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Recap: The centre for research and Design education 24 and 25 October Tate Liverpool Education practices in Arts Collaborative 2014 Conference

iJADE@chester.ac.uk by 31 May 2014. 150 word abstracts to be sent to generation of knowledge; co-creation. pedagogical collaboration; collaborative partnerships in teacher education; within collaborative practices; inter-adversity; agency and identity dynamics collaboration; collaboration through theories of collaboration; the politics of practices; communities of practice; theories of collaboration; the politics of collaboration; collaboration through adversity; agency and identity dynamics within collaborative practices; inter-disciplinarity; collaborative curricula; partnerships in teacher education; pedagogical collaboration; collaborative generation of knowledge; co-creation. Publications of papers: A selection of papers up for publication in the conference issue of iJADE. Call for papers

Despite the prevailing dogmas of individualism and competition, collaboration, partnerships and collective activity have continued to thrive in arts practices. This year’s iJADE conference will focus on collaboration in arts education, and invites papers that investigate this theme. The following stands may serve as a guide for intending speakers: changes in the way that we think about collaboration; the ethics of collaboration; partnerships with schools, partnerships through the arts; the relationship and/or tensions between collaborative and autonomous practices; gender and/or ethnicity in collaborative practices. Conference registration and fees for delegates (including all speakers):

Early registration by 31 August 2014 £150 (E150 NSEAD members, £50 students and unemployed)

Registration from 1 September 2014 £175 (E175 NSEAD members, £50 students and unemployed)

Fee includes all day Friday and Saturday sessions, refreshments and lunch, but does not include accommodation or evening dinners. There is no single day rate.

To make your payment follow this link: https://bit.ly/iJADEconf

For registration and further information contact iJADE@chester.ac.uk. There will be a £15 cancellation fee and no refunds can be given after 31 September 2014. Please note that the conference is non-profit making and all fees are used for conference costs.

Publications of papers: A selection of authors will be asked to write their papers up for publication in the conference issue of iJADE.
Sir Nicholas Serota, an art and design journey based on learning

Lesley Butterworth (LB) Thank you for taking the opportunity to talk, through J4, with our teachers of art and design at a time of such challenge to both the education and cultural sectors. Could we begin with your involvement in art and design at school, and of course your art teacher?

Sir Nicholas Serota (NS) I don’t think I had great art skills. I have some ability but nothing very exceptional. I attended Haberdashers, then a direct grant school in West Hampstead. I had no idea where it would take me but I thought there might be a great academic or even a great economist. So then I decided to take some history in which I had a growing interest and I joined a very small history of art department set up four years earlier by Sir Michael Jaffé who later became Director of The Fitzwilliam Museum. It all has a certain style and I think he had studied a great deal about contemporary art at the Royal Academy of Arts in 1961.

Sir Nicholas Serota (NS) I can remember the first exhibition my father took me to at the Tate, it was a Picasso show and I must have been about 14. The next show I remember taking myself to was a really marvellous show at the Tate in 1964 called Painting and Sculpture of a Decade 54-64. Looking at a decade of art from across the world.

Lesley Butterworth (LB) I still have the catalogue for 54-64 at home. It was a turning point for many many people.

Sir Nicholas Serota (NS) It was a very important show. It was one of the first really major shows that looked across Europe and North America. It had one or two surprise omissions but it was a really great show and it probably the one occasion where Tate has done a significant international survey of contemporary art. Another similar show would have been the New Spirit of Painting, which I was co-curator, at the Royal Academy of Arts in 1984.

Sir Nicholas Serota (NS) 54-64 was really compelling viewing and it opened my eyes to contemporary art.

Lesley Butterworth (LB) That show has influenced a generation, people still talk about it and remember it. So, after Cambridge you graduated and moved into working on exhibitions and making exhibitions look at a decade of art from across the world? Lesley Butterworth (LB) Not quite. After Cambridge I decided to do an MA at the Courtauld Institute of Art. I was initially accepted to do what was then the Modern Period, 1900-1925. I then decided to take a year out and then I also concluded that to move from the Looking at late-eighteenth century French painting. It was an exciting time to be in Paris, just after the events of 1968.

Sir Nicholas Serota (NS) It was a very important show. It was one of the first really major shows that looked across Europe and North America. It had one or two surprise omissions but it was a really great show and it probably the one occasion where Tate has done a significant international survey of contemporary art. Another similar show would have been the New Generation sculpture show in 1985 and a Frank Kline show. At that time I also began reading Studio International. Lesley Butterworth (LB) So, after Cambridge you graduated and moved into working on exhibitions and making exhibitions look at a decade of art from across the world?

Sir Nicholas Serota (NS) No. After Cambridge I decided to do an MA at The Courtauld Institute of Art. I was initially accepted to do what was then the Modern Period, 1900-1925. I then decided to take a year out and then I also concluded that to move from the Looking at late-eighteenth century French painting. It was an exciting time to be in Paris, just after the events of 1968.

Lesley Butterworth (LB) You were incredibly fortunate, unbelievably fortunate, I learnt a lot and then in 1971 I moved to what is now Tate Modern in Oxford, at that time the Tate Modern in Oxford, which had opened for about eight years. It had no collection but was a temporary exhibition space dealing with contemporary art, led very well but with great difficulty by Peter John who had done some really good shows and who had demonstrated that it was possible to make shows from artists from abroad as well as Britain. I tried to build that foundation and we did some important shows including a Joseph Beuys show. In 1976 I went to the Whitney Gallery for twelve years. In 1988 I came here where I stayed. Lesley Butterworth (LB) An excellent start!

