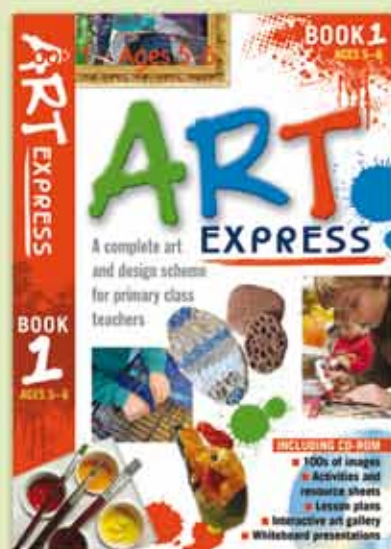


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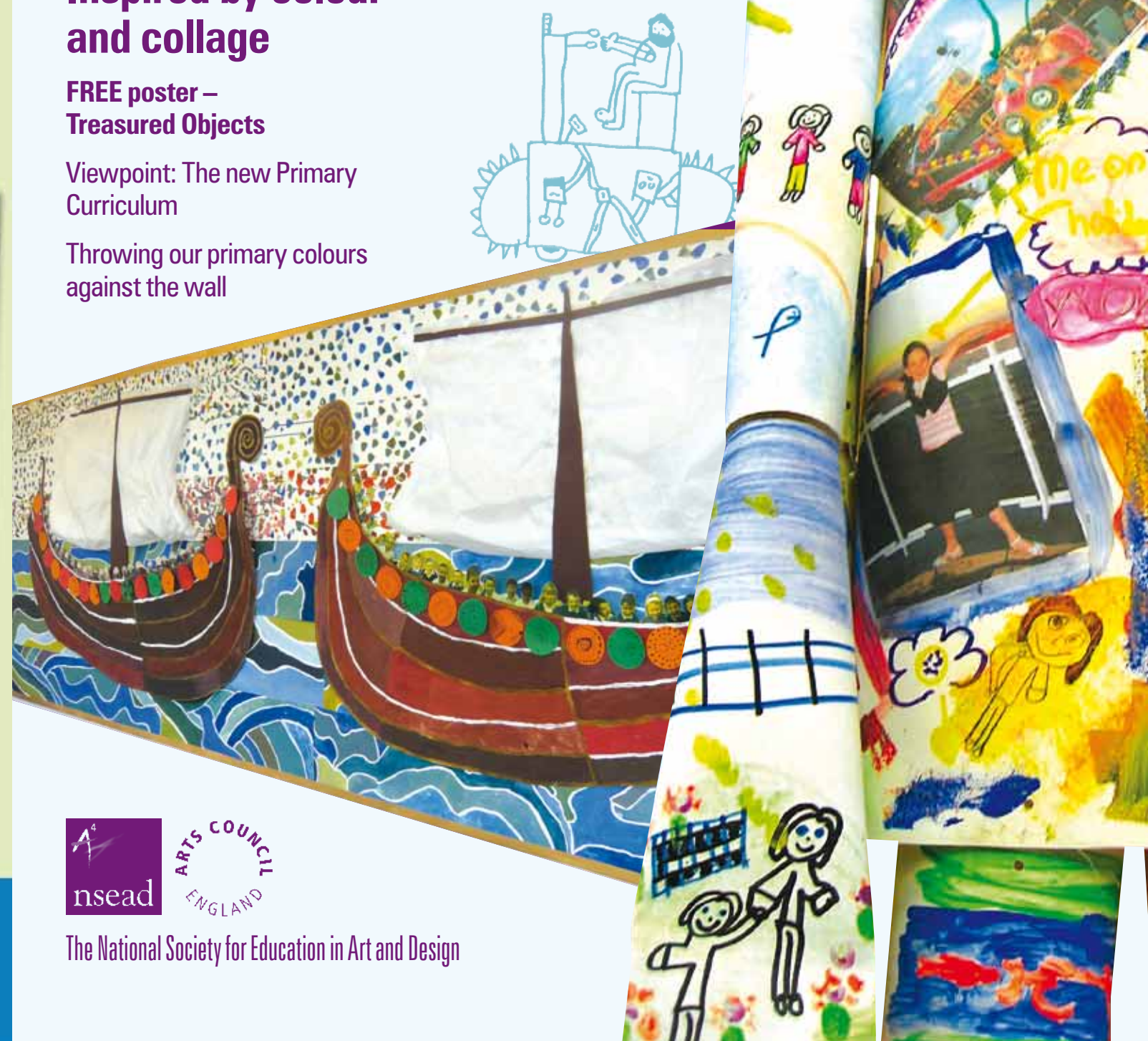
FOR THE BEST IN ART, CRAFT AND DESIGN TEACHING, FROM 3 TO 14 YEARS OLD

Inspired by colour and collage

**FREE poster –
Treasured Objects**

Viewpoint: The new Primary Curriculum

Throwing our primary colours against the wall



The National Society for Education in Art and Design

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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 'patchwork' and the password to 'quilt'. See page 25 for further details.

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START FOR THE BEST IN ART, CRAFT AND DESIGN TEACHING, FROM 3 TO 14 YEARS OLD

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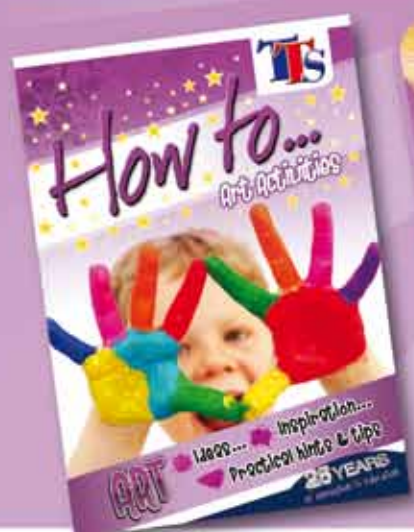


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START News

MEGA MOSAIC MAKERS 2009 THE TOPPS TILES PRIMARY SCHOOL ART COMPETITION

The 2009 Mega Mosaic Makers competition once again produced a wonderful array of mosaic projects. Congratulations to mosaic artist Oliver Budd, who took the first prize for his entry 'Bugs and Beasts', created with Challock Primary School in Kent. The judges were delighted with the standard of entries and Viv Johns of Topps Tiles commented: "Making mosaics is all about tiles and it is exciting to see how children use them to create such wonderful art." Over £2,500 worth of prizes are awarded each year, with a £750 first prize. The competition, run in association with BAMM, the British Association for Modern Mosaic, is open to existing or new mosaic projects; they do not have to have been created for this competition. A further £1,500 will be awarded to schools who apply for funding towards making a mosaic. For full conditions please visit the competition website: www.megamosaicmakers.org.uk.

SIGHTSAVERS 2010 JUNIOR PAINTER OF THE YEAR AWARDS

Inventions, flying cars, spaceships and aliens – these are just some of the images that spring to mind when picturing the future. For the fifth year running, development charity Sightsavers is inviting primary school children across the UK to take part in the 2010 Junior Painter of the Year competition and paint their vision of the future.

The competition, run by Sightsavers in partnership with the Royal Academy Schools, aims to promote the use of paint



in school classrooms, whilst encouraging children to reflect on sight and blindness amongst their peers. Last year over 15,000 entries were submitted by children aged 4 to 11 and this year's theme – *Visions of the Future* – is likely to generate even more.

The winning young painters will have their work exhibited at the Royal Academy of Arts in London alongside works by the famous artist and illustrator Quentin Blake CBE, and the renowned artist and keeper of the Royal Academy of Arts, Professor Maurice Cockrill RA.

Schools interested in participating in the awards this year can find more at: www.sightsavers.org/juniorepainter or by contacting the Junior Painter of the Year competition helpline on 01444 446 768 for a free awards pack. Entries must be submitted by 14 September 2010. *Image above: 'A world of puzzling creations' by Maya Andrews, national winner for lower juniors*

TATE MODERN CELEBRATES TENTH BIRTHDAY WITH FREE FESTIVAL

Tate Modern is 10 years old on 12 May 2010. Over 45 million visitors have passed through the gallery's doors since it first opened to the public. It is the world's most visited gallery of modern art and is one of the UK's top three free tourist attractions. To celebrate its tenth anniversary, Tate Modern will stage a major free arts festival: *No Soul For Sale – A Festival of Independents*.

On the morning of Tate Modern's birthday there will be a special procession from

Borough Market to the gallery. A band will accompany 300 children carrying cakes inspired by the building. Visitors will be invited to enjoy a slice of the birthday cakes on the day.

Coinciding with its tenth anniversary, a major building project will increase both gallery and learning spaces. This is essential development for the gallery: originally designed for 2 million visitors a year, around 5 million people now cross its threshold each year. The gallery also needs more varied spaces to show its ever-growing collection. The expansion work will give the curators 60 per cent more display space.

