist patterns), thick absorbent cloth, printing blocks or lino cuts, inking trays or flat-bottomed containers (rectangular ice-cream tubs work well), rollers and inking-up surface (if using lino).

Reviewing the work

Whichever project you have been working on, it is always useful to spend some time reviewing what the children have done. Encourage them to discuss their work. How did they feel about doing the work? What do they like best about it? Which patterns/colours have worked well? What did they enjoy? What did they find difficult? What would they change?



Other ideas

Batik pictures

Batik is used to decorate fabrics in India and is a good way to illustrate Indian stories. Wax-resist block-printing is a good way to create a border. The batiks can be mounted and displayed as pictures.

Hangings

Small batik pictures can be joined in sequence to create a large hanging that tells a story, or a larger batik picture can be used as the centrepiece of a hanging, with other techniques used to create a border.

Other products

It is quite simple to make small batik pictures or block-printed fabric into products such as bags or cushion covers.

Embossed designs

An embossed design can be created by placing a thin layer of Angelina fibre over a wooden Indian printing block. If you place baking parchment over this and iron it with a dry iron, the fibres fuse together and the design on the printing block is embossed into the surface. The excess fibre can be trimmed with scissors. These designs could be used in a variety of ways. For example, they could be put on textile hangings, collages, cards and topic book covers, glued or stitched in place and embellished with 3D fabric paint, beads and sequins.

Indian puppet-making and Bollywood film-making!

Alexandra Hucks, visiting art specialist teacher at The Paragon Junior School, Bath, describes a fun craft project that explores puppet-making and Indian folk stories. The project has an ICT-based outcome, with the children creating Bollywood movies based on the scripts they were inspired to write by the folk stories.

While travelling in Rajasthan in India last year, I was excited by the wealth of colour and traditional arts and crafts of the region. In particular, I visited a traditional Rajasthan puppet-maker's workshop, where each day a performance of old Indian folklore tales would take place using the puppets.

Puppetry is one of the most ancient forms of entertainment in the world. Besides providing entertainment, this visual art form is also used for conveying meaningful messages. Over the years, puppetry has developed into a powerful medium of communication. It offers a real challenge to the imagination and creative ability of the individual, and of all the art media, it is the least restricted in its form, design, colour and movement. It is also the least expensive of all animated art forms.

From my travels, I brought back several puppets and many pieces of the colourful sari fabrics typical of Rajasthan. My intention was to create traditional Indian textile puppets with my after-school craft

club. As an introduction to the project, we looked at several Indian folk stories that are often traditionally used in Rajasthan for puppet performances. Coming out of India's rich heritage of puppetry dating back to the 5th century, traditional puppet shows deal mostly with historical kings, princes, heroes, love stories and political satire. Puppets also perform stories dealing with religious themes and mythological topics.

I was really keen for the children to develop an interest in the cultural traditions of different countries and we focused on how puppets are used to pass on the traditional stories from generation to generation, thereby keeping the culture alive. We discussed stories and character roles and the children considered which character they would like to create and how they could play a particular role in the final performance using the puppets.

I decided to make the puppets over a term, which meant working with the children for an hour each week after school for 12 weeks. I wanted to enhance the children's skills in using a combination of clay and textiles, so I planned to use a variety of





techniques to create the puppets. Work on the project began with the children bringing in old pairs of tights or stockings to stuff with wadding to create the upper body and arms for the puppet. I then demonstrated how to create a ceramic head by making two pinch pots, which were then joined together. The children enjoyed modelling the clay into facial features for their characters using clay tools. A hole was made to allow air to escape during the kiln firing, and a long neck with a hole was added so that the head could be easily sewn into the upper body.



Having looked at the basic shapes of the puppets' clothing, the pupils were then shown simple stitching techniques for sewing the sari fabric into clothes. Several sessions were spent making costumes, which were then embellished using jewels and colourful buttons. I was really pleased with the way the children took on board the use of sewing techniques, and although it wasn't always easy, with patience and practice they became more confident and developed their fine motor skills. Finally, the strings were added and the puppets came to life!

The puppets then inspired a cross-curricular ICT project at the school. Several groups of Year 6 pupils started the project by researching traditional Indian myths and stories on the internet, and then wrote their own interpretations of the stories. The children collaborated on the scripts, editing and improving the texts on screen, and learnt how to lay out scripts using the appropriate conventions. They then performed their plays using the puppets, and these were filmed with a digital



camcorder. Building on skills previously learnt, they used Windows Movie Maker to edit their films and add voice overs, sound effects and soundtracks. The results were extremely entertaining and the children were very proud of their 'Bollywood' movies, which were shown in a whole-school assembly. Animation provided a great link between art, craft and ICT and created a fantastic vehicle for displaying and presenting the puppets and stories.

Resources

Old tights or stockings, wadding or other materials for stuffing, clay and clay tools, powder paint for painting faces, clear varnish, sari fabric (try local fabric shops or markets), needles, pins and thread, jewels and buttons (any crafts catalogue will sell these in bulk)



Silk painting



Sarah Baker, creative arts leader at Longlevens Junior School, Gloucester, shares her ideas on silk painting, which will inspire even the most sceptical primary teacher to undertake it in the classroom.

In my experience, silk painting is a technique contemplated only fleetingly by most primary teachers, before being wholeheartedly rejected. The main reasons for this seem to be that it a) is too expensive, b) requires skill beyond the teacher's or pupils' capability, or c) requires an extensive amount of equipment or preparation. Over the past few years, however, I have discovered that all three of these excuses are tantamount to old wives' tales. In fact, very effective silk painting can be achieved with very little kit, by non-specialist staff, in a relatively short (and mess-free) space of time, leaving all concerned with a tremendous feeling of success!

Resources

It is true – some basic kit is required and it is unlikely to be in school already, unless your school has a past penchant for embroidery. You will need a wooden embroidery hoop for each child. These are relatively inexpensive and can be purchased from the major educational suppliers in large packs. Alternatively, a local secondary school would probably be happy to loan you a set, or even be persuaded to buy one for you if you can find a school with visual arts status,

whereby they are required to support their local primaries in some way. If this is not a feasible route, you may be able to look to a Friends/Parent & Teacher Association for support. They may be willing to help, as the hoops are an investment, and (hopefully!) will be used for many years to come.

In addition to this, you will need a set of silk paints, detail brushes and gutta (the clear glue that prevents the paints from running together – but more of that later). On paper, these may look very expensive, but in fact a minute amount of paint is required, so they are likely to last a very long time – on the fourth year of using mine, I am still on the same set! Of course, you will also need silk. Again, plain white silk or imitation silk can be bought relatively cheaply from educational suppliers, or from one of the large fabric retailers.

Curriculum links

In our school, I have always included silk painting in the Year 4 curriculum. Our Year 3s complete batiks and I feel that from a textiles point of view, silk painting provides the Year 4s with the opportunity to refine and further the skills they gained the previous year.

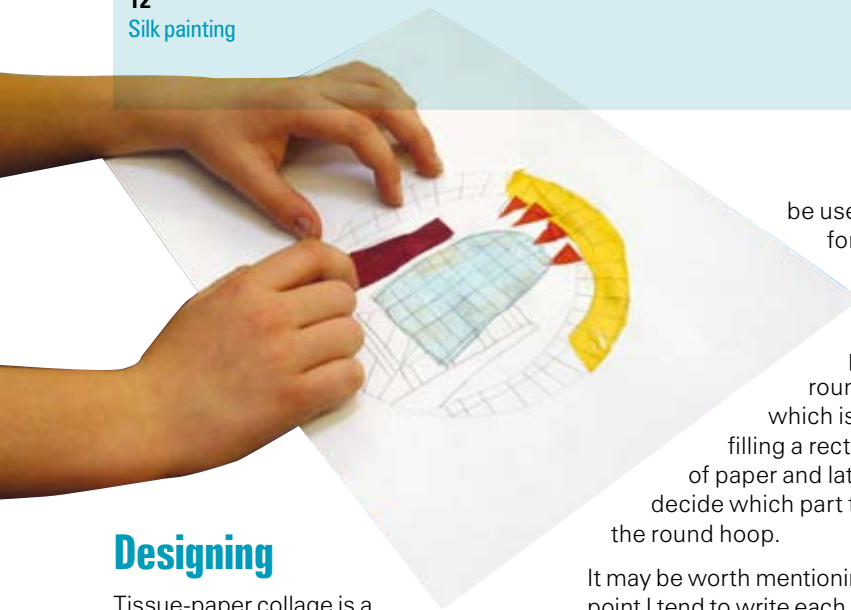
Prior to commencing the silks, the children plan their design using a tissue-paper collage, which enables me to develop another strand of the

National Curriculum with them. I incorporate the silk painting scheme into a local geography topic – in our case, the City of Gloucester. However, silk painting is extremely flexible as a unit of work and could be adapted to fit almost any topic, from 'Signs and symbols' to 'Mountains' to 'the Romans'!