Lesley Butterworth (LB) Yes, I was incredibly fortunate, unbelievably fortunate, I learnt a lot and then in 1971 I moved to what is now Tate Modern in Oxford, at that time the Tate Modern in Oxford, which had opened for about eight years. It had no collection but was a temporary exhibition space dealing with contemporary art, led very well but with great difficulty by Peter John who had done some really good shows and who had demonstrated that it was possible to make shows from artists from abroad as well as Britain. I tried to build that foundation and we did some important shows including a Joseph Beuys show. In 1976 I went to the Whitney Gallery for twelve years. In 1988 I came here where I stayed. Lesley Butterworth (LB) An excellent start!

Lesley Butterworth (LB) ‘I’ve never been a practicing artist but teachers play a very crucial role in the way in which you develop your thinking. We can all recall the experience of working with gifted teachers’
The visual arts in the nineteenth century. Judgements about the visual arts in the nineteenth century are just as rigorous now as they were then. This is a comment Sir Nicholas Serota made. He was in conversation with Tom de Ruyck and Simon Wilson. However, the fact was that our spaces were nothing like as good as they needed to be for the present day. With the help of government we have been able to open three new buildings in the city. The first show, Sir Nicholas Serota was in conversation with Tom de Ruyck, Simon Wilson and Steve Rendell. The second show, Sir Nicholas Serota was in conversation with Tom de Ruyck, Simon Wilson and Steve Rendell. The future for Tate has two challenges. Firstly it is a national collection with its main base in London, but we do an enormous amount of work outside London as well and we need to do more. We have a group of nineteen institutions across the country from Orkney to Cornwall. We work with them in a group called Tate International. We have worked with National Galleries of Scotland presenting the Artist Rooms series. We have developed these relationships further and shared the work of British artists with the rest of the world.

The second challenge is that we want to build up a dialogue with our visitors which is partly about the internet and partly about social media and how we respond to that and how we wish to develop our relationship. We want to look at Tate online and give people material that they can access however and whenever they want, and we also respond to international influence, with exhibitions but also to be shared online. Building relationships with other galleries is also important. We have a group of 150 curators working in museums and galleries across the country who meet to exchange ideas and research and build up an understanding of British art.

Sir Nicholas Serota was in conversation with Lesley Butterworth, General Secretary of SEAD.
Turner Contemporary is a visual arts organisation that believes in making art open, relevant and fulfilling for all. Our new gallery building, designed by David Chipperfield Architects, opened in Margate, Kent, in April 2011 and we have since welcomed more than one million visitors. Inspired by painter JMW Turner’s sense of inquiry, we offer a space for everyone to embrace their curiosity and to discover different ways of seeing, thinking and learning. Our programme enables intriguing connections to be made between art from 1750 to the present day.

The aim of our learning programme, We Are Curious, is to transform the way that children, young people and adults learn about and through visual art. We want to equip participants to deal with the unknown, the challenging and the difficult - not just in art, but in everything that they do. We Are Curious is inquiry based and brings together hands-on exploration with a philosophical structure that supports creative questioning and thinking across the curriculum. We aim to demonstrate how educational practice as a whole can learn from the way that artists think and behave. In the words of one of the young people who has been involved in our work: 'I think that this approach would help kids even if they don’t want to paint, or make, or draw. Seeing things from other people’s perspective – it’s a life skill – it is useful in all areas of life, and not just for creative reasons. It has helped me to develop a more open way of thinking. If you think more openly, you can approach things with a different mind, or even a better one.'

Artists practise divergent thinking - seeing multiple answers and ways of seeing the question: they know what to do when they don’t know what to do. The importance of ‘learning to learn’ and ‘building learning power’ (Claxton) is fundamental to developing creativity. Like the late arts and education scholar Elliot Claxton, we believe that when learners behave like artists they are more successful in everything that they do.

One of the most significant western artists to combine artistic practice and philosophy was Piet Mondrian (1872 – 1944), who is the subject of Mondrian and Colour, a major exhibition at Turner Contemporary from 24 May to 21 September 2014. ‘I wish to approach truth as closely as possible’ and therefore I abstract everything until I arrive at the fundamental quality of objects.’ In terms of encouraging pupils to ‘behave like artists’, Mondrian is a fascinating subject to explore. Living through overwhelming changes in society, struggling to earn a living and carving out a unique creative path, Mondrian demonstrated enormous resilience, confidence, vision and strength of character. Enabling children and young people to reflect on Mondrian’s life and practice to think about themselves and the wider world presents us with a hugely exciting opportunity.

Mondrian and Colour is the first major exhibition to consider the significance of colour during Piet Mondrian’s early career. It will examine his artistic career, beginning with the earthy paintings of his early work, his paintings in red and blue which arose from his interest in theosophy, and the colour fields he painted in the period following 1921. In the landscapes he created shortly after 1900, Mondrian painted the rays of the sun and the glow of the moon in order to make a new statement about colour. He was no longer interested in capturing fleeting external reality in the Impressionist sense; instead, his goal was to express spirituality in painting and return it to its essential nature. In 1921, Mondrian decided to paint only in primary colours in addition to white and black.

**Mondrian and Colour** and Turner Contemporary’s learning programme have much in common, Karen Eslea explains.

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**I don’t want pictures, I want to find things out**

**Piet Mondrian** (1872-1944)
Composition with Large Red Plane, Yellow, Black, Grey and Blue, 1921. Oil on canvas, 95.7 x 95.1 cm. Collection, Gemeentemuseum Den Haag, The Netherlands © 2014 Mondrian/Holtzman Trust c/o HCR International USA.
How are you influenced by the creativity of others? Would you create different things if you lived at another time?

Mondrian lived at an extraordinary time of artistic experimentation and production. He met, and saw the work, of many other artists when he lived in the Netherlands, Paris, London and New York. For pupils examining the work of other artists, he offers a great example of how to be inspired by others, rather than creating copies of their work. Mondrian learnt from his influences, but would then move on, developing his own vision.