TATE ST IVES TEACHERS IN PARTNERSHIP (TIP) 2010/11

A one-year professional development programme which aims to develop relationships between teachers who are keen to explore opportunities to work with art as a teaching and learning resource. The programme begins in October and combines three training days at Tate St Ives, an artist-led activity and a self-led project. Open to teachers, or teachers and teaching assistants working together. To register your interest email kerry.rice@tate.org.uk. Costs: £360 (teacher and TA), £180 (single teacher)



CATALYST: INSPIRING ARTS IDEAS FOR TEACHERS

11th June at Bodelwyddan Castle, Rhyl, and 2nd July at Saltram House, Plymouth

These are the last two dates in a highly successful series of eight arts-based teacher inspiration days across the 2009/10 academic year. Each training day is held in a stunning cultural venue with professional artists helping participants focus on interactive and innovative teaching ideas for 7- to 11-year-olds. The day works with three art forms selected from poetry, visual arts, drama, storytelling, dance and music.

There are a maximum of 30 places available on each training day. At the end of the day each participant is given the 120 page *Catalyst: Inspiring Arts Ideas for Teachers* resource book. This provides a lasting resource and contains sixty arts teaching activities. For more information please visit www.childrenandarts.org.uk. Thanks to generous funding from the Maaik McInnes Charitable Trust each Catalyst day costs only £45 per place.

DRAWING: A TOOL FOR DESIGN

There are two remaining chances to join the free one-day Power Drawing Workshop entitled *Drawing: A Tool for Design*. The remaining dates are: 13 May 2010 at the City Library, Newcastle upon Tyne from 10.30am to 4pm; and 25 May 2010 at the De La Warr Pavilion (Studio), Bexhill on Sea, East Sussex from 10.30am to 4pm.

Drawing: A Tool for Design courses are one-day professional development workshops for advisory teachers, heads of art and design and design and technology in secondary schools, and other education professionals. They offer an excellent opportunity for those working with children and young people, schools, lifelong learners and community groups to reflect on the role of drawing in professional practice, in education and in community participation. The purpose of the workshops is to raise awareness of the role of drawing and creativity in the design and construction process and its place in built environment education.

There will be opportunities to test out a variety of drawing strategies, to reflect on how drawing is used by professionals, and to plan ways of embedding it more firmly in the workplace. The workshop will be an opportunity for you to extend your knowledge and enhance your skills related to the use of drawing as a medium for learning.

To book a place on this workshop please email Emma Thatcher at emma@campaignfordrawing.org



From the Editor

After a very cold winter with many opportunities for painting images of the snow or creating sculptures in snow in the playground – it is exciting to see spring arriving and colour emerging all around us. Perhaps it is time to get out of the classroom and explore our surroundings, create a nature table or go for a walk!

This issue looks at colour and the ways we can use it in our classrooms – felt making, creating silhouettes and shadows. We also consider how a visit to a local gallery can inspire and enthral and we talk to one very popular gallery about how it engages its primary audience. Our poster in this issue – on the theme of treasured objects – uses the power of a historical artefact to inspire and aid the teaching of magnetism in science.

Cubism and colour mixing have always been popular topics in the primary classroom but it is always interesting to see how different schools tackle the same theme. One of this issue's contributors reminds us to look at those materials lurking at the back of the art cupboard. Ignored for so long, could they be used? Might such an act of frugality lead to a rediscovery of how good the material is? One school has certainly learnt to love powder paints.

In this issue we also look at the crucial topic of the New Primary Curriculum for England. We have pulled together all the important considerations to show how art and design fit into this latest curriculum

change. We hope that the issues raised will be thought-provoking, wherever you teach: education reform is never far from any of our working lives. Whether or not you are directly affected, please do join in the debates about the changes on the NSEAD website. Tell us what you think and, while you are online, remember that the member-only section of the NSEAD website is available to you as part of your START subscription. Through this you can find both back copies of the magazine and a wide array of information about art education to really enhance your teaching.

Future issues of START will include mark-making, history through art, sculpture and cross-curricular art. Please do get in touch with us if you are planning projects on these – or other themes. As ever, we urge you to get involved with the magazine, whether with a short book review (review copies provided) or a longer descriptive piece. We're here to help you through the process, so don't feel daunted. If you have something interesting to share just send a photo initially and from there we can work out how to share your ideas with your colleagues throughout the country.

Yours in art

Michèle

Michèle Claire Kitto
Editor
michelekitto@nsead.org

Wanted!! Teachers for the new START Readers' Panel

We are looking for art coordinators, non-specialist teachers, student teachers and NQTs to form a readers' panel in the magazine. In each edition different readers will be selected to review books and resources as well as comment on events and news. There will be lots of freebies for those who take part. Please send an email with your name, school and contact details to: michelekitto@nsead.org

We want your news...

Please send news items of interest to primary and pre-school teachers of art, craft and design to: **START Magazine**, NSEAD, 3 Mason's Wharf, Potley Lane, Corsham, Wiltshire, SN13 9FY or email them to michelekitto@nsead.org

Gallery round-up

TATE LIVERPOOL

Picasso: Peace and Freedom

21 May – 30 August 2010

This major exhibition, bringing together over 150 works by Picasso from across the world, will reveal a fascinating new insight into the artist's life as a tireless political activist and campaigner for peace, challenging the widely held view of the artist as creative genius, playboy and compulsive extrovert.

This is the first exhibition to explore in depth the post-WW2 period of the artist's life, and will reveal a new Picasso for a new time. The exhibition provides a timely look at Picasso's work in the Cold War era and how the artist transcended the ideological and aesthetic oppositions of East and West.



SCOTTISH NATIONAL GALLERY OF MODERN ART, EDINBURGH

What you see is where you're at – Part 2

27 March 2010 onwards

This spring will see the opening of the second major wave of *What you see is where you're at*, a programme of dynamic changing displays that celebrates the 50th anniversary of the founding of the Scottish National Gallery of Modern Art. There will be new displays of Scottish Colourist and German and Austrian Expressionist work; the first Scottish showing of important Ian Hamilton Finlay work, new and recent work by Scottish artist Callum Innes, the first Scottish showing of the internationally acclaimed contemporary artist Fiona Tan; a new display – *Young Scottish Painters* – highlighting emerging contemporary talent; and new work by 2009 John Watson Prize winner, Jacob Bee.

This second phase will also explore the Gallery's history. Since its foundation in 1960, the gallery has had only three directors (or keepers, as they were originally called) and the collection is heavily indebted to the personal vision of these individuals. The first director from 1960 to 1986, Douglas Hall, has been invited to curate a display of works that he is particularly proud of having acquired for the Gallery's collection. This display will include paintings by artists such as Fernand Léger, Chaim Soutine, LS Lowry, Joan Eardley, and William Johnstone.

www.nationalgalleries.org
Admission free.



TATE ST IVES

Open Door for Teachers

Sat 15 May, 1–4pm

An opportunity for teachers to visit the new exhibition (*Lily van der Stokker St Ives and the International Avant-garde*) and pick up the new teacher resource notes. The courtyard will be open from 14.30 for refreshments, to view handling materials and collect free resources including past exhibition catalogues.

www.tate.org.uk/stives

www.tate.org.uk/liverpool

Admission free, no booking required



THE ROYAL ACADEMY OF ARTS, LONDON

Paul Sandby RA: Picturing Britain, A Bicentenary Exhibition

Sackler Wing 13 March – 13 June 2010

This exhibition features over 80 works by the artist regarded as the 'father of English watercolour', Paul Sandby RA (1731–1809). It marks the bicentenary of the artist's death and celebrates one of the Royal Academy of Arts' Foundation Members.

Paul Sandby was celebrated in his day. The innovations and subject-matter that he introduced to the practice of watercolour painting in Britain had a profound influence on artists of successive generations, including Thomas Girtin and J M W Turner RA. However, from the mid-nineteenth century, Sandby's work slipped into obscurity. This exhibition aims to redress Sandby's position in the history of British art.



Summer Exhibition 2010

Main Galleries 14 June – 22 August 2010

The Royal Academy's 242nd Summer Exhibition will continue the tradition of displaying a wide range of recent work by both established and emerging artists in all media. The annual Summer Exhibition is the world's largest open-submission contemporary art exhibition.

www.royalacademy.org.uk

ORIEL MYRDDIN GALLERY, CARMARTHEN

Outsider

10 April – 15 May 2010

An exhibition of selected works by eight contemporary artists either living or working in Wales. This fascinating exhibition deals with intriguing ideas about the notion of the outsider. Each work offers insight into the nature of difference and otherness: some deal explicitly and poignantly with the identity of the outsider, others allude to the emotional and physical effect of being an outsider. Some artists introduce the possibility of positivity and humour in navigating this rocky terrain.

www.orielmyrddingallery.co.uk



Terry Frost (1915 – 2003), R. B. and W. Spiral for A. 1991, Oil and acrylic on canvas, 190.5 x 190.5 cm, Tate © Estate of Terry Frost

Pablo Picasso, *Still Life with Skull, Leeks and Pitcher* (Nature morte avec crâne, poireaux et pichet) 14 March 1945. Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco © Succession Picasso/DACS 2009

Douglas Douglas-Hamilton, *14th Duke of Hamilton and 11th Duke of Brandon, 1903-1973. Aviator* (With his wife Elizabeth Ivy Percy, Duchess of Hamilton, b. 1916), 1969. Oil on canvas: 89.80 x 129.80 cm (framed 115.60 x 155.00 x 10.20 cm) Scottish National Portrait Gallery. Purchased with the aid of The Art Fund, the National Heritage Memorial Fund and the Pilgrims Trust 1987

Liberty Jack, 2008. Janey Forgan © V&A Images

Paul Sandby, *View in Luton Park*, c. 1765. Pen, bodycolour and watercolour over graphite. 535 x 740 mm. Private collection



Duncan Grant colour mixing

Sarah Baker, arts leader, at Longlevens Junior School in Gloucester shares her new-found love for powder paint.