Preparation

Before starting the topic, I cut and stretch the silk on to the embroidery hoops. I cut the silk slightly larger than each hoop. The hoop has two wooden rings, one inside the other. The outer ring has a metal screw that can be loosened, then re-tightened to trap the silk between the two hoops. I then make sure that for each child I have a piece of white paper slightly larger than the hoop. Finally, I ask children to bring in images of Gloucester, in the form of photographs or leaflets, from which I make a selection that I feel would provide useful starting points for designing an image that could be used for silk painting. These are usually clear, uncomplicated pictures of buildings or part of a building synonymous with Gloucester, or a view of the city or the surrounding area, such as the River Severn or the Forest of Dean. If you have access to a colour photocopier at school, these images can be replicated for the whole class.





Designing

Tissue-paper collage is a great way to plan an image for silk painting. This is because it forces children to think in blocks of colour from the outset, rather than getting bogged down in tiny details that they will be later unable to reproduce on the silk.

‘The key to this process is really the simplicity of it.’

Firstly, I ask the children to choose one of the images I have provided as a starting point for their work. I then allocate them a hoop. If I have a range of hoop sizes, I tend to allocate the smaller hoops to the children with the most advanced motor skills, as they are usually able to cope more ably with the level of detail required when working in a small area. They then draw around the outside of their hoop on their paper, creating a plan that can later

be used as a template for the final painting. It will be the correct size and planned ‘in the round’ from the start, which is preferable to filling a rectangular piece of paper and later on having to decide which part to include on the round hoop.

It may be worth mentioning that at this point I tend to write each child’s initials on the piece of silk hanging outside of the hoop – particularly if the hoops are different sizes – as this avoids a ‘pairing hoop with design’ game later on!

The children should fill the whole circle with colour. If they are collaging a building and there is a large sky surrounding it, I encourage them to break it up into sections, maybe of different hues of blue, or perhaps including purples and pinks. This prevents large expanses of one colour, making for a more interesting silk painting later on, when they use their collages for inspiration.

Gutta and beyond

Once the children have completed their designs and the designs are dry, they are ready to commence the process of silk painting. Stage one of this is gutta. As the silk is so delicate, it is impossible to mark it with a pencil or such like, without permanently damaging the fabric. Instead, as white silk is translucent, it is possible to place the embroidery hoop directly on top of the collage and use that as a guide for drawing gutta lines.

Gutta can be purchased in colour, although in school I have always stuck to clear. It comes in bottles with small funnelled tops, which work in a similar way to icing bags. Its consistency can be likened to that of clear glue. The purpose of gutta is to divide the areas of colour within a silk painting. It acts as a barrier,

preventing the silk paint, which spreads very readily, from spreading too far. Consequently, when the gutta is applied to the silk, it is very important to make sure there are no breaks in lines and that lines are taken right to the edge of the hoop if that is the artist’s intention.

When the gutta dries, it will be clear and leave a stiffened surface. The paint can be applied at this point. I tend to control the amount of paint given to avoid wastage – half a teaspoon is plenty! Silk paint does not require mixing with water and produces a subtle effect. If you wish to have a darker tone, further layers can be applied. For a mottled effect, rock salt can be sprinkled on top of wet paint and removed once it has dried. It is also possible to embellish the designs further, once the paint has dried. Children can do this by choosing one shape they would like to make stand out and sewing round it with a contrast running stitch, adding some small beads or sequins if they wish.

Professional pride

Over the years, I have displayed finished silk paintings around the school, and every year they attract piles of praise from pupils, parents and visitors alike. The children who created them swell with unmistakeable pride. They are always able to explain the process they undertook to achieve the finished article, which often, if not always, appears to have been created by a much older child. The key to this process is really the simplicity of it – once you know what to do! If you are looking to increase your textiles in school, try it. You won’t regret it!



Constructed textiles collage

Lizzie Weir, textiles artist and teacher, shares her ideas on both her own and her pupils’ work, with particular reference to starting points and initial sketches, and the many possible exciting outcomes of a mixed-media project.

My work

I have long been interested in collecting. As an avid beachcomber, I have spent many a happy hour scouring the rock pools and strand line looking for interesting shells and other ephemera to use as inspiration in my own textiles work. This scouring is not confined to beaches; throughout the years, I have built up an extensive collection of ‘materials’, including traditional textiles media such as fabrics, (vintage and modern), beads, buttons, buckles, vintage clothing and accessories. The less traditional materials in my collection include retro sewing patterns, broken jewellery, broken ceramics and period graphics (adverts from old colour supplements and packaging from sewing-related items). I began my collection as a child, simply for the joy of collecting, but now all of these items have become useful materials in my work.



It is hard to categorise the work that I produce, as it is not traditional machine or hand embroidery, nor is it appliqué. I suppose the best title for it would be ‘constructed textiles collage’. I utilise a number of traditional skills, such as appliqué and embroidery, but am keen to knit these traditional skills with alternative

materials such as sewing with thin metals, gold leaf and old graphics. I am also very interested in changing the surface of fabric by applying varnish to the finished piece, so that it looks as though it has been captured in resin.



This piece was produced on a stretched and primed canvas, which I removed from the canvas to frame when I had finished. I used a primed, stretched canvas as I was painting on the surface before embellishment, thus requiring a taut surface. I find that a taut surface is great for sewing on, as it acts much like an embroidery hoop.

I began this work by painting the canvas in background colours found inside the claw of the velvet swimming crab on which I have based the piece. I then began building up the detail with embroidery and collage techniques. I am not interested in recreating the crab claw exactly; I am far more excited by capturing the essence and elements of the object. In this piece I was particularly interested in the surface detail of the claw – all the lumps and bumps and knobby bits! I was also keen to capture the colours found within the claw – the subtle reds, oranges, browns and golds. I have used a number of different fabrics, such as velvet, lace, organza and linen. I have also used buttons, threads, beads and sequins to build up the surface detail and create the patterns found within the crab claw’s surface.



This piece was created in response to the colours and textures found on the surface of an oyster shell. I constructed it using a variety of different media, including paint, threads, paper, fabric and varnish. I have also used beads, threads, studs, hooks and eyes, broken jewellery, razor blade cases, shells and dressmaking patterns, as well as items found washed up on the beach.

I begin all of my work with some preparatory sketches. They are working drawings, ways of thinking through colour schemes and understanding the subject matter I am studying. These drawings are not referential; they are gestural, focussing on capturing the essence of the object.



This is a detail of a preparatory sketch of a mother of pearl shell taken from my sketch book. I have used a variety of different media, including metallic paint, watercolours, buttons, beads, sewing patterns and retro graphics.

I have always considered my sewing machine to be a drawing tool. I can achieve the thinnest, subtlest, most fluid lines with it, and can reiterate and retrace the same line again and again, creating a thick, bold statement. I do not use a complex sewing machine; for over 10 years, I have had the same Bernina Sport, which my parents bought me second-hand when I started university.

Framing work is all important as it finishes the piece. I consider the frame an enhancement of the picture, so it should be subtle and not obtrusive, and should work with the picture. I use the same frame for all my work. It needs to be a deep frame, as I use buttons and similar items.



In this piece, which is in the beginning stages, I use different fabrics and threads to build up the layers of colour. I have taken inspiration from an evening primrose, and am interested in the colours and the delicacy of the flower. To achieve this delicacy, I have used a combination of different fabrics, including taffeta, lace, silk, organza, Angelina and vintage printed fabrics. I have then sewn over the top of the fabrics to bring out the subtleties of colour and pattern found within the flower.



Here is the *Evening Primrose* piece completed; I have left the edges of the piece frayed and uneven. I choose to leave the edges of my work frayed and un-hemmed because I like the relationship between the sharp edges of the frame and the soft, uneven lines of the edges of the picture.

Students' work

As with all projects, I introduce any textiles project by asking the students to produce a series of preparatory sketches from primary observation. I consider this essential, as it gives the students an understanding of the objects they are studying.

The series of works shown below are all primary observational mixed-media drawings; they are great starting points for a number of textiles pieces and could go in a number of directions.



There is such a variety of surface texture within this piece: the use of the red paint, which has a fluid, almost blood-like quality against the mosaic tiles, and the soft charcoal lines all combine to make an interesting and original work. The exciting element to an initial mixed-media study such as the one above is the potential that the work possess to branch off into so many different possible outcomes: it could become a screen print, a batik, an embroidery, a constructed textiles piece, a repeat-pattern fabric design, to name a few. The possibilities are almost unlimited.



This mixed-media piece is based on the leaf of a horse chestnut tree. The student was interested in the colours found within the leaf and the vein structure. A variety of media have been used to create the piece, including string and wool to make the veins of the leaves, and paint, fabric and gold leaf to create the background colour of the leaf.