The balance between generating conversation and giving information is a delicate one

It can be difficult to start a discussion when many visitors prioritise fact about the artist. The balance between generating conversation and giving information is a delicate one. Meaningful learning takes place when both are involved, with facts used to stimulate deeper questions rather than shutting down conversations. A figure as intriguing and influential as Mondrian provides a wealth of opportunities to learn about diverse subjects including society at the turn of the twentieth century in Europe and the United States, the two World Wars, colour theory, modern art, music and architecture. At the gallery, an exploration of context and artist production will generate questions for debate. What can knowledge about these subjects help us to learn about our lives today? The following questions may offer useful catalysts for learning in the gallery and the classroom, but there are of course also many more.

Is Mondrian old fashioned? Why did Hitler hostile about abstract painting? What was the influence of the Cubist style of Picasso and Georges Braque appeared almost immediately in his work. 'However, I realised that Braque and Picasso did not accept the logical consequences of their own discoveries. This desire of the cubists to represent volumes in space was contrary to my idea of abstraction, which is based on the belief that the space itself must be destroyed.'

He was passionate about American jazz, particularly boogie-woogie, finding its beat, irreverent approach to melody, and improvisational approach akin to what he called, in his own work, the "destruction of natural appearance; and construction through continuous opposition of pure means — dynamic rhythm."

Does your creativity help you to think more deeply about the world?

Mondrian's art was intimately related to his spiritual and philosophical studies. The Gein, a small river in northern Netherlands, was Mondrian's favourite subject between 1902 and 1908. Here he initiated the ideas of De Stijl, dissatisfaction with the status quo, on changing the relationship of space and nature, and the idea that art should go beyond art. He felt this was 'a delicate one'. Water, earth and air should be incorporated into a harmonious whole. In 1909, he joined the Dutch branch of the Theosophical Society. Thesosophists believed that every thought and action generates an aura that surrounds each person. Both the forms themselves and the colour of the forms carry meaning. The representation of the universal, dynamic pulse of life, also expressed in modern jazz and the metropolis, was Mondrian's point of departure.

Do changes in society cause a change in you?

In 1911, Mondrian moved to Paris and the influence of the Cubist style of Picasso and Georges Braque appeared almost immediately in his work. 'However, I realised that Braque and Picasso did not accept the logical consequences of their own discoveries. This desire of the cubists to represent volumes in space was contrary to my idea of abstraction, which is based on the belief that the space itself must be destroyed.'

Mondrian was born in 1872 and died in 1944, during World War II. He fled Paris for London in 1938, his fear of a repeat of World War I. He fled again to escape the impending Nazi invasion. He died in Paris in 1944, his fear of the Nazis increased by the inclusion of two of his paintings on Hitler's Degenerate Art list. He lived in the UK for two years meeting artists including Barbara Hepworth and Ben Nicholson. As the German pressures on Great Britain grew, Mondrian left for New York in 1940. There, Mondrian's favourite subject between 1902 and 1908, here he initiated the ideas of De Stijl, dissatisfaction with the status quo, on changing the relationship of space and nature, and the idea that art should go beyond art. He felt this was 'a delicate one'. Water, earth and air should be incorporated into a harmonious whole. In 1909, he joined the Dutch branch of the Theosophical Society. Thesosophists believed that every thought and action generates an aura that surrounds each person. Both the forms themselves and the colour of the forms carry meaning. The representation of the universal, dynamic pulse of life, also expressed in modern jazz and the metropolis, was Mondrian's point of departure.

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A gallery, two schools and an artist: in search of missing lessons

The project Hidden Curriculum investigates forms of learning in school outside the official curriculum, and the informal ways in which secondary school students learn from one another. Together with students we aim to find possibilities to address informal knowledge, unrecognised and undesired learning in the context of institutionalised normalisation processes. These specific interests informed an investigation into the schools and the gallery involved.

Annabel Johnson: a curator's perspective

There is so much for us to question in society, normality being key. It’s a word so often used without reference to the fact that everyone’s normality is so vastly different. We are confronted by challenging feelings with every step we take often pushing us away from one another. Together with students we aim to find possibilities to address informal knowledge, unrecognised and undesired learning in the context of institutionalised normalisation processes. These specific interests informed an investigation into the schools and the gallery involved.

A disruption nevertheless makes it possible for us to take distance to our habits and to let go of a routine for a moment.

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Hidden Curriculum

The key to what was achieved here is the slowness of the process – a desire to persevere with questions that need answering. Highlighting this with students shows that art is about complex ideas; that students can add layers of meaning to their work and know what it feels like to struggle through visual language with a resounding idea. If art is to continue to be valued, there has to be a place for students to learn to think like this and begin to question a school system that is subtly forcing students to sort them into categories through biological, environmental, economic and social conditions.

Hidden Curriculum addresses these ‘routines of the day’ which are so often seen as difficult to approach in the classroom. The pressures, in an assessment driven curriculum to work to schemes of work with predetermined outcomes and objectives difficulties in the assessment of ephemeral, performative and work of a collaborative nature are all obstacles to negotiate when evaluating new projects to work on. Work produced in this way could often be taken up valuable time needed for work measured against set parameters and ‘normalities’ prescribed by others.