Stashed in the corner of our art room lay a redundant stack of powder paint. Many containers were unopened, some had been guiltily sneaked in there over time, having previously languished in under-the-sink classroom cupboards 'taking up space'. Teachers were at a loss about what to do with them. They were scared of the mess they might create. At the very same time, teachers were asking me to order more ready-mix bottles because they had run out of paint. It was time for new

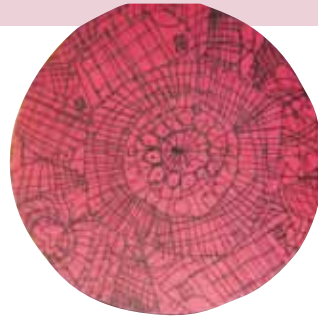
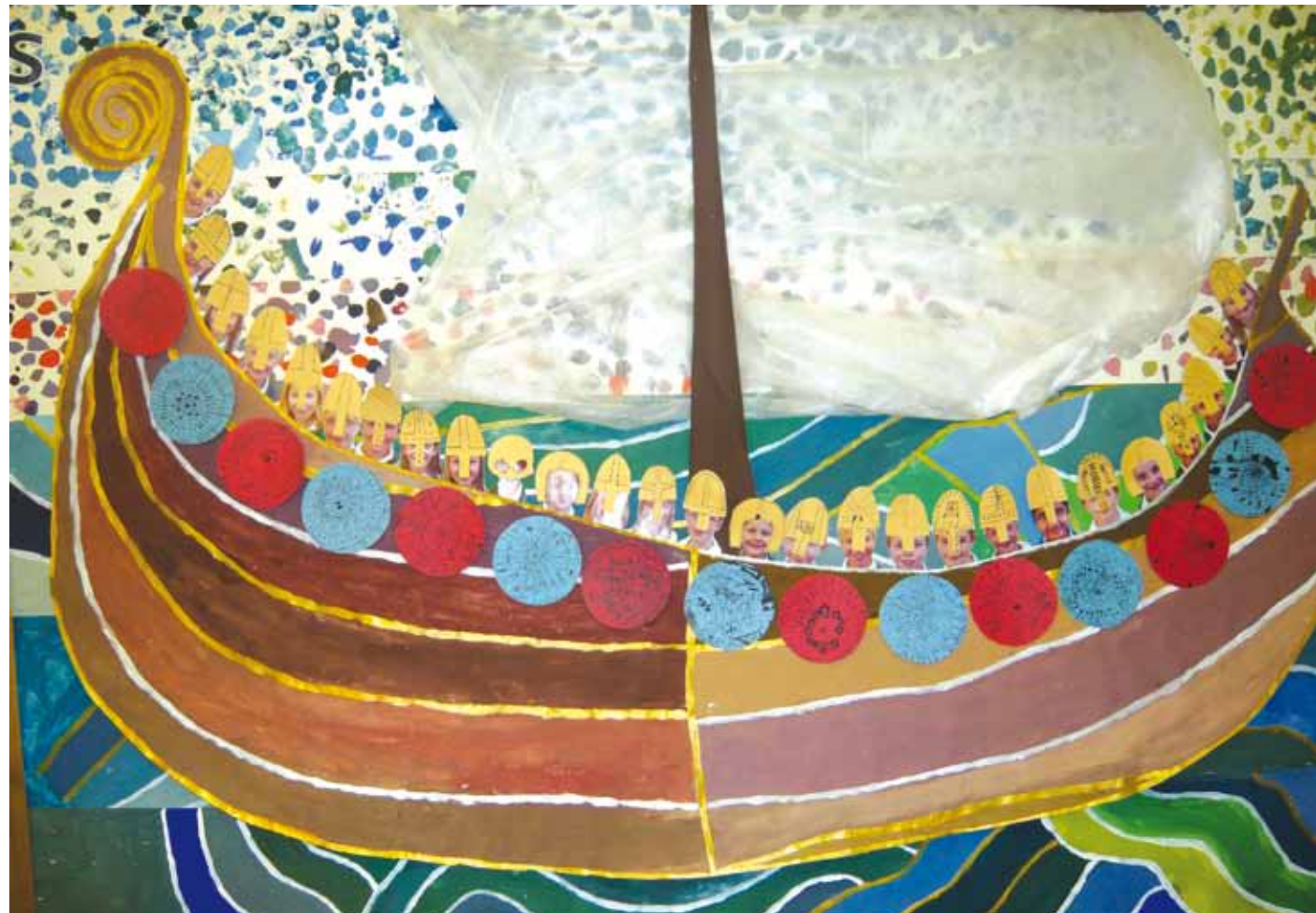
thinking, and the British artist, Duncan Grant provided me with the inspiration for how to do it.

In my experience, colour mixing in primary education has consisted largely of mixing secondary colours to complete a 'colour wheel', or 'using blue and yellow to create as many shades of green as possible'. Of course, both of these exercises have their place, and sketchbook work is invaluable. But, by using a piece of art as a starting point, I found that both teachers and pupils can become more engaged with the process and purpose of colour mixing as a means of producing their own piece of art.

The inspiration

The large canvas *Bathing* (1911) by Duncan Grant, provided the visual stimulus for this project (see www.tate.org.uk).

Grant's simplistic use of blocked colour in strips, particularly for the sea and rowing boat, are perfect for 7- to 11-year-old pupils to replicate in their own work. The composition of sea, sky, boat and figures also lent itself to collaborative large-scale work with pupils able to work on separate components of the picture before these were brought together into a single mural.



Bathing also provided ample opportunity to make cross-curricular links. I tied it into our year 4 History curriculum on 'The Vikings', turning the rowing boat into a longboat, which allowed further discussion and research into sea journeys made by the Vikings. It could just as easily link to the Greek Olympics, rivers or water topics.

Key skills

For pupils to work with confidence and skill it was necessary to teach them first to mix powder paint effectively. As I have previously mentioned, this is something that fills a great deal of teachers with dread. Over the years, I have found teacher modelling, combined with a clear explanation of what to do and what not to do has been invaluable.

On each table I provide a smallish quantity of the powdered colours, each in a separate container, such as a margarine tub with a spoon. Children work in pairs with an empty palette, a paintbrush and an empty yogurt pot half-full of water. Moving the container of paint powder close to the palette and not vice versa (explain this will avoid spillage), the children take a spoonful of each colour required and place it in a compartment of their palette. I then show how to add water with a paintbrush, explaining that although it is tempting to pour the water this would lead to coloured

water rather than quality paint. It is far better to begin with too-thick paint as this can easily be thinned. Watery paint can be tricky to thicken without creating lumps.

To reinforce this message, I ask children to visualise 'warning triangles' (we all make triangle signs with our fingers) when adding water and also when adding the colour black, as a tiny amount of black can overpower any other colour. In fact, when adding black, I ask children to try to count the grains of powder each time. This visual reminder really seems to help their understanding of its power and rarely now do I see it used excessively.

Collaborative work

Using the colours in *Bathing* as inspiration, pupils worked in pairs to mix a range of colours to describe the sea. Once they found a colour they liked, they recorded it in their sketchbooks and then used it to paint a section of the waves that we had already drawn on strips of paper. Through this process, the pupils were faced with many decisions and the room quickly became a hub of active learners deep in discussion with their partner.

Is this a blue or a grey?

Which section should we paint?

Should we thin it a little to make it go further?

Which colour would ours look best next to?

We are missing some lighter shades ...

At this point the less able pupils started mixing small amounts of colour to be used for spotting the sky while the more able pupils moved on to the trickier task of mixing an effective range of brown shades.

After a relatively short period of time (just two afternoons), we were able to construct our mural. The pupils were very pleased with their achievements, very happy to point out their contribution and to say how they had done it.

Final touches

As our topic was 'The Vikings', I completed the mural with class photos and added shields. These were designed by the pupils using a doodling technique inspired by an article in START 21 by Meg Fabian in 2006.

The powder paint stash

And so the powder paint stash is now diminishing. In fact, I may soon have to order some more. Following my lead, colleagues are now praising its virtues: 'lovely quality', 'much better to mix with', 'far more economical', 'nowhere near as much mess as I thought'. Both teachers and pupils have begun a new journey into the land of paint.



Felt making with pre-school children

Laura Hilton is audience development officer with Staffordshire Arts and Museum Service. Here she tells us how children between 3 and 4 years old created three felted wall hangings to hang alongside work by professionals in the *Nursery Rhymes* exhibition at the Shire Hall Gallery in Stafford.