This drawing is such an exciting and free approach to drawing: the use of fluid, smooth lines versus the scratchy, thin lines is fantastic. This is a great drawing to use as a starting point for a textiles project, as there are so many possibilities, including printing, embroidery, felt and batik.



This banana is one of the many outcomes of an initial sketch similar to those shown above. In an imaginative approach to textiles, the student has sewn together the two parts of the banana, which are made out of card and heavily worked with a variety of media, including paint, chalk, oil pastel, gold leaf and buttons.

These studies all possess potential and provide exiting starting points for textiles projects. It might be that the student chooses an element of the work to focus on, such as the colour, or a particular area found within the work. It might be that the student is excited by the texture of the object and simply wants to investigate that. However they choose to go, one thing is certain: the work that they produce will be exciting and challenging, for it is through taking risks and being challenged that great work occurs!

Contextual studies

Below is a list of textiles artists that might be appropriate for students to study. This diverse range of artists have directly influenced my work, and I have discussed their work with my own students.

Zoe Leonard, Claus Oldenburg, Christo, Tracy Emin, Alice Kettle and Eva Hesse

Abstract collage and stripy seascapes

Naomi Renouf, textile artist and art and design coordinator at St Lawrence Primary School in Jersey, uses her own textile work to inspire children to create textile and paint-layered pictures. Examples of her work have been used at this and other schools in Jersey as a starting point for individual and large-scale group work.

In her own textile pieces, Naomi uses acrylic paint and layered textiles to create seascapes and landscapes featuring trees. She also does more abstract work on hand-made paper or calico. She machine-embroiders the surface to secure the layers together and add detail. On some work, she also uses hand-embroidery and beading. These techniques can be adapted for classroom

use, where children of all ages can build up their own layered pictures using a variety of materials.

Learning objectives

- to use collage techniques
- to create a painted background
- to consider colour
- to consider composition
- to create a textured surface
- to use a variety of media

Getting started

All of the work starts with a layer of paint, which provides a background on which to work. Acrylic paint or other paints mixed with PVA glue can be applied to cartridge paper, card, calico or even MDF (but this needs to be painted with undercoat first).



Abstract work

With very young children, the abstract work on hand-made paper can be used as a starting point. Once the children have looked at the work, discussed it and talked about what they are going to do, ask them to collect all of the bits that they think they might want to use before starting, and get them to choose the colours of paint that they want to use.

The paint can then be spooned straight on to the background on which they are going to work. It needs to be brushed so that it covers the surface, making interesting patterns but not mixing it so much that it becomes a brown mess. It also needs to be thick so that it remains sticky long enough for the children to place bits of paper, fabric, threads, beads and sequins in it. When it dries, the paint holds everything in place like glue.

Older children can create interesting collages in a similar way, but as their work is more sophisticated and takes longer, they will need to use PVA glue to attach things once the paint has dried. After the background has been painted, flat materials can be arranged on and stuck to the painted surface, leaving some areas uncovered for the paint to show through. Next, other flat materials can be placed over these so that they overlap at different angles. Areas of paint should be left to show through. Encourage the children to try arranging the materials in different ways before finally deciding how to stick them. Once an interesting surface has been created using flat materials, three-dimensional materials can be added to embellish it.

Layered seascapes

This activity is more suitable for Key Stage 2. Before starting work on layered seascapes, the children will need to have looked at and possibly sketched appropriate seascapes to help them to

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Mini-poster – Abstract collage by Reception children



build up images in their minds that they can use later on. If you are going to work on trees, then sketching is necessary so that the children have an understanding of the structure of a tree.

At this stage, you can introduce the pictures of layered textile seascapes. Discuss how they are made by building up the surface using layers of paint, fabric and stitching. Look at the materials

available in the classroom and discuss how these could be used to build up pictures in a similar way, starting from a simple painted background. Explain that flat materials need to be applied first and three-dimensional materials last.

The children can then create the painted backgrounds that will be the first layer of their work. The surface to be worked on needs to be completely covered with

paint. The colours chosen can be put straight on to it and mixing will happen as the paints are brushed to cover the surface. If the paint is applied thickly, the strips or pieces of fabric for the next layer can be placed straight on to the wet paint. This can create interesting textures where the paint comes through the materials placed on it. PVA glue may be needed if the paint starts to dry. The amount of background paint left uncovered will vary from picture to picture. The work should now be left to dry completely.

At this stage, it is a good idea to review what the children have done and discuss how the work can be taken forward. For example, more fabric or paper can be added to overlap what is already in place and to create features of the seascape. Threads, beads and other three-dimensional materials can be added too.

Resources

Acrylic or ready-mixed paint, a variety of papers, textiles, threads, beads, sequins, any other suitable bits and pieces, PVA glue, scissors, paintbrushes

Other ideas

Textured papers

Papers with a variety of textures can be created using different techniques, for example marbling, spraying, sponging and splattering. These can be prepared in advance and then used cut or torn to create interesting effects in the layered pictures.

Landscapes

Landscape pictures could be built up in exactly the same way as the seascapes.



The Magic Fish

– an Early Years project that inspired work with KS2

Sylvia Arneil, from St Aloysius RC Primary School in Oxford, describes a textiles project that was initially undertaken with Year 1 pupils after reading the story *The Magic Fish*. It led to work in felt, with the school KS2 art club using the same inspiration.

Literacy starting point

It all started with the story of *The Magic Fish*, which I read to the children the other day. The story was met with great excitement and interest, perhaps because it was already known to the majority of them, or maybe because it had all the qualities of a classic tale. Many of the children started wondering what they might wish for if they were lucky enough to catch a magic fish, and perhaps what it might look like. The discussion that followed was full of ideas and descriptive language – it looked as if the fish had already worked some of its magic in the children's imaginations!

The Golden Fish by Paul Klee

Paul Klee, who was a great admirer of children's art, created in this painting a very simply composed but richly detailed underwater world. I showed the children the painting in large scale on an interactive whiteboard, which was very helpful and made the session, with 27 children, much easier to run. The children could easily read the picture, but needed to be helped and guided a little bit to notice and appreciate details like the variety of seaweed, the waves, the air bubbles and the patterns on the fish. Once prompted, they became extremely absorbed in analysing the painting and learned to observe and enquire beyond the obvious.

We then discussed the choice of colours and the contrasts they create. We observed that to make something appear shiny and bright we do not necessarily

need to use gold or silver paint – the contrast between colours can make things appear shiny. The children found this discussion very interesting and inspiring and were ready to create their own artwork.

Oil pastel drawings

I asked the children to draw their own magic fish on a piece of A4 paper. I handed out the reproductions of Klee's painting, explaining that they could be used as a supporting resource. I did not want the children to copy the painting, but to use it as an inspiration and also as a reminder of what a finished picture should look like, as five-year-olds tend to sketch rather than study. Prior to this, we discussed the technical details of using oil pastel: the different mark-making that can be achieved, depending on the position of the pastel, blending to mix colours, and so on.

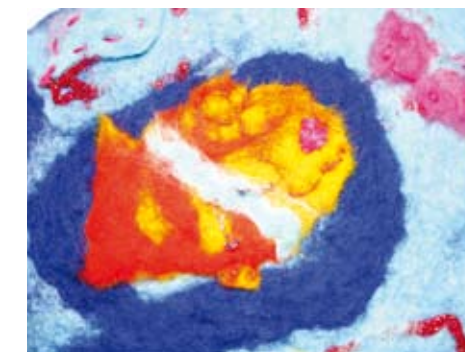
Some children found the drawing pretty challenging, as they got a bit tired of filling 'all this space' with pastel. For this reason,

we completed the drawings over two separate lessons. But the effort was worthwhile and the results were outstanding. Every picture had its own unique flavour: the different shapes of fish, colours and patterns, the water surrounding the fish, and the atmosphere – all were individual.

Painting on fabric

We now entered the final phase of our project: a big textile 'ocean' made out of assembled individual pieces. I was lucky enough to have two fantastic students working with me, which made things run smoothly, and was able to fit it into a two-hour session. I would recommend that you enlist the help of at least one other adult at this stage.

I knew from the beginning that I wanted to create a painted fabric background (representing the water), and attach collage-like fish to it, as I believed this was the best technique for this age group and would work for a large class. I wasn't sure,





however, what kind of paint would produce the best effect on fabric. I experimented with variety of paints – fabric paint, cold dye and poster paint – but none of them seemed to satisfy the needs of my time limit and ordinary classroom environment, with a carpet that couldn't be stained and a lack of suitable storage space for things like dripping cloths.