In both H Paul’s Way Trust School, Tower Hamlets and Cumberland School, Newham, the teaching staff and management were brave enough to put their trust in the Whitechapel Gallery and artist Annette Krauss giving us the license to spend a year working with students on Krauss’ Hidden Curriculum project. They had the foresight to realise that asking students to question rules and structures does not mean transcending them. Analyzing the reasons why we are forced to behave and act in certain ways is an important part of learning, forcing students to take a step further and begin to ‘unlearn’ deeply rooted practices. Krauss proves we are wrong to ever assume that young minds cannot deal with philosophical questions and complex ideas. ‘I do not think that can be inaccessible to the uninstructed are played out through students’ performative actions; theory and practice are brought closer together and you see the significance of what is being said through their games and short films.’

Hidden Curriculum"
The method used is one that schools, and to a certain extent galleries, normally try to avoid – disruption. It is here where the seriousness of play comes in. We investigate when a disruption is not just a funny joke, but rather the project Hidden Curriculum is dedicated to the multilayered and paradoxical potential of disruption. Although a rupture is always part of a system, and certainly has the power to reinforce and sustain systems, a disruption nevertheless always part of a system, and certainly has the power to paradoxical potential of disruption. Although a rupture is

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Liz Millward: a teacher perspective

in Cumberland School fifteen students (ages 14-15) began working with Annette in a workshop to deconstruct the words

0.5. Krauss references theorists Paulo Freire, Jaques Ranciere and Augustin

Art as Muddiness,

poster displayed at Open School East

The Crafts Council’s new research report Studying craft trends in craft education and training explores what has been happening in craft education and training from key stage 4 through to postgraduate study, combining an analysis of trends over a five-year period with case studies to illuminate those patterns

Craft is one of the most entrepreneurial of all the creative industries. 80 percent of all makers set up their own businesses* and further 6 percent work in business partnerships. Our goal in producing this report is not only to increase our understanding, but also to contribute to the debate about how best to secure creative education in general, and craft education in particular, through all levels of our education system. We are keen to see a strong evidence base to drive debate about the importance of craft education and training in a climate of rapid and continual reform.

The findings reveal some worrying declines in art, craft and design but they also point to new directions for the sector. The report acknowledges the government’s drive to increase engagement by employers in education at all levels, yet highlights the need for new mechanisms to enable a sector dominated by sole traders and micro-enterprises to participate effectively.

The report shows how increases in provision across key stages 4 and 5 and further education – driven mainly by the unitisation of qualifications – have led to a proliferation of short course options. At the same time this change has had the
Communities of learning and learning through art – Naomi Hart shares her insights into gallery-based learning programmes in LA

With persistent budget cuts and curricular reform in the United Kingdom (UK), the arts continue to be threatened and undermined. In the United States (US), our teaching colleagues have witnessed the increasing marginalization of the arts within public (state) schools over the last 20 years, due in part to standardized academic testing that is extremely narrow in scope and not inclusive of the arts.

When I decided to spend six months of my sabbatical-based in Los Angeles I was keen to take this opportunity to connect with colleagues there to share experiences and explore models of good practice developed to address some of the common challenges that art educators from both sides of the Atlantic face. I was particularly interested in seeing how art museums and galleries have developed programmes to support the overall provision of art education in the absence of guaranteed provision within schools.

I spent time with the education teams at the J. Paul Getty Museum, Los Angeles County Museum of Art (LACMA) and the Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles (MOCA). I saw in each a strong commitment to education, as one would expect from comparable institutions in the UK or elsewhere. I saw many examples of good practice representative of similar programming in the UK, but I am interested in reflecting here on what I felt went beyond familiar ground or what I felt resonated with my own experiences of art education in LA.

Over at MOCA, I had the pleasure of spending some time with a cohort of teachers engaging in MOCA’s Contemporary Art Start (CAS) programme. This comprises of two MOCA staff-led museum visits for students, two classroom visits by MOCA educators and up to 40 hours of professional development for teachers. The goals of the CAS programme are extensive and range from skills to knowing where and how to find resources to take back into the classroom. These events are seen in the faces of the teachers who attend: the social function it fulfilled. The majority of those who attended LACMA’s Evenings for Educators are non-art specialists who are expected to integrate art into other subject areas and many of who have little experience and confidence engaging with art. For me, the most profound impact of opportunities such as these are seen in the faces of the teachers engaged in art-making tasks, working in pairs or groups with perfect strangers with whom they share an interest in integrating art effectively into their teaching. When they are allowed to access their own creative self in a supportive and inclusive atmosphere and are encouraged to connect with others, it is clear that they feel empowered, supported and inspired.

In this article I have reflected in brief on a select few aspects of my experiences of art education in LA. To read more, please visit my blog at artadventurer.tumblr.com

Naomi Hart
Meet the Artist

Tanja Gangar introduces the National Portrait Gallery’s Meet the Artist Programme

Meet the Artist is a programme introducing secondary art groups to practising portrait artists in the National Portrait Gallery, attracting over 400 students a year and providing new ways to connect artists with schools.

The programme began in October 2008, after discussions with Sandy Nairne, Director of the National Portrait Gallery and Liz Smith, Head of Learning and Participation, on ways to open up the Gallery and offer a broader level of access to secondary art and design groups.

As the newly appointed Learning Manager for Art, I was particularly keen to respond to the curriculum and offer teachers support with implementing contextual referencing for aged 14-plus particularly the then new Creative and Media Diploma, which required students to research and explore the creative processes conceptually.

What transpired during conversations and initial consultation stages with teachers from local borough schools, delivering GCSE, A-Level and Creative & Media Diploma, was the lack of opportunity in schools for students to gain access to ‘real live artists’ sharing ideas, methods and approaches and the opportunity to relate these to both context and purpose. For the Gallery, this type of programme, in an institution with a historical portraitures focus, was an ideal way to directly engage schools with living artists.

From here, an initial outline was put together where one artist per term would be approached to deliver an exclusive, free, illustrated talk offering students the opportunity to enter into a conversation about the content, process and approach to the artwork and the artist’s collaboration with the Gallery.