Gathering ideas

In June 2008 I visited the 'Daisies' group at Stafford Children's Centre with some large photographs of the Shire Hall Gallery and talked about our plans for the *Nursery Rhymes* exhibition there. I explained that the art they produced would be hung alongside work by professional artists, for all visitors to see. We read *Each Peach Pear Plum* by Janet and Allan Ahlberg, sang some nursery rhymes and action songs, and made a flock of paper sheep for Little Bo Peep. By the end of the session, the children had given me a list of their favourite rhymes: Incy Wincy Spider, Little Bo Peep and Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star.

Making felt

A short while later, I returned to the Children's Centre with Fiona Waddle of the Stoke on Trent based arts group, the Cultural Sisters. Fiona worked with the children over two mornings to create the felt wall hangings. We worked with small groups of six to seven children at a time around a large table. Some of the children came back to us a number times during the two sessions, others just had a go at one part of the process.

Step 1

We began by checking that none of the children had wool allergies and we made sure they all had aprons to wear. The table was covered in a layer of towels and a layer of bubble wrap (which we did not tape down) and we had a bucket of water to hand.

Step 2

The children chose to make 'Twinkle Twinkle Little Star' first and they selected the colours which they thought would make a good night sky. They were each given a piece of merino wool (widely available online and from some craft catalogues) and were asked to pinch a fine wisp between finger and thumb and lay it on the table lengthways, together helping to form a rectangle. We talked about where wool comes from and we helped the children to tease out the pieces if they were a little too thick.



Step 3

When we had completed the rectangle and there were no visible gaps, the children added a second layer at right angles to the first, and then a third at right angles to the second.



Step 4

To add the decoration, the children selected new colours and laid them out to create bright, shiny stars. On the second hanging, we made a great big spider with a web and a smiley face, and on the third we made a flock of rainbow sheep, counting their legs as we did so. At this point, we could have added extra decoration if we had wanted to – silk threads, chiffon or even angel hair.



Step 5

Once the decoration was complete, we used squeezezy washing-up liquid bottles filled with water (and just a tiny bit of washing-up liquid) to wet the design down. We tried to make sure that it was evenly covered, but a few dry bits don't matter too much at this stage.



Step 6

We patted down the design with our hands to make sure that the water and washing-up liquid had soaked through every piece of felt, being especially careful not to forget about the edges and corners.

Step 7

Another piece of bubble wrap was placed on top of the design and we rubbed our hands around in circles to felt the wool. This takes quite a lot of hard work so we sang some songs while we did it, starting with the nursery rhyme we were busy illustrating. Halfway through, we took the bubble wrap off the top and turned the felt over so we could rub the back too.



Step 8

We rolled the felt and bubble wrap into a big sausage and rubbed it from side to side then patted it hard, just to make sure that the wool had felted properly.

Step 9

The felt was unwrapped and washed in the bucket of water to get most of the soap out. It takes a couple of goes to do this properly, so make sure you have easy access to water!

Step 10

The felt was laid out on the table and smoothed into shape, then covered with towels and patted down so it would dry flat. We looked for the stars and sheep that we had made and talked about the colours and how the wool had changed.



Display

Because the finished felt pieces had uneven edges, we decided the best way to display them would be to pin them straight onto the walls, rather than trying to frame them. We used sticky velcro to do this in the Shire Hall Gallery, but for long-term display a piece of dowel rod can easily be stitched to the back and used to attach a picture wire or ribbon for hanging.

The work was exhibited at the Shire Hall Gallery between September and October 2009 and is now on permanent display at Stafford Children's Centre.

Cubist collage



Anne Wilford head of art at Queen's College Preparatory School in London shares an imaginative project inspired by her own interest in Cubism and exhibitions and museums she has visited.

I decided to undertake an art project based on violins and music, and to use the ideas of cubism as a starting point. I was very impressed by the cubist pictures included in the Tate Gallery's 1994 exhibition entitled *Picasso: Sculptor/Painter*. I had also been to visit the Picasso Museum in Paris and again felt inspired by his cubist pictures.

Many people may be reluctant to use cubist works by such artists as Pablo Picasso or Georges Braque as starting points for young children because they appear chaotic and fragmented as well as being sophisticated and complex works of art with many layers of meaning. However, after visiting the Paris Picasso Museum, I recognised a potential link

between the way a child may learn to understand the world and the way an artist may interpret his vision of the world and his surroundings. I felt that young children would understand the idea of breaking up objects to see them from many sides at the same time. I also felt that they would greatly enjoy the freedom and variety of the cubist style. I felt that focusing on either analytical or synthetic cubism as separate styles would be too sophisticated for young children. Instead, I decided to amalgamate key elements from both styles: the restricted colour range from analytical cubism and the more decorative features such as found imagery and a variety of collage materials from synthetic cubism.

With a class of 9- to 10-year-olds, I initiated an informal discussion about cubism. I told them it was a twentieth-century art movement started by Picasso and Braque in about 1907 and we looked at various books and postcards for

illustration. Then I explained that we were going to construct a cubist collage picture about violins and music. The class had been exploring the process of telling the time to the hour and half hour in our mathematics work.

Cubist artists often include words symbols and numbers in their pictures so we decided to use computers to type these for our collages. The class brainstormed words to do with violins and music, which were recorded on a flip chart. The children selected different typefaces and sizes and text colours and each child used these to produce at least four words. In ICT the children were learning to find keys on the keyboard, use the space bar and change the font size, type and colour.

I gathered together a range of violins. The children completed observational drawings of these using pencil and graphite pencils. I encouraged them to



make their observational drawings from different angles and to incorporate many sides of the instruments.

Picasso and Braque often used neutralised colours or a one-colour scheme in their collages. Whilst looking at such pictures as Picasso's *The Violin* (1914) we noticed that paper from a variety of sources such as old wallpaper segments and discoloured and aged papers from recycled sources had been used. To create this antique effect each child painted a piece of A4 paper with tea. I explained that we would be using a limited range of colours to include black, grey, white, brown and shades of these colours. There would also be a limited use of red, blue and green.

Once all the preliminary work had been completed, the cutting could begin. Each child was given a named plastic wallet and told to keep all their pieces in it. We looked closely again at such pictures as Braque's *Bottle, Glass and Pipe* (1914) and Picasso's *Woman with a Guitar* (1915) and *Ma Jolie* (1914). Then we started.

First we cut the tea-stained paper, we looked closely and observed curved shapes and rectangles of all shapes and sizes. I then gave each child a selection of coloured paper from the limited colour range. The children then cut these to form the parts of a clock, including the minute and hour hands. Next the children cut out typed words and headings from their own typing and from a range of newspapers and magazines.

When all the components of the collages had been collected it was time to start organising our collected collage materials

into a structured environment. I chose A3 paper as the most appropriate size for the finished piece of work. I stressed that parts of the collage would overlap, being layered on the page, and that only traces of real objects would be seen in the finished pictures. One child said that it was like throwing something up in the air and seeing how it landed. Another then suggested that we might actually want to throw all our collage pieces in the air to see the effect on paper.

The class were confident and eager to get started. They seemed very sure about where they would place pieces on their collages. It was a delight to see that they had assumed ownership of their work so instantly.

When all the collage pieces had been glued down we once again looked at the work of Picasso and Braque. This time we focused on the marks the artists had made and explored how they had added tone by using pointillist and cross-hatching techniques. I put white, grey and black oil pastels on the table and the children started making marks. Their response was exciting to watch as they began to realise that their own creative mark-making would determine and consolidate their finished pieces. Some made a careful series of different size dots while others smudged and swirled in a crescendo of mark-making. Some children needed to be gently reminded to stop, before their collages became completely obliterated.

The delight on the children's faces was wonderful to watch as they surveyed their finished collages. Their pride in their work



was palpable and they were keen to talk about each other's work. Picasso was greatly interested in the way in which children saw things and their infectious enjoyment in making pictures. "When I was a child I painted like a great master, but to be able to paint like the children I'll have to work at it for the rest of my life."

I greatly enjoyed this project and feel that my class learnt a great deal about observational drawing, collage techniques and the work of Picasso and Braque. The collages could be extended to incorporate strips of material including batik, fabric and silk work. Finished work could be displayed with a range of different instruments, images and photographs of the different stages of the collage process.

Resources

Violins, images of violins, collage papers, photocopied sheets of music, tea, oil pastels, PVA glue, and A3 paper.

The Oxford Children's A to Z of Art by Malcolm and Meryl Doney (ISBN 0-19-910470-0)

A Day with Picasso by Susanne Pfleger (ISBN 3-7913-2165-X)

Picasso: Sculptor/Painter by Simon Wilson (ISBN 1-85437-135-5)

Pablo Picasso 1881-1973 by Carsten-Peter Warncke (ISBN 3-8228-7221-0)



Silhouettes explored through painting and collage

Steve Pratchett, former senior lecturer in art and design and in geography at University College Plymouth St Mark and St John shares a project undertaken with 10-year-olds which explored silhouettes through a range of different experiences.

Some of a young child's first experiences of silhouette will be through observing and playing with shadows.