Finally, I tried block paints, and they were a spot-on choice. They are easy to use, their colours are vibrant, they dry reasonably quickly and they can be used diluted with water or almost dry, which extends their mark-making potential. A double sheet of newspaper put underneath the fabric to absorb the excess water completed the preparation. We used old white fine cotton sheets to paint on and different painting tools: fine and broad soft brushes, toothbrushes and sponges. The children were given free choice in terms of colour and the way in which they used the tools.

It was very interesting to watch this activity: some children used all the colours available and mixed them on the fabric, creating a muddy pool; some used a limited, water-related colour range, and others took their time and tried all the tools, concentrating on shapes and mark-making. Many tried paint flicking. We also used some gold and silver powder paint, which added a bit of a shine and dimension to colours when sprinkled over wet paint. Everybody truly enjoyed this activity, as it was experimental and intuitive.

Collage fish

We left the fabric to dry and moved on to making fish out of scraps of felt, shiny fabric, bubble wrap, string and wool. I find that primary school children are never given enough time to practise using scissors, and some of them needed help with cutting. Felt, in particular, is difficult to cut, but the more they try the better they get. The children then used PVA glue to join the parts of their fish together and

stuck them in a chosen place on their fabric ocean. For display purposes, I stitched the individual pieces together, creating a big rectangular patchwork.

Some time later, I asked the children to write down what they would wish for from a magic fish, which complemented the literacy foundation of the project. I can only say that for many it was very difficult to stick to one wish...

Felt-making golden fish (KS2)

Some time later, I ran a project based on the same Paul Klee painting, *The Golden Fish*, with a group of primary-age children (8–11) during my Saturday art club workshop.

The objective was to look at one painting and make reference to it in a creative way. I chose felt-making because the children were already familiar with the technique and I wanted to reinforce and extend their freshly learned skills and introduce the basics of stitching. The aim was to make two felt pieces: one in shades of blue and one in bright, hot colours. When dry, the blue would become the background, and the light-coloured felt the image of the fish. The children were asked to cut out the shape of the fish, arrange it on the background and felt it as one piece once

again. The felting-in was quite brief because the fish didn't need to be firmly attached to the background, as they would later be stitched down.

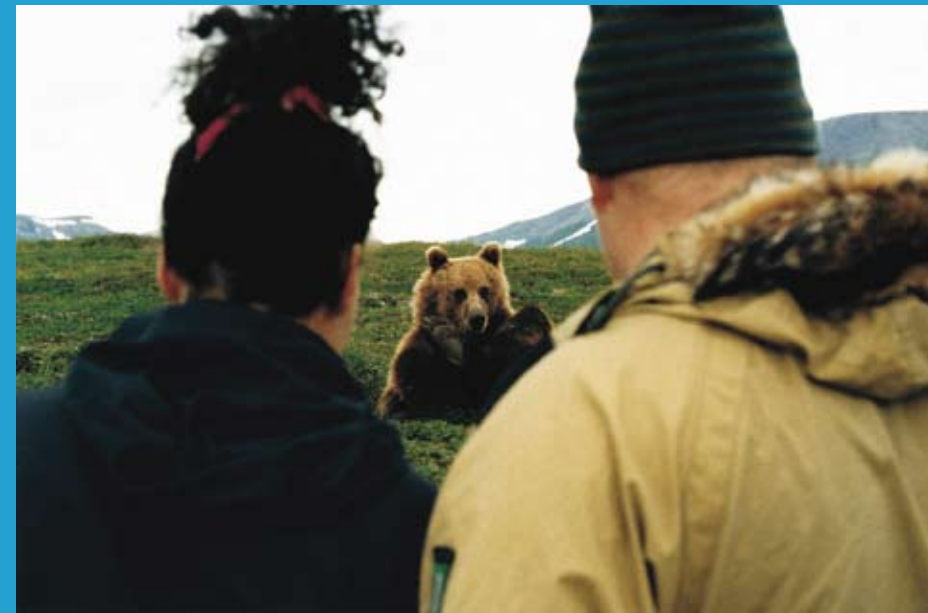
We did the stitching next. I introduced three basic stitches: running stitch, back stitch and blanket stitch, and handed out copies of pictures of the stitches, too. I also showed them how to sow on a bead and a sequin. It took a while for everyone to get going and things like threading a needle or making a knot proved to be quite difficult. The stitching itself was more successful than I'd imagined, and the children really enjoyed it, despite the occasional drama with tangled silk or threads. They used different stitches to create seaweed and patterns on their fish, and used beads as eyes and background decoration. Blanket stitch, which we used on the edges of the felt, was particularly liked by most of the children who tried it.

This project fitted into six hours, three of which were spent on felt-making and three on stitching. The experience, and others like it, has showed me that stitching and simple forms of embroidery can be very engaging and liked by this age group, but sufficient time has to be allowed for basic threading and knotting, and it is very important to use needles and beads with wide holes!



Olly & Suzi:

'A collaborative, mutual response to nature at its most primitive and wild'

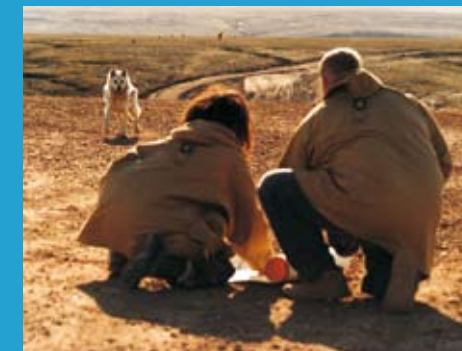


Interactive wildlife artists **Olly & Suzi** take time out of their busy lives to talk to **START** Editor **Michèle Kitto** about their work, inspiration, passions and travel, and how their unique approach to making art can work in the classroom.

Perhaps you have never heard of art duo Olly & Suzi, known outside the art world as Olly Williams and Suzi Winstanley, or perhaps you, too, watched the insightful documentary entitled *Wild Art: Olly & Suzi Paint Predators* on BBC 4 in February, or have heard that a shark once took a bite out of one of their drawings. Olly & Suzi are passionate about predators, and about species and environments that are under threat. In their work, a mix of pencil sketches, acrylics and watercolours, they attempt to look beyond outward appearances, however beautiful, and highlight the plight of the vulnerable and the importance of conservation.

Olly & Suzi have been making art together since they met as degree students at Central St Martins College of Art and Design in 1987. In 1993 they decided to leave their studio in search of direct,

first-hand inspiration and started creating their artwork on location in the wild. Since then, they have completed over 50 expeditions across the world – into the jungle regions, the Arctic, the desert and the ocean – searching out the predators and prey that occupy some of the most fragile and endangered habitats on Earth. They are about to embark on work with tigers, a species on the verge of extinction. Closer to home, they held a year-long retrospective exhibition and residency, *Olly & Suzi Untamed*, at the Natural History Museum in London in 2001–2002. They exhibit regularly in galleries, most recently in New York.



Olly & Suzi paint and draw together, often hand over hand on the same painting at the same time and often with the same brush, responding to the wild animals that they are tracking and their habitats. They work on location, in close proximity to the animals, but also back home in the studio. When they create work in the wild, they use the animal habitats as their studio, creating immediate responses to the events that unfold in front of their eyes, capturing the moment. Presenting the animal as icon, they aim to also raise an awareness and understanding of their subject, often allowing it to represent itself by incorporating the odd paw print, bite mark and track into their work.

'We show our painting and drawing in installation alongside photographs and film to communicate and document the art making, and our subsequent interaction with nature, as an ongoing process.'

I am interested in how you could sell this concept of making art together – the idea that it is OK to draw on each other's work – to teachers, and am reassured that Olly & Suzi have put this into practice a lot with schools and teachers. With teaching blood in their veins, and each with children of their own, they seem very comfortable in the classroom. Olly describes their recent work with primary school children: 'We get kids collaborating and ... encourage them to let go and respond to each other's marks in a non-competitive way.' Taking the competitive edge out of working together,





and making it a meaningful experience for children, is the essence of what they do. To promote collaboration, Olly suggests that instead of giving a group of children a piece of paper each, they are given one piece to work on together. They should then be encouraged and enabled to respond to one another's marks and not think that any one is better than the other. Although he concedes that this collaborative practice might not suit everyone as a lifelong way of working, he is quick to point out that as an experimental process or classroom activity it is very powerful.

Olly continues: 'Look, you don't have to go to the North Pole to have an adventure; you can go out into the park, grab a twig, some leaves, see what happens when you push that into the paper, see what happens when you grab some graphite, look for a sparrow, look for a starling, look for a worm, look at it and draw it.' He wants to inspire children in urban environments to sit down and slow down and respond to each other and, importantly, respond to their environment. In a nutshell, this is what Olly & Suzi do in the wilderness: 'We go into the wilderness ... from our mad busy urban lives.'