When considering candidates, it seemed obvious that the Gallery as an institution was well equipped to offer this type of provision for schools, with the opportunity to engage more closely with the Gallery’s strong relationships with artists and rolling initiatives such as the Portraiture Commissioning process. This is where the National Portrait Gallery assigns six portrait commissions to artists a year as part of its commitment to collecting portraits of those who have made an important contribution to British history and culture.

The development of the Meet the Artist programme, reflects the Gallery’s approach to commissioning artists — a will to take risks, whether by encouraging young artists such as Brendan Kelly, or by approaching more established artists who may not usually undertake portrait commissions, like the more established Ross Wilson.

When selecting suitable and diverse artists and sitters for Meet the Artist there is awareness that with such a specific audience that curriculum links need consideration. Key to this is the acknowledgement that teachers require their students to gain access to contemporary practising artists whose work would continue to stimulate practical responses as well as provoke further critique and analysis back in the classroom. Resources such as our Photography and Image and Identity packs for teachers were created to support this. At first, the audiences were held in the Gallery spaces in front of the artists’ work, but as audiences for Meet the Artist grew, sessions were relocated to the OnSlate Wing Lecture Theatre, an on-site 136-seat lecture space. It still was appropriate to continue to use artists whose portraits were currently on display in the Gallery spaces, in order for schools to visit the work before and after the event, to engage with the Galleries but also put the artist’s experience into context.

Artists exhibiting in the annual competitions BP Portrait Award and Taylor Wessing Photographic Portrait Prize proved a very popular choice with visiting schools, who used the artists’ talks to enrich a wider Gallery visit. Beczame apparent that offering students close contact with an artist gave a unique insight not only to the artist’s practical approach and outcomes, but how to relate to them on a more human level, disengaging the notion of the artist as a distant unapproachable entity, to be acknowledged and revered from afar.

Since its beginning in 2009, Meet the Artist has successfully hosted thirty-four artist speakers, ranging from commissioned artists and award winners to those with temporary displays in the Gallery. Artists work across the media of print, painting, drawing and photography. The programme itself has attracted over a thousand individual audience members and at least forty new schools to the Gallery, offering a unique opportunity for artists, students and teachers, and increasing the Gallery’s schools audience.

Tanja Gangar, Learning Manager, Art, National Portrait Gallery, London

For more information on the Meet the Artist Programme go to: http://www.npg.org.uk/learning/schools/secondary-schools/art/meet-the-artist-john-nassari.php

The use of the programme is flexible, for example projects such as Meet the Artist, including a talk for one audience of students, or a series of talks for a number of different groups. In recent years, Meet the Artist has proved a popular choice with visiting schools, who used the artists’ talks to enrich a wider Gallery visit. Beczame apparent that offering students close contact with an artist gave a unique insight not only to the artist’s practical approach and outcomes, but how to relate to them on a more human level.

‘It became apparent that offering students close contact with an artist gave a unique insight not only to the artist’s practical approach and outcomes, but how to relate to them on a more human level’
Art of conflict

A student-led project based on ‘Conflict’ resulted in powerful, emotional and sometimes shocking artworks. Louise Clazey explains how the journey, not the destination, made this possible.

Inspired by the theme of conflict, we aimed for this project to be an organic, fluid and student led. The opportunity for students (aged 13-14) to explore and express their views, opinions and emotions through their own artwork was the focus.

As teachers we are frequently advised to provide success criteria with clear outcomes and objectives so that students know what is expected of them. Whilst this can be very important, in this project we didn’t want to place restrictions on the creative process or outcomes. What is the point in producing a piece of work if you already know exactly how it will look? Why do something if you already know the answer? The journey was fundamental.

In an attempt to actively engage students from the outset, we built on prior learning from English and humanities by creating a differentiated six-week, option-based home-learning project. Students had the opportunity to explore the theme of conflict from art, society, music, fiction and poetry. They responded with some astounding and unique creative outcomes. One of the most popular options was the challenge to create a contemporary war memorial. A student living in a rural community constructed a poppy sculpture made from spent coloured shotgun cartridges in memory of the victims of the First World War; some based their work on the war in Afghanistan using the Call of Duty video game as inspiration; and others produced shocking sculptural creations using old action men figures influenced by the horrors of nail bombs.

Students commented positively on the unrestrictive nature of the tasks, and the element of choice that enabled them to produce highly personal pieces.

With the foundations of the project firmly established, we were faced with the challenge of maintaining interest and motivation. As the project was still in its infancy, I was discovering, learning, working and creating alongside my students. Most of the time I had a rough idea in my head of what would take place each lesson, but must admit more often than not, the students took the lead and surprised me with lessons which went on exciting and creative journeys. I couldn’t have planned it any better – this was exactly as I had intended, and it wasn’t just my excuse for failing to plan each lesson in detail.

Sketchbooks were constructed from old book pages, brown paper and anything else they could find (rubbish from bins included) followed by research on artists inspired by conflict. The aim of the project was to produce a personal response to the theme of conflict through the creation of an altered book. That was it. Students had free choice of materials and resources and were left to work independently on their creations. The process of cutting, manipulating, tearing, deconstructing, reconstructing, combining and reassembling, engaged boys and girls equally.

‘The process of cutting, manipulating, tearing, deconstructing, combining and reassembling, engaged boys and girls equally’
moments for my students’ unfamiliar materials and when experimenting with relating to materials and processes. The content, concept worked quietly and supportively as they resolved problems calm; students were totally engaged and focussed; and they reassembling, engaged boys and girls equally. Lessons were creating work following instinct and intuition, and without fear of failure – I saw significant learning taking place. Some of the most rewarding moments in this project occurred when students were actively encouraged to think for themselves and make mature, independent decisions about their own artwork. The serendipitous acts when experimenting with unfamiliar materials and processes (which are all too familiar to art teachers), were defining moments for my students. The process and practice of allowing students to become totally immersed in a piece of personal work provided a challenging learning journey and experience which I feel students valued and will remember.