There are very few things as rich in fascination and mystery for a child as shadows. A shadow is both real and unreal at the same time: it is something which is 'object like' but which does not possess certain characteristics that belong to objects of the physical world. (Petter 1996: 120)

Silhouettes

When an object is interposed between the eye and an extremely bright light source the pupil contracts to reduce the amount of light entering the eye. As a

result, the object appears dark in contrast to the background and colour, pattern and texture can disappear. Unlike the camera, the eye cannot compensate with 'fill in flash' to bring out these features.

Within silhouettes there is no colour, pattern or texture to distract the eye or to disrupt the perception of shape or contour. Hence, the eye quickly becomes 'bored' with the featureless blackness of the silhouette's interior and is drawn out to the contours of the shape. It is the detail and intricacies of these contours which hold most fascination for the human eye.

Silhouettes also heighten awareness of tone and contrast. When children explore silhouettes, they soon discover that the tonal contrast between light background and dark foreground can be exploited in image-making, to create the illusion of depth and perspective.



Responding to Pienkowski

Pupils benefit from understanding how artists and designers work, how they can gain from encompassing artists' working methods and how they can re-use the techniques and processes of professionals in their own way and at their own level ... it is exciting to consider how ideas and influences emerge through exploring other people's art and design forms and their cultures, both past and present. (Stephens 1994: 28)

A class of 10-year-old primary children at Manford Primary School were encouraged to critically respond to Pienkowski's silhouette paintings (see fig 3) by using the



Fig 4



Fig 5



Fig 6



Fig 7

following elements from the methodologies suggested by Clement, Piotrowski and Roberts, (1998: 74). These are:

- pastiche (exploring another artist's work for subject matter, recreating the artist's work, borrowing)
- working directly from (using a piece of work to learn more about it, e.g. colour)
- working in the style of (using methods that a specific artist uses, recreating the subject matter of a familiar painting)
- studying artists' methods (making studies of sections or details of works by different artists to compare different methods of using materials and processes)
- analysing visual elements (comparing and contrasting the different ways artists use colour, line, tone, shape, form and space in making work).

The children used marbling inks dripped into a tray of water using pipettes to create their marbled backgrounds on A3-size white cartridge paper. The selection of colour was important here to determine the colour mood of the final painting. When the backgrounds were dry (in our case, the next week), the children then drew their silhouettes onto these backgrounds in pencil and filled in with black paint. At this point, it is vital to provide children with a range of appropriate brushes. Children cannot

produce quality silhouettes of intricate shape and contour with inappropriate brushes. A range of different-sized watercolour brushes were used. The bristles are soft and come to a fine point, which facilitates detailed 'drawing' with the brush. Large clumsy nylon or hogs hair bristle brushes cannot achieve this and are doomed to produce disappointing and frustrating results for the children.

For some strange reason, in educational settings, small hands are often given large, heavy and unwieldy brushes and chunky crayons with broad blunt ends, with which it is impossible to make an accurate mark. This is in contrast to the thinner colouring pencils, biro and felt pens and the brushes supplied with children's paintboxes that children use at home and which are far more in proportion to the size of the child's hand. Looking at the size of a 4-year-old's hand and scaling up to adult size quickly reveals the size, weight and thickness of the drawing materials that they are being asked to use. It is hardly surprising that they are limited to producing rough bold outlines or that they grip them with the whole hand. (Hope 2008: 29)

Note that the children have not simply copied Pienkowski's work. Instead they have 'worked in his style – using methods a specific artist used' (Roberts 1998: 74) to explore their own ideas.

There is a narrow distinction between copying and 'working in the style' of an artist. UK classrooms and corridors are not short of copied Picasso portraits, Monet water gardens and Van Gogh sunflowers or 'Starry Night'. There is nothing wrong with working from these artists' ideas, but plenty to suggest that copying can limit artistic outcomes ... the more creative act is to transfer some of this knowledge to original artwork and add something new. (Barnes 2002: 179)

As well as encouraging children's exploration of tone, shape and contour,

the marbling offers opportunities to exploit line and colour. The swirling movement of the marbling and the colour mood can both be exploited at the silhouette painting stage. This is particularly noticeable in figure 5 where the movement and colour of the marbling are used by the child to suggest water. In some instances the marbling is used to communicate ideas and atmosphere to the painting. For example, in figure 6 the lines of marbling trailing behind the witch's broom suggests movement, the lines of marbling writhing up from the base of the tree accentuates its gnarled character and the swirling colours surrounding the witch perhaps imply the conjuring-up of spells, while those around the submarine and octopuses in figure 5 contribute to the sense of titanic struggle.



Fig 1



Fig 2



Fig 8

Fig 1. Haunted House. A silhouette painted in black powder paint on a marbled background by a 10-year-old girl from Manford Primary School in Essex.

Fig 2. Bonfire Night. Children silhouetted against a bonfire holding sparklers and watching the fireworks by a 9-year-old girl from Manford Primary School in Essex.

Fig 3. Fairy Tales by Jan Pienkowski
Published by Picture Puffins

Fig 4. The Fairy and the Baby Prince by a 10-year-old girl from Manford Primary School in Essex.

Fig 5. The Submarine by a 10-year-old boy from Manford Primary School in Essex.

Fig 6. Silhouette painting featuring a witch and her cottage by a 10-year-old girl from Manford Primary School in Essex.

Fig 7. Swan and Signets by a 10-year-old girl from Manford Primary School in Essex.

Fig 8. Pegasus. A silhouette painting of a winged horse and a skeleton by a 10-year-old boy from Manford Primary School in Essex.

Fig 9. Painting in powder paint of people silhouetted against bonfires on Bonfire Night by pupils from Manford Primary School in Essex.

Fig 10. Exploring colour mixing with a limited palette.

Fig 11. Volcano by a group of three 10-year-old children from Manford Primary School in Essex.



Bonfire Night

It is a disappointment to walk into some schools and see that the children have never had the opportunity to mix any colours together themselves. The artwork is trapped in a clash of reds, blues, yellows, oranges and greens without a more subtle shade in sight. (Barnes 2002: 98)

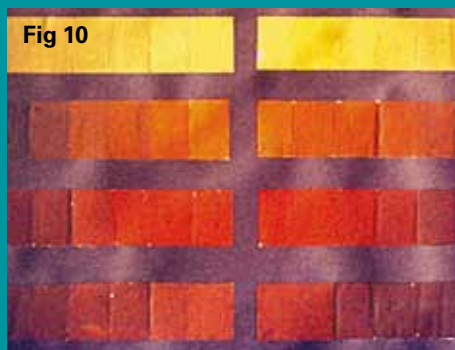
As Bonfire Night approached, I instigated a project that led a class of 10-year-old children in an investigation of silhouettes. This began by looking at video footage and photographs of people and firefighters standing silhouetted in front of fires. Some children acted as models dressed in clothing for firework night and stood behind a large hanging white sheet that was back-lit with an overhead projector so that their silhouettes appeared on the sheet. These silhouettes were then observed and drawn as part of an observational drawing lesson, which focused on the contours of the silhouette shapes. The following lesson focused on fire and flames. The children observed the colours and movements of flames in photographs and on video and colour-mixing experiments took place using a limited palette to explore the colours of flames (see figure 10).

Using their colour experiments for reference, the children began painting their bonfires onto black paper. Note the

mixing that has taken place on the page as further colour has been worked into wet colours already on the paper. Also, notice the movement in the brush strokes to suggest the writhing of the flames and the use of dry brush technique to create the feathering as the flames die out towards their tips, and to indicate the speed of the rockets. When the bonfire paintings were dry, the final lesson involved children using their silhouette sketches as a reference to create their figures silhouetted against the bonfire. For this they used a variety of brushes, including fine pointed brushes to create the detail in the contours of the silhouetted shapes.

Silhouette collage

The medium of collage can be described as a recipe for visual confusion. This is because without careful control of abundant colour and pattern, the results of cutting, tearing



and sticking things down tend to look jumbled and disorganized. The best collages, by contrast, show considerable skill in sorting materials and making them work together. (Barnes 2002: 113)

Black sugar paper collage was used as another medium for exploring silhouettes, this time ones which interpreted action words, e.g. collision, demolition, shatter, quake, explode.

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Throwing our primary colours against the wall



Frances Williams is education and outreach manager at the South London Gallery in Peckham. South London Gallery has acquired a reputation over the last ten years or so as a local gallery showing some of the best contemporary art being made today by both British and international artists. Here she describes their work with local primary schools.

The gallery is housed in a beautiful double-height Victorian building sandwiched between residential housing, a public housing estate and the Camberwell School of Art. The busy Peckham Road is to our front with, as yet, no lollipop person or zebra crossing, alas.

Our most immediate noisy neighbour is Oliver Goldsmith Primary school: if you stand in our back garden, you can hear the children screaming around the yard in their break times. We work with 40 schools in Southwark and see nearly 2000 children pass through our doors every year.





You'd be forgiven for thinking that the sort of conceptual art to be seen in such exhibitions as the Turner Prize isn't the average primary school teacher's (or pupil's) cup of tea. But I am happy to say that, in our case at least, you would be wrong.