'...performing art, music, acting, all these things are collaborative events. You can't put on a play on your own ... but somehow painting [and] drawing [are] viewed traditionally as a sole event, and we are quite up for challenging that'. Olly

Among the artists and people that have inspired them, Olly & Suzi list Joseph Beuys, Hockney, Rousseau, Picasso and Rothko – artists that have worked from life, that have a sense of history and the natural world, and a sense of humour. The second group that inspires them includes people like the naturalist and broadcaster David Attenborough, and they have been honoured to work with some of the top cameramen, conservationists, trackers and polar explorers.

Olly & Suzi feel strongly that it is important for children to understand the extent of the problems in the natural world and, rather



than being apathetic and thinking that you can't make a difference, realise that actually a small contribution can be key. They are doing their small bit of the larger jigsaw of global conservation by combining art and conservation in a subtle, low-key kind of way – looking at animals and interpreting them unsentimentally, stressing their plight and importance – and encourage you to do your bit too.

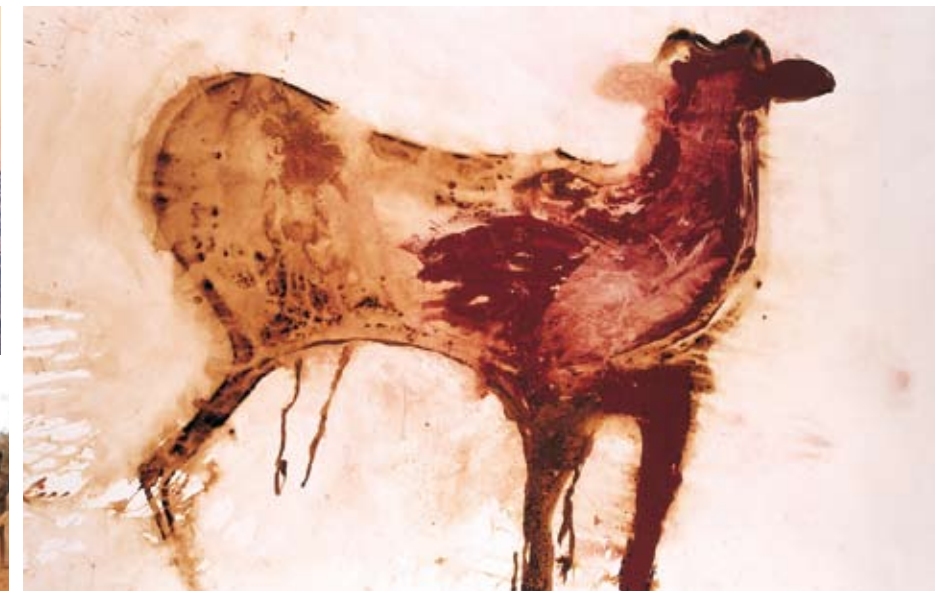
You don't need to go on a school trip to the Amazon or the Arctic to make the world of animals and conservation exciting. Try your local park or school grounds. Get hold of some mud, find a worm, take time out of your busy school day to stop and actually look at it, then draw it. It's quite simple really, perhaps old fashioned, but often the least complicated ideas are the best and most fun!

Resources

Book: *Olly and Suzi: Arctic, Desert, Ocean, Jungle* (published by Harry N. Abrams). Available second-hand on Amazon, from £6

Film: *Wild Art: Olly & Suzi Paint Predators* (Storyville BBC4). Warning: this film contains strong adult language, but gives you, the teacher, insight into how these artists work. Cost £10; email nfo@arcanepictures.com

www.ollyandsuzi.com



Interview with Arthur Morris, age 11, from Chilton Cantelo School, Young Pavement Artist of the Year, 2008

What has winning the competition last year meant to you?

It has really boosted my confidence, and has given me lots of opportunities that I wouldn't have had – like drawing at the foot of the dinosaur at the Natural History Museum, and visiting Pinewood Studios to see film and television production.

When did you first become interested in art?

Ever since I can remember, I have loved doing all sorts of art. When I was much younger, I did a lot of collage work and finger painting; now I do more painting and drawing, working with watercolours, acrylics and gouache, oil pastels, pencils, charcoal, even mud!

Have you met Olly and Suzi? If so, tell us about them.

Yes, I did meet them at the launch of this year's competition at the Natural History Museum.

They really inspired me and were very friendly and fun to be around. They obviously really care about the animals they work with, and go to every extreme to get close to them. They have huge respect and faith in the people who help the animals that they want to paint and draw. Just like they want the animals to join in with their art, they also really

wanted lots of children to get involved in the Muscular Dystrophy Competition and think about the plight of endangered species. I think it is amazing that they can use one brush together at the same time to get such great pictures.

Why should teachers encourage their pupils to enter the Young Pavement Artists' Competition?

Because it is an amazing experience, which anyone can enjoy, and because it is important for young people to think about endangered animals. It gives you the chance to enjoy art, help raise awareness of individuals who have muscle disease and help raise money for the Muscular Dystrophy charity.

The Muscular Dystrophy Campaign Young Pavement Artists' Competition is the first major art-based initiative to explore the relationship between using the pavement as a canvas and chalk as the medium. This year, the environmental and conservation theme is Endangered Species. See page 2 for details.

www.muscular-dystrophy.org/pavementart



Art therapy in primary schools

Art therapy has often been associated with special schools, but **Liz Lockett**, registered art therapist, explains how art therapy can work in the primary school, and provides an insight into the power of art therapy in the lives of young children.

I am an art therapist currently working in primary schools in Herefordshire. I have been working with groups as well as individual children for the past three years and have really enjoyed engaging with children in a school setting. Prior to this, my work included working with children with autism in a special school setting, alongside a team of other therapists, including music and drama therapists, and psychotherapists.

Referrals quite often come directly from individual head teachers, or are passed via social services to the school. There are two forms that need to be filled in before work can commence with a child: a parental/guardian consent form, as well as a referral form completed by the head teacher. The second form provides space for a 'reason for referral' and details of past interventions or other agencies involved. The next step is to meet with the child's teacher and to establish what needs she or he thinks the child has, how their behaviour has been in the classroom, how that child is relating to their peers, as well as any other concerns or insights the teacher has. This contact and continual liaison with the child's teacher is of primary importance, as it helps to gauge how the child's behaviour has changed throughout the therapeutic input they are receiving.

The rooms in which I work all vary – some with a sink, some without! The most important thing is that it is a space where the child can feel able to explore and work through some unresolved conflicts and difficult issues. Using the art materials – I usually offer them a wide selection, including oil pastels, clay, coloured chalks, acrylic paints, plain and coloured paper, and so on – their feelings are expressed in

a safe and unthreatening way, which for some provides enormous relief. For some of them, the classroom sets up the worst areas of conflict and they end up behaving badly to attract the attention they crave. The knowledge that at some time in the week they will have an attentive adult to themselves, in itself gives them the sense of security they need.

The art materials used by the children provide a tangible medium through which they can express themselves. Children often have difficulty expressing their feelings verbally, and the process of art provides a less problematic, more spontaneous means of communication. This approach differs from art teaching in that the learning skills and the aesthetic quality of the image are not the primary concern of the art therapist. Some children use picture-making specifically, drawing pictures of their experiences, their feelings or their fears and they can choose to talk about them if they wish. The important feature is that experiences may emerge more readily in visual images than in verbal communication, and the artwork may facilitate discussion of otherwise inaccessible topics and provide a permanent record of the process experienced by the child.

Tamsyn

I would like to provide a brief account of a girl who I will call Tamsyn, aged 10, who I saw for over a year. She produced some very strong work, but unfortunately I have no images of the work she did because she moved to another county and took her portfolio of work with her.

Tamsyn had been referred for art therapy to offer her an opportunity to express her feelings and build up her self-esteem. She had experienced significant family problems, the effects of which manifested themselves in poor behaviour, attention-seeking rudeness as well as general disengagement with school.

During her first session, Tamsyn came across as mature, eloquent and capable. She couldn't think of anything to draw and said she would spend some time thinking about it. She decided she would draw the river near her home and the two bridges that cross it. She spoke about her uncle, saying that at times she couldn't concentrate at school and constantly saw pictures of him in her mind. She went on to tell me that her uncle had drowned in the river when she was only six and that she had been in the area at the time it happened. She recalled that he had been drunk, and that it was dark and she was walking to her granddad's house and saw the lights of the police cars and ambulances. Tamsyn went on to finish a painting of the river depicting the two bridges.

This was to be the first of many traumas in Tamsyn's life, which she disclosed to me in the sessions over the year in which I saw her. There were long periods of time where she remained very closed, cautious, distrustful and avoidant. Her images reflected this in that they were sparse and usually comprised cut outs from clothing catalogues of things she liked. Long periods of time were spent cutting and gluing. During this time, I had to remain patient, and be careful not to try to speed things up, as she would quickly retreat. Then, after a silence of three to four months, it was almost as if the flood gates opened and Tamsyn had finally decided she could trust me. Every week, from then on, she hurried into the room, grabbing art materials and portraying what was going on in her life at the time, as well as talking, crying and asking for advice as to what she should do in certain circumstances.