This year I plan for students in year 8 (ages 12-13) to follow this theme in conjunction with the 100 year commemoration of World War One. Students will work individually and collaboratively in the creation of personal war memorials, taking inspiration from the more TEA project (moreteablog.wordpress.com) with our matchbox starting point. I am excited to immerse myself in this project, and to plan, learn and create alongside my students. I have visions of standing back, and watching in awe. Students became...
The learning environment

Louise Gatti on changing the environments in which we teach and learn

At present I am a teacher of art and a coordinator for the gifted and talented of a secondary academy. Before becoming a teacher my passion for the arts led me to work in the international commercial sector for arts and antiques. However nothing I achieved in the private sector can compare with the pleasure I get from being a facilitator of art and design with young people today.

My background helped equip and inspire me to introduce and change my learning environments. As we all know an art teacher’s job is not confined to marking sketchbooks – we are muses, curators, technicians, budget managers and at times we nurture struggling young artist’s egos.

When approaching this article several thoughts crossed my mind. I thought about writing about how all our classrooms are galleries and we are the curators of art work not yet produced, but then I had a reality check and thought back to my first classroom – I spent the summer holiday clearing out the dust and unblocking sinks. The caretaker said: ‘It looked no different’, but the students noticed and so began the process of creating a positive learning environment.

William Emery describes in his book, 200 Awesome Things Teachers Do how a child can quite happily fail repeatedly when playing a video game but when they fail they are not keen to try again, which is something an art teacher is exposed to daily when the deadline is imminent. Emery comments that the student is more likely to try again in the video game as they are receiving instant feedback. However, when I brought this up in a philosophy for children training session my colleagues argued that it was not the case but the environment in which they were playing the game which helped them achieve, it was the comfort of their own room or the security of an environment where they are not failing in front of their peers. This game theory interested me as my background is in the computer game industry and with the development of online gaming was this theory correct? I asked myself the question, whether the environment that I had created for my students could then be applied to my classroom and also to the learning environment outside of my classroom.

So here are a few of my tips to changing your environment:

1. A clean classroom is universally welcoming. No one likes to walk in a dirty chair especially a self-conscious teenager

2. Familiarity with the layout of resources is comforting. To my surprise I have found that I like everything to be in its place. A good idea is to use empty Christmas tins as storage i.e. ‘Miss where are the sharpeners?’ ‘Have you checked the Quality Street box?’ ‘Miss where are the scissors?’ ‘Have you checked the Haribo box?’ Other confections are available.

3. As an instant effect on a classroom invest in some Posca pens and draw on your windows. The fascination of drawing on windows can excite any age group. ‘This can be key words, a critique written inwards to show other students which is usually wiped off. How about the支出e maths link or maybe just a famous equation by the numeracy bandit? If you don’t have windows try some blackboard paint on an old piece of wood and apply an inspirational quote daily.

4. Some of my colleagues have created their learning spaces and developed literacy corners, a space dedicated to developing written evaluation skills. This can be as simple as a dictionary or word of the week wall, however, to get the most out of your literacy corner an array of sentence starters or art history books can develop your more able student.

5. Using electrician’s tape draw outlines on your floor – this is always fun in a health and safety lesson where you can do an outline of a body to create a health and safety crime scene.

6. Tables – don’t be afraid to change your tables on a regular basis to suit the activity of your students. Art and design is a practical subject and students will move around the room, however, I have found that U shaped tables are easy to facilitate group activities. Also tables on wheels are useful.

7. Setting up a Twitter account to post homeworks and interesting articles as well as a more manageable task of displaying the artist of the week. A quick snap on a mobile and a tweet and you have created a viral gallery without dusting off the mount board or having the awful guilt of creating a health and safety crime scene.

8. Group critiques – there are lots of theories and it doesn’t hurt to get rid of your tables and all sit in a circle on chairs – it’s important as a teacher to be on the same level as the students.

9. Learning environments at home are achievable through setting challenging independent study projects. Get rid of the homework that comes with a lot of baggage and set projects that are differentiated and fun. Ask, if you are a teacher, do you want to run home and do it – how do you expect your students to? My favourite has been our own version of Word and display homelinks photography projects using their mobile phones. Overcome printing issues and deadline issues by setting up your IT Department to set up a homework email account that students can access.

10. If you ever get the opportunity, teach in an open plan department. By being able to see what your colleagues and other students are doing you instantly share best practice and create a real ‘buzz’ of learning. I credit all the good things I do to my colleagues who share my space.

11. Avoid being a hoarder as space is precious and have a termly clear out.

12. Never have pre-cut images – it is just nice and it is distracting for all.

13. Don’t over clutter with posters, rotate or stick to ones you really want the students to use.

And finally you, as a teacher, can check out NSEAD’s Facebook group local networks or TeachMeet. This has dramatically changed me as a teacher and as a life-long learner I have found the resources and opinions of my colleagues help challenge some of my thinking.

To end, I am not saying my tips work for everyone, but I know my students and I am in a friendly and positive environment in my room where everyone can have the chance to succeed and more importantly everyone can fail without fear. Like in all computer games, remember to reload anytime.

Louise Gatti
Gifted & talented coordinator and teacher of art and design, Josephine Butler Campus

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One method, three teachers and much imagination

Three teachers share how they’ve used carrier bags and a hot iron to make stunning eco-friendly artwork

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**Bags + weaving = jewellery**

“Where did you get your necklace from?” asked the lady on the till. “I made it out of some carrier bags.” I casually replied as I packed my groceries into numerous carrier bags, “Carrier bags?” she exclaimed with a total look of confusion, “Yeah” I said as I carried on packing. “No way it’s amazing” she complimented.