We work hard to make our education programme relevant and engaging for teachers and children alike, for both their pleasure and learning. Because the nature of the learning at the gallery is experiential – have a walk around it and see how it makes you feel – translating even the most complex theme is something to be relished. Seeing how children respond directly to works of art is a joy and very often eye-opening too.

'For our latest exhibition, artist Michael Landy has created a giant bin in the gallery into which over four hundred artists including well-known names such as Damian Hirst have thrown their works.'

Take the *Art Bin* for example. For our latest exhibition, artist Michael Landy has created a giant bin in the gallery into which over four hundred artists including well-known names such as Damian Hirst have thrown their works. It's a giant accumulation of canvases and sculptures, half smashed up, and it's growing larger each day. In the words of Landy himself, it's a "monument to creative failure": a relevant if tricky subject for teachers to embrace in these days of Ofsted-regulated league tables. (What role does failure play in success? How do we learn? What do we value and what do we throw away?)

After receiving our exhibition information pack, Goodrich Community Primary School decided to give the *Art Bin* a whirl. They hadn't been before and booked in for a full day at the gallery, with three visits for three classes of 8- and 9-year-olds. Jo, the gallery's schools' officer, spoke to the school's arts co-ordinator, Fiona, about what she wanted. Fiona asked if her children could explore environmental issues through the work. So crushing and shredding and experimenting with materials was our focus when the groups arrived one very rainy Monday morning not knowing what to expect at all.

We began with our usual introductory chat with the children: had anyone been to the gallery before? One or two had. What did they think they would see in the gallery? Paintings, sculptures and drawings were mooted, and one

enterprising little girl suggested, "weird things". How to behave in a gallery? Well sorry, no running, shouting or touching, but talking and enjoying yourself – yes, very much allowed.

We asked the children if they could make a list of all the interesting things they could see in the *Art Bin*. They could use drawings or words, whatever they liked. Off like a shot to investigate, they crowded around the bin, peering in and shouting "a plastic cow!", "a gold ball!", "a head made of bread!" Our education team had conversations with them around why they thought the artists had put things in the bin and what did they throw away of their own.

After a long time looking and list-making we formed a circle to play a game of What's In The Bin? Each person in turn read out one of the artworks from their list remembering the rule: 'If it's been said before – sit down on the floor.' This memory game got everyone giggling and squirming to look back at the bin as we tried to think of more things as we went around.

After that, we split into different groups according to the different types of materials we could see: plastic, paper and polystyrene. Each group went off to the education space in turn to try out ways of getting rid of materials, (shredding, adding water and burying in soil). This section of the workshop elicited the most conversation about where things go when you don't need them anymore, the properties of materials and how to bash up a plastic bottle.

Back in the main gallery space, one group used their bodies to make movements representing different things in the bin: from swirling paper cups to splashed-flat ink blots. The other group watched their performance and guessed the artworks they were depicting – shouting out everything from a toothbrush to a man vomiting babies. (The latter was a definite favourite.)

The session lasted an hour and a half and everyone went away knowing a lot more about the *Art Bin* and having thought hard about how best to get rid of old cartons, empty crisp packets ...

This wouldn't be an unusual Monday morning for primary schools visiting the South London Gallery. In the last ten or so years, many galleries nationwide have really opened up to schools, offering a range of services from simple visits and

artist-led workshops to education packs and teacher continuing professional development courses.

Unlike big institutions, such as the Tate, we are able to offer schools bespoke services that fit closely around their needs. We are also lucky in being able to offer art on the doorstep: many schools walk here or get on a bus for a journey of only twenty or thirty minutes. This means that the children can come back anytime they like with their families and it puts us on the map as a social resource as well as one for learning. Our half-term family workshops are just one of the ways local families get involved.

Increasingly we are developing longer term relationships with teachers to enable them to get the most out of what we offer. We also happen to think that we can learn from them. Last year, for example, a project with two Secondary Schools, called Double-Take, saw works of contemporary art hung in school halls and corridors. (The gallery has a collection of art by many leading young British artists.) This really enabled teachers to get stuck into art as a means of working across the whole curriculum.

All in all, we aim to make a trip to the gallery more memorable than the bus ride it takes to get there, or the meal you have once you've done the official tour. It's about embedding the gallery meaningfully in the local community as a place to come regularly and to try out new experiences and ideas. In the words of one of the children: "It's not just rubbish, it's loads and loads of art rubbish."

Images (excluding image to the right overleaf): Michael Landy, *Art Bin*, 2010, installation view South London Gallery. Photo: Andy Staggs



Centenary illustration project

Giles Hughes, deputy head at Colmore Junior School, tells us how his school celebrated its 100th birthday in September 2009 with a Centenary Fair which included stalls, live music, displays of artefacts and artwork and the launch of a book charting the school's history.

The event was a huge success: it was well received by the local community and, most importantly, it didn't rain. What the visitors to the fair didn't see was that for the preceding six months, staff, artists and children had run numerous art projects that enabled the children to undertake research in, and engage with, the school's history.

We made contact with many ex-pupils and staff through advertising a Centenary Launch event. Here we displayed hundreds of old photographs, school records, old log books and registers. Teams of children at the school welcomed over 300 visitors – taking their photographs, interviewing them and



scanning any documents they brought with them. As this event had left us with a mountain of information to catalogue and record, we decided to put together a book that featured the best of what we uncovered. Our School Improvement Plan also highlighted a desire to develop a more creative curriculum in school, particularly in History, so producing a book that the whole school could use seemed to tick all the right boxes.

We had generated such a wealth of information that it was difficult to know what to include and what to discard. Some decisions were easier than others – amazingly we made contact with an old lady who was also celebrating her 100th birthday. Joyce Wardle could remember her first day at school in 1914, aged 5. She could recall classes of sixty children seated according to ability with the brightest at the front. Although Joyce found herself seated somewhere near the middle of the class, she lived an amazing life and had many touching recollections of her years at the school, including the time that staff bought her a doll when her father was called up for the First World War.

Small groups of children worked together to edit the interviews, while others were given the task of illustrating the text. Producing the number of illustrations required, and to a high standard, was a challenge. I organised small groups of illustrators, selecting children from our gifted and talented register. Each group was given a chapter of the book to illustrate. I tried to ensure that each group was given different media to work with and I steered them towards particular styles and ways of working in the hope that the book would have variety. Supplied with digital cameras, one of these groups became our photography group and worked with photographic artist, Ming de Nasty (www.mingdenasty.co.uk).

It became clear from an early stage that in order to produce a truly professional publication, we needed the help and advice of a book designer and so we enlisted the help of Ian Richards. His help and experience proved invaluable and each week he came into school with laptop and scanner and worked with the groups – showing them how they could turn their ideas into reality. This was quite a feat, as the children threw up ideas and suggestions at a rapid pace.

Because we were working to a tight budget, we had to think long and hard about what material to include. There was enough material for hundreds of pages and we only had sixty-eight to play with. We were spoiled for choice when it came to stories and anecdotes from the war years but one anecdote stood out above all others.

'As the children filed out of the school at lunchtime, a German pilot opened fire, spraying machine gun bullets at the fleeing children.'

An ex-pupil remembered a time when the school site was mistaken for the nearby Longbridge Spitfire factory. As the children filed out of the school at lunchtime, a German pilot opened fire, spraying machine gun bullets at the fleeing children. Incredibly, no one was injured, although the memory still brought tears to the eyes of an old lady as she spoke to the children conducting the interview. This was powerful stuff and certainly left our children in no doubt about the drama and hardship of the war. To effectively illustrate the story we kept the palette of colours dark and sombre, drawing charcoal over old newsprint and brown paper. Scanning the images into photoshop, we were able to add a dramatic black skyline of buildings to create a striking set of images.



We were lucky that the school still retains the original head teacher's logbooks spanning the last hundred years. This invaluable archive threw up many fascinating stories and pieces of information. Reading through one hundred years' worth of records was a tedious job at times, and it took the children a while to adjust to reading the copper plate handwriting. We decided to include a selection of our favourite entries in the book. These entries were introduced by our very own 'Colmore Bookworm', a character invented to guide the reader through this section. The children selected the most dramatic and amusing entries to illustrate. My personal favourite was the tale of a boy who stole phosphorous from the school science department. Unfortunately, it ignited in his trouser pockets resulting in him being sent to hospital in a 'motor ambulance'. There was no shortage of children volunteering to illustrate this story! The logbook section of the book contains a wide variety of media, from simple pencil drawings to collage, watercolour painting and photo-montage. This variety helped to keep this section fresh and vibrant.

Away from the illustration groups, our photographic group were kept busy. They decided to create a fold-out section in the book. Their idea was to make a timeline of the last hundred years, made up of portrait photographs of ex-pupils from that time. The children had a huge collection of photographs to work with, having taken many portraits at the Centenary Launch event. These needed to be catalogued, arranged and then edited. The selected photos were cropped and trimmed in Photoshop before being placed on a background showing pictures of the school. The children even altered the colours in the timeline with the oldest people appearing in sepia tones, moving



into black and white, and finally into full colour for the most recent faces.