Her home life continued to be traumatic, with the loss of her much-loved brother to prison, as well as the death of her 'only friend', her dog, her mum changing partners, witnessing fights between her dad and her brother, and finally moving school again. She did, however, become

'Art therapy ... can work in conjunction with and indeed facilitate the educational process.'

much more integrated and happy at her current school during the time she was receiving art therapy.

Our final session was difficult for us both, as we had been on quite a journey together. Tamsyn brought some small cakes, which we shared, and asked if I could continue to see her in her new school in Manchester. She knew this was impossible, and we both understood that this was her way of saying she didn't want it to end.

Primary school art therapy group

This is a brief account of an art therapy group that ran for eight weeks at a primary school in Herefordshire. We had two groups: the first included children from Years 1 and 2, and the second, those from Years 3, 4, 5 and 6. Each group contained around six to eight boys and girls of mixed ability and lasted for 45 minutes.

The aim of the group was to provide an art therapy group experience that would allow for expression of emotion within a structure that was supportive, containing and gently challenging. Many of the children had low self-esteem and low confidence. Others had problems relating to their peer group, as they found it hard to take turns, share or listen without interrupting one another, giving the impression of a lack of respect and thoughtfulness about the needs of others.

The initial part of the session was spent sitting together in a circle. This gave the group time to gather, and was usually spent doing a warm-up activity, including introductions, finding out how everyone in the group was feeling that day, or movement and exercises.

The second part of the session was usually spent around a large table, painting. This was often a directive session led by me and included a variety of themes, including painting in pairs, self-portraits, families,



round robin drawings, emotions, wishes and metaphorical gifts to one another. This part of the session gave the children an opportunity to be self-expressive, to experience using various art materials and to work together as a group or independently. Some needed assistance or found it difficult to focus for a length of time, but generally everyone in the group participated and enjoyed the process.

The final part of the session involved sitting in a circle again. All the children found it hard to stop work and move to this closing phase. Some found it difficult to listen to others reflecting on their artwork, or to take turns, and remained unfocused, but for the most part everyone was able to contribute and explain what their work meant to them and to receive my feedback. I found this one of the most rewarding parts of the session, as children were often very open about their work and the good and difficult things that were going on in their lives. Some areas that

were spoken about include two boys' experiences of being bullied, a child's sense of loss following the death of her mother, one boy's surprise at being included by others in a group painting, and one boy's realisation of his intolerance for others when they didn't do as he asked. Some children, who were initially withdrawn and quiet, became, over time, more confident and willing to talk in the group.

At the final session, each child was given their work in a folder to take home and asked how they had found the eight weeks. Many asked if they could return and found the idea of the group ending difficult. This is common with group endings, but a positive sign that they found it a good and helpful experience.

The Foundling Museum

Lost for school trip ideas? There are plenty at The Foundling Museum, as **Lindsey Copeland** discovers and reports.

One of the many challenges facing primary school teachers is finding a suitable school trip that will not only educate their students but also engage them.

This museum has an excellent educational program that is geared towards meeting the needs of teachers, as well as the educational requirements of their pupils, in a fun and interactive atmosphere. It provides pre-planned activities and tailor-made packages to suit the needs of the individual teacher, while catering to the often not-so-easily-impressed minds of young children.

The Foundling Museum originated as the Foundling Hospital, opened in London in 1739 by Thomas Coram, in what is known today as Bloomsbury. England's first home for abandoned children, the hospital was built in order to look after the nearly one thousand babies that were abandoned each year, and was to take in more than 27,000 babies

before it closed in 1953. The hospital's long history is detailed in the great many artificats, letters, clothes and records that are clearly displayed throughout the museum.

The Foundling Hospital was the inspiration for Jamila Gavin's novel *Coram Boy*, which was later adapted into a musical. It is also part of the history of artist William Hogarth, and composer George Frederick Handel, both of whom have work on display in the museum. Hogarth, in particular, who was one of the original Governors of the hospital, made it an important piece of history when he encouraged artists to donate their works to the hospital in the hope that it would attract wealthy benefactors. In so doing, he made the children's home Britain's first public art gallery and exhibition space. Today, several works by Hogarth, Reynolds, Gainsborough, Wilson, Hayman, Highmore, Roubillac and Rysbrack are included in the museum's fine art collection and can be seen by visitors in fully restored 18th-century interiors. Being able to see parts of the original hospital in the museum's various exhibitions allows children to witness a piece of history, making the museum a perfect place for them to learn about important events in English history.

The museum is situated next to the site of the original hospital, now demolished, and currently showcases varied and engaging displays of fine art, music, and 18th-century interiors saved from the original hospital. The many exhibits and hands-on activities bring to life the experiences of children in the 18th century, allowing today's children to feel a connection between themselves and the past.

At present, the museum is showcasing an exhibition on Handel entitled *Handel the Philanthropist*, which commemorates the 250th anniversary of the composer's death. In this exhibition, visitors can see Handel's will, along with manuscripts and artworks on loan from the British Library, the Royal



College of Music and The National Portrait Gallery, among others. The show runs until 28 June 2009.

What makes this space so ideal for children is that the education department understands and strives to meet the needs of teachers by creating an individual programme for each group. This allows teachers to evaluate and choose for themselves the options and sessions that would be best for their students, especially with regard to certain curriculums. In addition to viewing the works of art and artifacts on display within the museum, children are invited to interact with objects, dress up and role-play, and to engage their minds in creative practices that foster learning as well as social interaction.

Booking a school trip at The Foundling couldn't be easier. Visits are free and they include a session on Citizenship and Identity, in which children can participate in such activities as Finding Words, a creative writing exercise, Finding Ourselves, in which they create self-portraits inspired by 18th-century portraits, or Finding Tokens, an interactive display in which children learn about mothers who had to leave their babies at the hospital. The museum also offers a programme called Victorian Foundlings, in which children can role-play, use costumes and archive material, and re-enact pieces of the hospital's history. In addition, the museum has a session entitled *Thomas Coram: The Man Who Saved Children*, and SEN sessions for special needs students. The space is large enough to accommodate large or small classes, and the staff are not only warm and friendly but also informative. They will gladly answer your questions and listen to any concerns or needs teachers may have. The museum also provides a space to eat lunch and a reading area in which books are provided. You are advised to book well in advance, as time slots do fill up quickly.

education@foundlingmuseum.org.uk.
www.thefoundlingmuseum.org.uk.

NSEAD START Summer School

Winnie Hill-Cottingham and Loren Fenwick share with readers how the START 2008 summer school has inspired them in their teaching over the last year.

Printmaking in the classroom

It was a great privilege to participate in the first NSEAD **START** Summer School, held in Winchester in July 2008, and a wonderful opportunity to meet and work alongside fellow art and design teachers. The Summer School weekend comprised three organised workshops led by specialists in the field of art education, covering subjects from printmaking and textiles to clay work and mixed-media group work. The content of each workshop was inspirational: you were given opportunities to develop new skills or extend techniques, depending on your previous experience. I felt that it acted as

a springboard for ideas, and gave me the confidence to encourage my pupils to explore and experiment.

In the printmaking workshop, led by Michèle Kitto and Ian Shearman, we investigated collograph printmaking. This is a printing process whereby you can build up a relief block made up of different surfaces, which when completed enables you to achieve a textured tonal print. This activity was 'fish' based, and as Michèle and Ian explained, the outcomes could be as simple or sophisticated as you desired.

After the workshop, I was extremely keen to put the collograph printmaking technique into practice. As part of a Year 4 design and technology lesson during the following autumn term and, making a cross-curricular link with Japan, the children's country of study in geography, we looked at simple kites. I thought this would be a marvellous opportunity to experiment with.

By way of introducing the lesson, I asked the children to create imaginative sketches of different fish shapes. They went on to select one to draw and colour as a 'best' copy and add a tissue backing.

In our second session, we continued our 'fish' theme. The intention was for the children to develop an understanding of 'collograph'. They used their original coloured fish design as a pattern for the outline shape of their relief block, cutting it out in thick sugar paper. They then applied a range of varying thicknesses of paper (ripped, cut or overlapped) to their

outline shape. We used glue-stick, but Marvin medium glue could also be used. Once the relief block had been made up, the children overlayed it with thin newsprint paper and took rubbings using a thick coloured wax crayon. (On the course we used a wax brass rubbing block.)

The results were fantastic. With such exciting outcomes, which the children kept repeating in different colours, they thought it was just like 'making a magic picture' appear before their eyes and the words 'Wow!', 'Amazing!' and 'Brilliant!' could be heard in the classroom as their prints emerged. It was such an exciting experience for those of all abilities and, more importantly, the children were most complementary about one another's work because the results were so varied.