It all started when being asked to teach PSHE years ago and being allowed to put an artsy spin on things (see nsead.org/downloads/Case... Study. 32 pPdf). After making a large turtle banner from carrier bags I couldn’t face another huge plastic project – so I came up with plastic jewellery made from woven carrier bags.

Here’s how it’s done:

1. Cut some colourful carrier bags into inch wide long strips and weaving them together. Tape the vertical strands to some greaseproof paper so the plastic strips don’t blow away (as they can get static and stick to your fingers).

2. Iron the finished weaving between the greaseproof on a low temperature. This gives you a chequered plastic bag weaving.

3. Repeate this process by slicing the ironed weaving in the centre of each vertical strip to fragment the colours and get rid of the stripy pattern later on.

4. Bowwear your weaving and iron again. Repeat this process until you end up with a much smaller and much thicker piece of plastic.

5. Cut into desired shapes and make jewellery.

This is such a cheap and cool way of raising money forcharities for your department, school or college. Your only outgoings are the jewellery money for charities for your department, school or college.

**Carrier bags + a net = sling-bags or sketchbooks**

AcostaCo released the process of heat bonding plastic bags to me a few years ago. She said it to make decorative corsets for a BTEC Art & Design brief. The idea laid dormant until year 8 bags L2-13D Textile technology appeared on my timetable. As usual the budget was tight and I only had eight or nine weeks in the rotation. I was asked to introduce an element of innovation, wow factor and awareness of environmental issues.

The process is quite simple. We use five supermarket bags and one or two what I call ‘posh’ bags for the outer layer. The handles and seams need to be cut to create a large, flat rectangular sheet of plastic. Using an iron, these are heat bonded together between two sheets of greaseproof paper. The paper is vital to avoid burning plastic and nasty fumes.

I provide students with a black card net, complete with instructions, written on the card itself. Students are taught about pinning, seams, seam allowances, hems and to consider proportions. They use sewing machines to stitch and construct the bag.

The two-metre long strips are made of 3” strips of black bin liners folded and doubled over as the inner layers, and one layer of ‘posh’ plastic bags wrapped around the black plastic to match the bag. As a differentiation strategy I provide nylon or strapping.

I run a parallel applique and embroidery activity to create an ‘eco-logo’. It keeps students engaged whilst waiting for sewing machines and makes a great addition to the bag.

I am fortunate to have a technician on hand when we use the sewing machines. He is our ‘Bob’, who can ‘fix’ any jams or rethreading issues.

My students love this project and often comment that they can’t believe they have created a book or a bag from ‘rubbish’.

Chet Mistry
Art teacher at Ladybridge High School
Twitter Ladybridgeart

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**A photograph + bags = window hangings**

Looking at aerial photographs as a starting point, students simplify the shapes and colour each shape and adding lines and dots for detail. This becomes the pattern for cutting out the carrier bag design.

Then a piece of clear polythene approximately A4 size, normally the kind used for packing new sports clothing, is used as the ‘canvas’ on which to create each design.

A variety of carrier bags are needed in order to find match blocks of colour. Quality Street cellophane can be used too for the smaller details. Starting with the big blocks of colour, students cut out the shapes and lay them onto the clear piece. When they have the main parts it can be ironed together between two sheets of greaseproof paper. I normally use a newspaper pad underneath the whole thing and a few sheets of newspaper above the greaseproof paper too.

The detail is then added using the same method and many layers can be added as required. To finish it off, another clear layer is put onto the top to sandwich the whole thing together. This is then displayed as a window hanging.

As an alternative to this landscape pictures can be created using the same method.

Lorayne Southam
Art and design teacher

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Cross-phase - 24 25
Adam Hayley reports on an innovative art loan scheme

Last term our A level cohort created a collective body of work of an extremely high standard and sophisticated nature. We felt so passionately that their work needed to be seen by a wider audience that the art loan scheme idea was generated. Our aim was to showcase the artwork in and around the local community within professional surroundings.

Our intentions were not only to share the successes of the students, but to raise finances to part subsidise artist workshops and educational visits; ensuring that all of our students benefit from the legacy of their peers.

The cost of hire is five pounds per print for each calendar month. This will join customers access to a range of different loan packages, each designed to provide suitability, variety and style for any location. Over a 12-month loan period, the packages can also provide a discounted saving. To sustain the scheme we will offer twenty new images each year from which to choose, ensuring that year after year, workplaces are always refreshed and vibrant. Six weeks after the launch we have now secured significant donations, which will be used to enhance our students’ experiences in and outside our studios.

Initial concerns were raised with regards to copyright and ownership of the original image. However, as an educational centre we have the authorisation to display our students’ work in any capacity we wish. Moreover, as artwork is often displayed in galleries, corridors and to outside visitors we very much see this as an extension of our normal display procedures. We have promoted the scheme to our lower year groups in order for them to strive to be included in next year’s selection.

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Our long-term vision aims to provide our students with opportunities that might not otherwise have been open to them had the scheme not been in existence. Activities we have hosted in the past include a year 11 (ages 15-16) three-dimensional puppet making workshop with artist Teresa Wilson, year 10 (ages 14-15) paper engineering with Andy Singleton and most recently a two-day workshop with internationally acclaimed artist Michael J Browne creator of The Art of the Game featuring Eric Cantona as Jesus Christ. All of our year 12 (ages 16-17) students experienced first-hand tutelage in oil painting and discussed ways in which they can develop their Unit One portfolios as part of their A level course. We very much see the funds raised from this scheme helping to finance future events of this calibre, without the need to pass this cost onto our students.