During our research, we found many beautiful old photographs of the school. Photographs from the 1930s showed groups of children posing in costume for various dramatic productions. Our photographic group studied these old photos and set out to reproduce modern versions of them. This meant finding the exact location of the original photograph, then dressing, arranging and posing children as in the originals. The children loved doing this and the resulting photographs look wonderful when displayed alongside the originals.

Other illustration tasks meant that whole classes of children could work together on chapters. Individual children were asked to illustrate memories that were collected at the launch event. For this activity I supplied the children with photocopies of school records, the children used these papers in collage pieces so that anyone taking a closer look at the resulting illustrations would find snatches of text relating to the school, giving these pages an extra dimension.

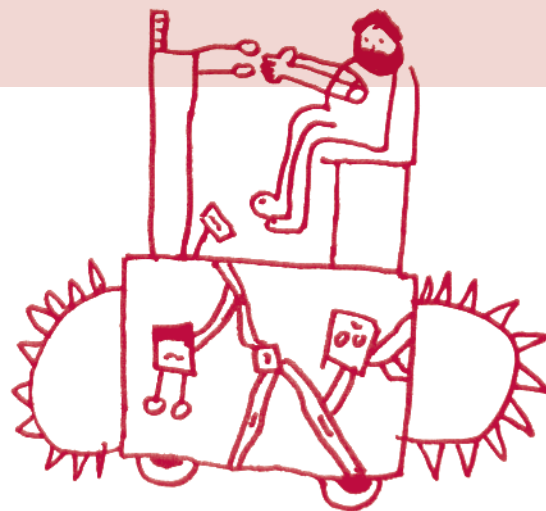
Wherever possible, we tried to link other school events into our centenary research. For example, the illustrator Michael Foreman paid a visit to school to promote some of his latest books. We talked Michael into giving a drawing demonstration to a class of children. As I told the children stories about an old member of staff, Michael sketched illustrations at the front of the class. The children loved watching him work and were amazed at how quickly he was

able to come up with humorous and engaging drawings. This experience gave them real motivation to create sketches and illustrations of their own. We scanned Michael's drawings and allowed the children to draw over them, adding colour and details using simple painting software.

The completed book has been a real hit with the children and local community. We have placed sets of books in each classroom to be used as group reading books as well as in local history projects. By making the book available for sale to the public, we managed to raise funds for further art projects. If your school has a forthcoming centenary, anniversary or special occasion, then why not produce a book of your own? These books not only create a lasting legacy but also provide a valuable and engaging resource that can be used for years to come.



Get drawing!



"The art of drawing which is of more real importance to the human race than that of writing ... should be taught to every child just as writing is."

At least that was what John Ruskin believed, and his view was the inspiration behind the formation of the Campaign for Drawing in 2000 (www.campaignfordrawing.org).

An independent charity supported by such luminaries of the artistic world as Quentin Blake, David Hockney and Gerald Scarfe, the Campaign works to raise the profile of drawing as a tool for thought, creativity, social and cultural engagement. It does this through the activities of two programmes: the Big Draw (nationwide, celebratory and free events to raise the profile of drawing), and Power Drawing, its professional development programme.

And why does the Campaign want to get us all drawing? The answer is because it sees drawings 'as perceptual and conceptual tools, aids to thinking and to communicating ideas' (*Power Drawing: Active Learning* by Eileen Adams):

If you do enough drawing, you will become both a better learner and a better drawer ... it enables children to reflect upon and re-work their experience, in order to understand it. It reinforces what has been learned. It motivates children to learn and gives them practical and intellectual tools to aid their learning, promoting them to question, to wonder, to generate ideas and to solve problems. (Ibid.)

Learning to draw can help learning itself because:

Drawing is another symbolic tool, just like words and numbers. It helps children construct a body of knowledge [that] is not always learning what, but also learning how. In learning to draw, children will learn how to think visually and spatially ... In a world where information and ideas are increasingly mediated through visual means, drawing by hand and with the aid of a computer allows pupils to be more effective learners. (Ibid.)

The Campaign's professional development programme, Power Drawing, focuses on the use of drawing as a tool for learning. Eileen Adams, the director, worked with Clare Price of ArtForms, to develop a CPD programme for one artist and one teacher in 15 primary schools in Leeds. This involved school-based curriculum development supported by three day-long sessions providing inspiration and direction. Opportunities for planning, sharing and reflecting on experience, for reviewing work in schools and for experimenting with drawing strategies increased teachers' confidence and gave artists insights into the ways children learn through drawing. At the end of the programme the participants had created a valuable resource that could be used by teachers in other schools.

Teachers who had taken part in the programme identified a number of changes to their usual practice. They said that they were now using drawing in a broader range of curriculum areas, they were introducing a wider range of drawing strategies and they were working with a



Reference

Eileen Adams (2009) *Power Drawing: Active Learning* (book and CD), Campaign for Drawing and ArtForms: Leeds.

Books in the Power Drawing Series cost £5.50 each, including postage and packing from NSEAD, 3 Mason's Wharf, Potley Lane, Corsham, Wiltshire, SN13 9FY. Telephone 01225 810134. Email: bookshop@nsead.org.

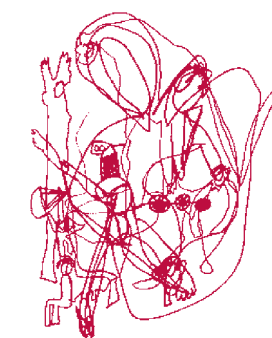
wider range of drawing media. Many reported that they found it easier to create more opportunities for experimentation and reflection and that they were making use of drawing to prompt and shape thinking, rather than merely to illustrate and summarise. They found that pupils were drawing in a variety of environments inside and outside school and that they themselves were placing greater value on pupils' efforts and achievements in drawing.

At the end of the course, the group agreed that drawing:

- enhances pupils' enjoyment of learning
- improves children's motivation and capacity to learn
- is a powerful medium for learning across the curriculum
- develops skills of perception, communication, invention and action
- helps raise educational standards across the ability spectrum
- nurtures creativity and develops the imagination and powers of invention
- develops children's visual and spatial understanding
- has an important role to play in developing literacy skills
- nurtures social skills of collaboration, negotiation and shared decision-making.

The Campaign's strongly held belief is that children who draw will find themselves becoming the sort of active and enthusiastic lifelong learners that – according to the Green Paper of 1998 entitled *The Learning Age* – will play a vital role in the knowledge-based global economy of the twenty-first century. They say that their work will be complete when the phrase 'I can't draw' disappears from common use.

Teachers are invited to share their own case studies on the use of drawing at www.campaignfordrawing.net. For further details, contact: Eileen Adams eileen@campaignfordrawing.org



A new curriculum, a new opportunity

Robin Widdowson, Assistant General Secretary of NSEAD, sheds light on the new Primary Curriculum in England, and its impact on the arts.

Introduction

A revised primary curriculum was launched by the Department for Children, Schools and Families, and the Qualifications and Curriculum Development Agency (DCSF/QCDA) at the start of 2009. This will be statutory for all year groups in 2011. This short review provides an overview of the new curriculum, based on materials that have been published to date by QCDA.

Some background

It has been ten years since the last revision of the primary curriculum in England. Recent government and independent reviews have identified the need to respond to changes in the wider world, to changes in children's needs, and to changes in our understanding of learning and teaching. The Rose Review was commissioned by the government

specifically to look at the national curriculum and its findings led to the primary curriculum reforms that have now been put in place.

So what does the new primary curriculum look like?

The most obvious change that most teachers will notice is the move from a focus on subjects to a focus on areas of learning. The aim here is to increase coherence and better meet the needs of young people in the twenty-first century. Other changes reflect a more coherent sense of purpose and an increased focus on children themselves.

There are now statutory curriculum aims embedded into each area of learning. These aims are shared across the primary and secondary phase to support progression and to ensure that all children have the opportunity to become successful learners, confident individuals and responsible citizens. Underpinning these aims – and running through the new

curriculum – are six skills that are to be embedded into all that we offer children in our schools. The six skills are: literacy, numeracy, ICT capability, learning and thinking skills, personal and emotional skills, and social skills.

The new primary curriculum moves away from the traditional focus on thirteen subjects. Instead it organises knowledge, skills and understanding into seven areas of learning: understanding the arts; understanding English, communication and languages; mathematical understanding; scientific and technological understanding; historical, geographical and social understanding; understanding physical development, health and well being; and religious education. The first of these, 'understanding the arts', is the one that concerns me here, as this is the area that embraces art and design alongside music, dance and drama.

When schools develop a new curriculum they should not simply see these areas as new subjects: taken together they provide the essential knowledge, skills

and understanding that primary children need to develop through their primary years. Schools are being encouraged to work across the areas and to make connections that work for them and their learners. This is illustrated through the seven case studies that can be found on the QCDA National Curriculum website, each of which embraces more than one area of learning.

Progression and assessment

The new primary curriculum is designed to enhance progression through the primary phase, more effectively linking with both the early years foundation stage (EYFS) and the new Key Stage 3 curriculum. This is achieved through the curriculum progression sections that describe how 'understanding the arts' looks at the early, middle and later stages of the primary phase.