As an extension activity, the relief block can be used with printing inks and rollers to print on to paper or even fabric – the possibilities are endless.

Winnie Hill-Cottingham St Bernard's School, Slough

Fabulous felt!

Last summer I attended the NSEAD Summer School in Winchester and one of my favourite workshops was about making felt. I was absolutely enchanted by the process and couldn't wait to get back to school to share my new enthusiasm with my pupils.

Felt-making uses wool fibres. Each strand is covered in microscopically small scales and when water and pressure are applied, the scales open up and tangle together, forming a compact surface and shrinking in the process. (We discover this, to our detriment, when we don't follow the washing instructions on our woollens...)

Felting is a magical process. It makes an interesting change from weaving or knitting as a means of creating fabric and a very useful benefit is that it can be cut





without fraying, eliminating the need for finishing edges. The natural irregular edge of felt is quite attractive and an inherent part of the process, I think, but edges can be cut to neaten if desired.

I did my first felting project with a Year 5 class. We had been looking at artists from different eras and they were very interested in the cave paintings at Lascaux in France. I remembered that at the Summer School, cave paintings had been mentioned as an inspiration for felt-making designs, so I decided to jump in and give it a go. I was quite nervous about it, having not made felt since the summer, under supervision, but the handouts from the summer school were very clear and helped me to remember and recapture the excitement! (Thanks Michèle!)

What you will need

Wool fibres, which are readily available from many educational art materials suppliers (white and coloured), to suit your project. The white is cheaper, so is good to use as a base.

Bamboo rolling mats. Sushi mats are good, but expensive; placemats work well and can be sourced more cheaply. Your source for wool fibres will probably also supply bamboo mats, or it may be worth looking on the internet.

Net curtaining, cut into pieces 5 cm larger than the bamboo mats. This is cheap to buy new, but second-hand ones from a charity shop work just as well. They must be the plain variety with no patterns or large holes, as these will let the wool through while you are rubbing.

Warm water. It does not need to be very hot; remember, young hands are much more sensitive to heat than ours are.

Soap. Any popular brand of washing-up liquid will do the trick; bars of soap or soap flakes can also be used, but these are messier. A trick I decided to try, which works well, is to add the soap to the water (about a cup to two litres of warm water). This didn't produce the mountains of soap suds I was expecting, but did felt the wool well.

Dishtowels, to help eliminate excess water from the rolled-up pre-felted wool fibres.

The process

Every felt-making book I have read describes a different process for making felt. The method I describe suited the needs of my pupils, in that they were able to understand the process and follow simple guidelines without much adult interference, but my suggestion is that you have a go yourself and see it in action before trying it in the classroom. Better

still, go to the next Summer School, where you will get much more of a guided, hands-on experience and loads of ideas and inspiration, as I did.

Step 2

The wool fibres are pulled from the pack in fine bunches and laid next to each other on the rolling mat. A second layer is placed so that the fibres run in the opposite direction. Between four and six layers are laid down in the same way. This forms the base. It is worth spending some time teaching the pupils how to pull out pieces of wool in small, fine tufts, because if chunks are laid down, the felt will be lumpy and bulky, may develop holes and will not felt very well because many fibres will be lying in the same direction, making it more difficult for them to mat and tangle. On top of this, coloured fibres are laid down to form a design.

At this point, once all the pupils have finished laying down wool and before the water and soap are used, the wool can be covered with a piece of net and stored for the next lesson if necessary.

Step 2

Once the wool fibres have been laid down, they are covered with a piece of net. Warm, very soapy water is poured into the centre, a small amount at a time, and worked from the centre to the outside; the wool will flatten as it gets wet. Make sure that the whole design is

thoroughly wet and flat. Rub gently but firmly over the netting to start the felting process. Vigorous rubbing at this point may displace some of the design. Depending on the design, this may not matter – and may indeed add to the overall effect – but to avoid this, rub in small but firm circles all over the surface, paying careful attention to areas of delicate design. Helping the fibres to bond now will prevent them from moving in Step 3, which is much more vigorous. Some of the wool may come through the netting; this is natural and nothing to worry about.

Step 3

Once the entire area is saturated and soapy, gently remove the netting. Be careful not to displace too many of the fibres, which are still far from bonded at this stage. Gently fold back any wedges that are too straggly. Roll up the bamboo mat and squeeze out the excess water and soap. (Do this over a basin or a bucket as a surprising amount of water will come out!) Roll the mat in a dish cloth to prevent it from slipping and then roll it back and forth, as you would a rolling pin, for a few minutes on a sturdy table or on the floor. After a couple of minutes, unroll the mat and you will see that the felt has shrunk in one direction. The fibres should have bonded enough at this point for you to be able to lift the felt carefully off of the mat. It can be gently pulled back to its original shape if it has shrunk too severely. Turn the felt 90 degrees and roll it up again. Do not worry too much about edges that are sticking over the mat; the felt will soon shrink to fit the mat, or you can move it around so that all areas get a chance to be rolled in the mat. Repeat the rolling process until all the fibres are felted and have become part of a single mass. Keep turning the felt: don't forget to rotate and turn it over so that all areas get felted. Between each rolling, you can gently reshape the felt if it has shrunk too much or distorted. The more you roll, the more the fibres will felt and shrink, resulting in denser, thicker, smaller pieces of felt. How much you felt is up to you, but do it at least until all the fibres are bonded together.

Once the felt is made, it should be thoroughly rinsed out to remove all soap. It can then be left to dry flat on a table or over a radiator.

Most pupils have done some sort of sewing or collage work using textiles but they really get a thrill out of actually

creating the fabric themselves, and it is much quicker than weaving or knitting! Beads and embellishments can be sewn on to the felt, or it can be cut or sewn. In fact, there is no limit to what can be achieved, other than your own imagination.

At the NSEAD Summer School, we discussed making puppets, bags and even socks; we also saw evidence of whole-class projects involving giant pieces of felt. The wonderful thing about attending an event like this is that like-minded people inspire each other and ideas are generated

by teachers in similar situations to you. Real, hands-on practical advice is shared and first-hand experience is gained. I left feeling somewhat sorry that it was the beginning of the summer holidays, as I could not wait to get back into class and try out some of my new ideas! I would strongly recommend this experience to any art teacher, regardless of their experience, level of expertise or classroom constraints, as an excellent way to revive and inspire you for the next academic year. Oh, and it is LOADS of fun!

Loren Fenwick, Aldro School, Surrey

NSEAD SUMMER SCHOOL 17–19 JULY 2009

The two-day Summer School is a wonderful opportunity to revisit or learn new practical skills, and explore developments in art, craft and design education that will have a measurable impact in the classroom.

The content of the weekend will be hands-on, creative and enjoyable in a supportive environment. By the end of the weekend you will have lots of ideas and resources, and have had time to reflect on your own classroom practice. Workshops will be facilitated by primary arts specialists, and professional artists and craftspeople all highly experienced within the primary classroom.

A selection of skills-based workshops will include costume and adornment, sculpture and painting, and new media, and delegates will also have the opportunity to consider thinking and researching skills for children, starting points for arts and cross-curricular projects, use of sketchbooks, risk-taking and the open-ended brief.

For more information or to book please contact Anne Ingall. Tel: 01249 714825 Email: anneingall@nsead.org



Book reviews

Adinka

**A primary cross-curricular project
Published by RISC, Growney & Lowe
at £15.00**

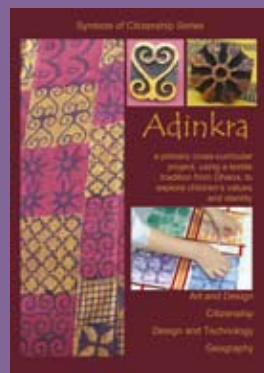
Adinka, a primary cross-curricular project that focuses on an ancient form of printmaking from Ghana and explores children's values and identity, would be fascinating for any art teacher to use with their pupils. What makes the book so helpful are the details about how this process works, and the tradition is brought to life through the words of the real craftspeople who are still creating beautiful and original pieces of work every working day.

This project would really be thoroughly rewarding to tap into, as children learn about a tradition in another country, and develop an understanding of how doing such work allows people to become self-sufficient. It also gives pupils the opportunity to think about their own identity in a unique way and challenges them to work collaboratively.

Adinka is full of photos, images and suggestions for further research for teachers, a step-by-step lesson plan and advice on how the project can be linked to other schemes of work. It will certainly broaden your horizons as a teacher and bring a whole new world of contemporary art to your pupils' doorstep!