Guidance on how to assess pupils in relation to the New Secondary Curriculum is provided in a set of key principles and revised level descriptions. Unfortunately, guidance for Assessing Pupil Progress (APP) is not available for teachers of 'understanding the arts'. Nevertheless, the key principles are helpful in encouraging schools to think carefully about the purposes and processes of assessment.

The revised level descriptions for art and design have been updated to ensure they accord with those for the New Secondary Curriculum. However, while they are described as being important in setting out national standards of performance, from 2011 they are no longer statutory (except for English, mathematics and science).

It is important to note that the levels described are still specifically related to the legacy curriculum areas and there are no descriptions that relate to the broad area of learning, or specifically to art areas other than music.

What's out there to help me?

The new primary curriculum materials are now live on the QCDA website. They are supported by a range of helpful interactive tools that include a tour of the site itself – and it is worth making this your starting point. There is also a short overview of the new primary curriculum and a new tool that helps you design your own curriculum

and produce medium-term plans. There is a 'compare' function which helps you to make effective links across the curriculum and there are case studies that show how pilot schools have already implemented the changes.

Primary schools will have an additional INSET day in the 2010/2011 school year and schools will have some five terms to prepare. Although there is a wide range of support, most of it takes a whole school perspective and at present there is no specific support for those involved with art and design.

What are the challenges and opportunities?

There are many aspects of the curriculum changes that are helpful to teachers of art and design. It is refreshing to be encouraged to design our own curriculum to meet the needs of our children, communities and settings. Equally, the importance statements remind us why we teach art, craft and design. We are also reminded of how the arts can help develop transferable skills that will help children thrive in schools, at home, in their wider communities and in the future workplace. The placing of art and design within a more coherent area of learning helps us see the links across the arts that are so much a part of contemporary practice.

Critics might draw attention to the limited support and guidance for non-specialists, or to the rather unhelpful, and perhaps backward-looking focus on formal qualities. We might wish for a greater focus on critical thinking and ideas, rather than simply on 'making'. We might question the failure to draw explicit attention to the issue of creativity throughout the area of learning or, indeed, across the whole curriculum.

However, I suggest that we need to put the national curriculum into perspective. We need to see it as a beginning that describes the national entitlement for all children; as providing details about some of what they need to know, understand and be able to do. The challenge then is for us to create the inspiring learning that will challenge, inspire and excite our children so they can act, think and behave as young artists, crafts people and designers.

So how do you feel?

How will you respond to the changes and the framework that is offered? How will

you design your curriculum? Why not share your ideas through NSEAD's forum: 'The Community for School Improvement'.

Further information

For more about the background to the review: <http://curriculum.qca.org.uk/new-primary-curriculum/About-the-new-primary-curriculum/outcomes-of-the-primary-review/index.aspx>

For more about the curriculum aims: <http://curriculum.qca.org.uk/new-primary-curriculum/aims-values-and-purposes/index.aspx>

For more about the six essential skills: <http://curriculum.qca.org.uk/new-primary-curriculum/essentials-for-learning-and-life/index.aspx>

For more about the areas of learning: <http://curriculum.qca.org.uk/new-primary-curriculum/areas-of-learning/index.aspx>

To see the case studies: <http://curriculum.qca.org.uk/new-primary-curriculum/case-studies/index.aspx>

To see the big picture of the primary curriculum: <http://curriculum.qca.org.uk/new-primary-curriculum/designing-your-curriculum/the-big-curriculum-picture/index.aspx>

To see the curriculum design tool <http://curriculum.qca.org.uk/new-primary-curriculum/designing-your-curriculum/curriculum-design-tool/index.aspx>

For more about the key principles: <http://curriculum.qca.org.uk/new-primary-curriculum/assessment/assessment-key-principles/index.aspx>

To see the revised level descriptions for art and design: <http://curriculum.qca.org.uk/new-primary-curriculum/assessment/level-descriptions/Art-and-design/index.aspx>

To see the curriculum tour: <http://curriculum.qca.org.uk/new-primary-curriculum/curriculum-tools/curriculum-tour/index.aspx>

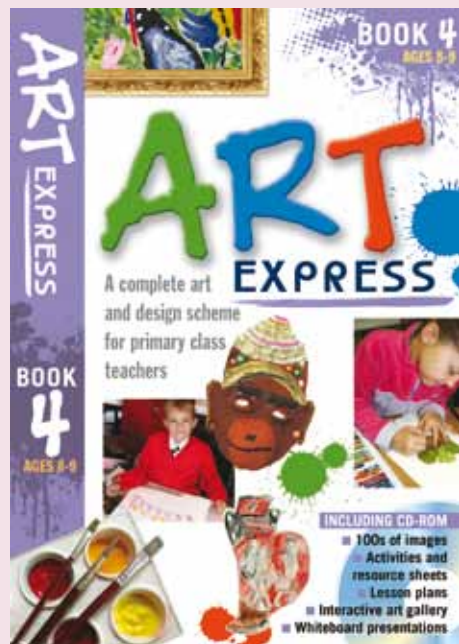
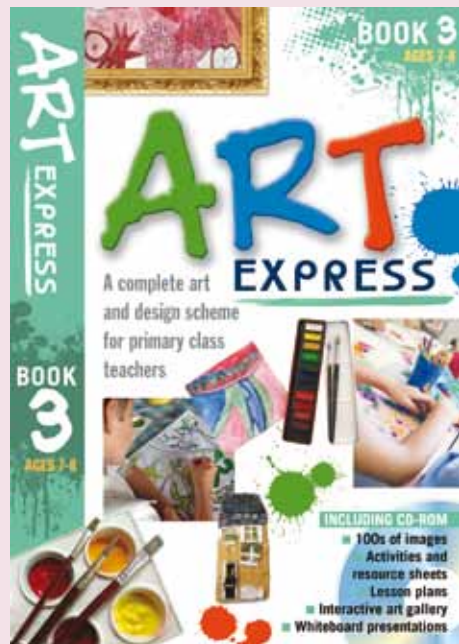
To compare areas of learning: <http://curriculum.qca.org.uk/new-primary-curriculum/curriculum-tools/compare-areas-of-learning/index.aspx>



N.B At the time this article was written this Education Bill was yet to be enacted by parliament.



Book reviews



ART express: Books 3 and 4

Published by A&C Black. Single user licence £34.99; site licence £150.00.

In this inspection-fevered world, what a godsend these ART Express books 3 and 4 were to me. So many activities require paperwork these days, but there is not always the time to make-up relevant sheets or revamp existing ones, so it was great to have assessment and self-evaluation sheets available on the CD-ROM. Each project was a lifeline, reassuring me that I was doing the right thing, or giving me new twists to old 'friends'. How great to have lists of artists – some well known but some new names to be explored – that could be used in the projects, or to spark off new adventures: I love the 'sitting around' project – what a great idea for a summer design that will work for all ages.

The books contain pages of how to use materials in new and old ways, different slants on resources, how to involve the pupils in individual, group and school-enhancing projects. The books are illustrated with bright, inspirational illustrations which add clever texture to the reading. Indeed after I had read 'Painting large and small' I just wanted to, well, paint.

Each chapter has clear learning objectives, differentiation and follow-on projects in lots of different mediums. The section on printing with string and tube would surely empower the most nervous of teachers to have some fun and try some thing new. For me, mixed media is a bit of a phobia, so it was lovely to read the section on group rainforest section and feel "yep, even I can do that".

When grading and report writing are starting to weigh me down, what a delight it is to open these books and feel revitalised, to get back that feeling of excitement that should always be at the beginning of a new project.

They may not seem to be a cheap option and yet, with the CD included, I do think they are worth the money. The books are well produced, substantial and glossy. Their quality indicates that they are likely to stand a considerable amount of art room wear and tear.

With these books, I will go into the summer term with renewed desire and the enthusiasm to play a little, have fun and find the pupils have learnt a lot as well. I am so pleased I found these books. They are really very good, I recommend them.

Reviewed by Jan Rickman, head of Visual Arts at Ballard School, Hampshire.

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ABOUT NSEAD

START is published by the National Society for Education in Art & Design (NSEAD) with the support of Arts Council England.

The NSEAD is the leading UK authority concerned with art, craft and design education and promotes and represents art and design in all phases of education throughout the UK.

A professional association with active membership among art and design teachers and lecturers in the UK, the NSEAD is also a leading provider of in-service education, online and other publications for art and design education.

Visit www.nsead.org for more information.

How to access art lessons and art projects online

The National Society for Education in Art & Design 'Units of Work' database has about 300 units of work that can be accessed free of charge by subscribers to **START** magazine – there should be something there to surprise and inspire you. The units have been written by some of the UK's leading art educators and include art projects, art lessons and descriptions of classroom and art room teaching strategies for children, pupils and students from 3 to 18 years old. However, most of the units are easily adapted for use by a wider age range.

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

To access the Units of Work you should go to www.nsead.org and log on using the username 'patchwork' and the password 'quilt'. Then click on 'Resources' followed by 'Units of Work'.

You can simply browse through the units or search them by using keywords such as artists' names, themes or techniques. Alternatively, you can search for age range, particular media and processes, and the elements such as shape, form, colour, tone and texture.



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