Reviewed by Rachel Shadlock, Norman Court School, Salisbury

Available direct from RISC (Reading International Solidarity Centre) at £15 plus P&P
Tel. 0118 958 6692
www.risc.org.uk/education/teaching_resources.html



Start to Felt

Ewa Maria Kuniczak

Start to Appliqué

Nancy Nicholson

Published by Search Press at £6.99 each (paperback)

If appliqué and felt-making are something you love to do, then these books should definitely be added to your collection. The felt-making book would require some level of understanding to begin with, as the instructions are easy to follow but complex in nature, and perseverance would be needed to achieve the final product. The appliqué projects, on the other hand, look great fun to do and seem easy enough to achieve.

Each of the books begins with a short but concise introduction briefly explaining the history of the techniques of felting and appliqué. The materials and equipment sections are clearly written and illustrated with photographs. For those that are not clued up about where to get supplies, there are suggestions on where to buy your materials.

Start to Felt has four delightful and bright designs. Although these are quite complex tasks and not for the faint-hearted, there are many clearly written and illustrated instructions. 'Funky Facts' and 'Top Tip' boxes add interest and useful, easy-to-read information.

Start to Appliqué has a useful section on embellishments, materials, equipment and techniques, beautifully illustrated with photographs. There is a great 'Stay Safe' box for essential safety tips and again a 'Top Tips' box containing useful instructions. The section on stitching is superbly illustrated. As with the felting book, all activities are clearly explained and



beautifully photographed and easy to follow. Personally, I felt that the appliqué designs could have been more contemporary and less '1970s'. However, the choice of fabric will make a difference to the final design. Excellent value for money.

Reviewed by Sarah Davis, Peterborough High School

Print, Pattern & Colour

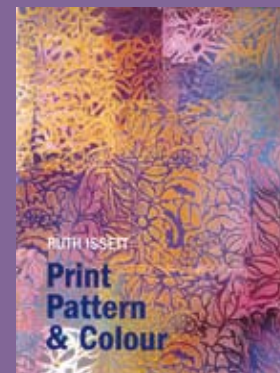
Ruth Issett

Published by Batsford at £18.99 (hardback)

At first glance, this book doesn't seem to have much to offer the primary teacher. However, after even the merest of flicks through, you come away with the feeling that there is much more to this print lark than potatoes and cotton reels.

The author, gently but firmly, guides the reader from basic printing on paper through to the production of printed fabrics that would not look out of place in the haute couture world. Detailed, informative equipment lists are given, along with very useful notes outlining the advantages and disadvantages of each item. Materials (including specific, commercially available products) are discussed and their relative merits for different applications noted. Techniques are clearly explained and the reader is guided step by step through many and various activities, projects and concepts.

This book, although aimed at an adult audience, is profusely illustrated throughout with photos that would serve as an inspiration and an appetiser for children. The author has managed to pack a wealth of information and ideas into quite a slim volume, and there is something for everyone, from FS to Y6



and beyond. Many of the activities are ideal for an art club or for extending more able children. If the printing currently undertaken in your school is beginning to seem predictable and uninspiring, then think seriously about buying this book.

Reviewed by John Fidler, Bielefeld School

Big Book of Fashion Illustration – A World Sourcebook of Contemporary Illustration

Martin Dawber

Published by Batsford at £19.99 (hardback)

This book would be superb as a resource book in schools and colleges. It is full of images depicting lifestyle ideas and scenarios, trendy young things wearing the right clothing, looking fantastic, listening to the right music and being seen with the right people. The book is a reflection, as stated in the foreword, of 'the globalisation of all design areas, such as home-style, travel and sports'.

The *Big Book of Fashion Illustration* would be the ideal source book for anyone wishing to gain inspiration for a fashion, graphics or illustration project, as the collection is diverse and the book is full of different styles of illustration using a wealth of media. The 'Children' section contains some particularly interesting images. There are also a number of striking studies elsewhere in the book, which are artworks in their own right, including Claire Anderson's stitched piece entitled *Fleur* and Michael Sibley's *Jo*. These are beautiful works and would be superb reference and research material for students studying any artistic discipline.

However, some of the most successful images for me are the ones that perhaps hark back to what have been described as the '1940's style sketches with long tall legs' in the 'Womenswear' section of the book. One in particular, by Bill Donovan and entitled *Setarium Couture*, is a beautiful, simple line drawing in classic thick black strokes, with an explosion of colour and style.

This is a great sourcebook that contains a wealth of ideas and thought-provoking suggestions. Personally, I would like to have seen more of the 1940s style seeping in just here and there!

Reviewed by teacher and artist Lizzie Weir

Shoes: The Complete Sourcebook

John Peacock

Published by Thames and Hudson at £24.95 (hardback)

This is a fabulous book for shoe lovers and design historians alike. The shoes featured range from the simple sandals of Ancient Egypt to the fashion footwear of today. The shiny cover entices you into an illustrated history of 2000 shoes, each one beautifully drawn and accompanied by a black- and-white outline and dated description. The author has drawn each shoe in great detail, showing buttons, laces, fastenings and even fabric texture. This encyclopedic history does not provide lesson ideas, but does present opportunities for the creative teacher.

Shoes is aimed at KS3 pupils and design students, yet younger children will love to explore the evolution of shoes, their beautiful designs and how modern shoes take inspiration from those of 1000 years ago. There is a wealth of design

possibilities for teachers and pupils, including designing your own shoe detail (from the templates) to reproducing a pair from simple craft materials. For those wanting a new aspect to the creative curriculum, the shoes featured can be linked to most periods of time and places in the world.

Shoes, a satisfyingly weighted book filled with delightful pictures, is a beautiful reference hardback to admire over and over again.

Reviewed by Year 3 teacher Tansy Spink, Pycroft Grange Primary School

World Textiles: A Visual Guide to Traditional Techniques

Published by Thames and Hudson at £18.99 (paperback)

World Textiles offers a cross-cultural look at the history of textiles. Full of amazing photographs, it takes the reader on a visual journey, providing a range of materials from around the globe on which to feast the eye: non-loom textiles, loom-woven textiles, dyes, sewn textiles, embroidery and embellishment.

There is a useful description of a technique on almost every page, and every kind of textile is covered. At the back of the book there is a useful glossary, a worldwide further reading list and a list of textile collections. With 778 illustrations and 551 in colour, it is a wonderful reference book for anyone interested in textiles, be they a beginner or a more experienced artist. This book is a must!

Reviewed by Julie Hignett, Clarendon Primary School, Bolton



Product review

Silk-painting equipment from Heart Educational Supplies

Heart Educational Supplies are specialists in providing materials for sewing, textiles and crafts – a veritable Aladdin's cave for the textiles enthusiast! Many an hour have I spent poring over the more general educational suppliers' catalogues, desperately trying to find specialist materials – usually without luck. Heart Educational Supplies have put an end to that – for textiles at least!

From their website, www.heart-educational.co.uk, you are not only able to download their brochure, but can also access advice and information on using the products that they carry. The products that I have tried have been of an excellent quality. For silk-painting, Heart carries a range of embroidery hoops, including some with plastic frames and large packs for use in school. It also supplies some extremely useful wooden frames that can be used for both silk and batik work. Instead of being permanently fixed, the frames have ingenious notches, which allow the frame to be put together in a range of sizes, without the need for nails! This also means that they collapse for easy storage.

Heart really has thought through the needs of the primary school, for as well as supplying the usual silk by the metre, they also sell silk scarves (26 cm by 26 cm), at a very reasonable price, which can be attached to a wooden frame, or trapped in an embroidery hoop, with minimum effort. They even sell silk pins to attach the silk to a frame without damaging the fabric – again, at a very reasonable price.

The range of silk paints carried by Heart is impressive – they can be bought singularly, or as a class pack. The Seta Silk paints that I tried came in a beautiful range of colours – rather than the standard primaries, there are subtle shades with names such as salmon, caramel, plum, buttercup, azure blue and poppy red. The colours blend with ease and build strong tones when layered. The class set comes with a thinner, so that you can lighten the colours.

Heart also sells Chinese brushes, which I have not seen in other educational suppliers. These are fantastic for silk-painting, as they have a firm, yet very sharp, end that is perfect for the precise painting required for silk. These really would be an asset for children, as they would afford them far greater



control over their work. This is true, too, of the gutta sold by Heart. The gutta I tried came in a squeeze tube with a very fine nozzle attached. With these it would be tricky for anyone to 'blob' their design. They even come in a range of colours, including gold, bronze and black, which would be perfect for some topics. They can be used to embellish designs in the final stages instead of sequins and beads, as well as to provide a frame for the colours at the outset.

In my opinion, Heart Educational Supplies has really considered its target audience carefully. If you are looking to make some long-term investments in textile materials, it may well be worth browsing their catalogue. The quality and range of materials on offer is hard to beat!

Tested by Sarah Baker, Longlevens Junior School, Gloucester



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The Society is always keen to receive new ideas to add to the existing units – if you have a lesson you are particularly pleased with, please write it up in a similar format and email it, together with one or two examples of your children's work to johnsteers@nsead.org

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