The 2011 Ofsted report Making a mark: art, craft and design education 2008-11 draws attention to concerns that pupils who remained unconvinced about their capacity to draw, were turned off by a narrow focus on fine art or were denied rich first-hand experiences, such as working with a creative practitioner or visiting an art gallery. ‘At Wilmslow High School, we aim to ensure all our students share the same experiences: an opportunity to exhibit work, learning from creative industry specialists and all this in the knowledge that their work, their skills, will help to fund future projects’.

Adam Hayley
Teacher of art, Wilmslow High School

The Wilmslow High School art loan scheme
Josefin Boren describes a collaborative portrait where students worked together to explore policy and reforms

The portrait of Michael Gove was created during my PGCE course at Goldsmiths University. As teachers in training we were challenged to create a piece of work in response to the question ‘What is Art and Design pedagogy?’ My motivation was to create a piece that had input from students and initiate a dialogue around the politics that determines the future of art and design education. The result was a piece of work where students share and voice their feelings about art and design and reflect on why the subject is an important part of the National Curriculum.

The juxtaposition of my drawing and students’ writings in the background of Mr. Michael Gove creates a concept piece instead of a depiction of our educational minister. The work challenges the problematic belittlement of art and design in the curriculum as it evidently plays a major role in students’ educational development.

The small and personal handwritings in the background invite the viewer to take a step closer to the work and read about the great and important impact art and design has had on those students. The writings range between personal stories of how the subject has allowed them to flourish and grow with confidence, to how the subject allows them to take risks, experiment and even fail without feeling defeated.

Josefin Boren
Newly Qualified art and design teacher from Goldsmiths University
www.josefinboren.com

Mr. Michael Gove, a portrait

Launching on 5 June United Nations World Environment Day 2014, It’s Our World aims to encourage children and young people, aged 4-19 years, to bring their local landscape to life through art.

To be mostly driven through schools and selected partners, participants are invited to ‘Put themselves on the map’ by creating an artwork to show a range of interpretations or responses to their environment.

It’s Our World has been created in support of Healthy Planet and Start Healthy, The Prince of Wales’s sustainability initiative that is part of his charity Business in the Community. The project is being developed with a wide range of community, arts, educational and environmental partners to include the National Society for Education in Art & Design, the Geographical Association, National Union of Teachers, Keep Britain Tidy, Eco-Schools, Empty Classroom Day, The Wildlife Trusts (England & Wales), The Scottish Wildlife Trust, The Eden Project and The Campaign for Drawing.

Subject matter can be approached in a variety of ways including observation, outdoor learning, multiple perspectives that reflect local neighbourhoods, critical thinking about environmental impacts and ways in which to lead more sustainable lives.

Artworks including close-ups of natural forms, landscapes, or detailed studies of urban environments are accepted in many mediums such as watercolour, acrylic or oil pastels. Submissions using a range of approaches to include graphics, textiles and printmaking are also welcomed. The use of recycled materials in creating collages and 3D artwork is encouraged to promote sustainability.

There are no limitations on size as artwork can be uploaded, as scanned images or digital photos, onto the Online Gallery from mid-September 2014 to end of May 2015. The project has been purposely timed to enable schools to plan ahead.

Uploaded artwork will be showcased on JCDecaux digital screens across the UK from UN World Environment Day on 5 June 2015. Participating schools and partners will also be encouraged to exhibit original artwork to their local community to coincide with the nationwide digital display, thereby providing a vibrant snapshot of how the nation’s children and young people view their local environment.

Further details on It’s Our World will be announced nearer the official launch in June. Visit itourworld.org or contact patizi@juniper-pre.co.uk or patizi@juniper-pre.co.uk for more information.

Hamlet’s. The focus was what does the subject mean to them personally, I avoided going into a political debate, as the writing was not to result in attacks on Mr. Gove’s character, more so to bring forward students’ views and thoughts. My message is clear; it is the voices of our students that need to be heard before any dramatic educational reforms are put into action.

Through close interaction and collaborations with students while prioritizing their interests, it is clear to me that successful learning takes place when students dare to speak their minds and take ownership of their ideas. When they are able to do this, they become motivated and work passionately beyond limiting requirements of the course.

As Bell Hooks states ‘[we need] to teach in a manner that respects and cares for the souls of our students if we are to provide the necessary conditions where learning can most deeply and intimately begin.’ It is my ultimate goal as a teacher to work together with students and nurture the confidence that is needed for them to express their voice and ideas. I do not set out to educate painters, drawers or sculptors, but to educate confident, independent and curious individuals who are willing to explore the media which most successfully communicates their idea.

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www.josefinboren.com

‘The writings range between personal stories of how the subject has allowed them to flourish and grow with confidence, to how the subject allows them to take risks, experiment and even fail without feeling defeated’
An ‘Outstanding’ lesson

Michael Bradley describes a lesson observation judged outstanding by Ofsted

Kings International College comprises of approximately five hundred, 11-16 year-old students. When I joined the school we were coming out of a few years Ofsted and HMI monitoring. This Ofsted visit proved to be very positive. Presently, I am the only full time teacher (and head) monitoring. This Ofsted visit proved to be very positive; the school we were coming out of a few years Ofsted and HMI monitoring.

The questions I overheard the inspector ask the students were: “Can you explain what you know about this artist; How do you think it is relevant to what you experience and researching other artists, craftspeople and decorative work of Alberto Seveso, drawing from life, personal and techniques. We had been exploring the digital and highly outcomes using a range of innovative and refined processes ability students were exploring ways to personalise their middle learners, were investigating how to carefully develop using their own influence and research for pattern and colour. The whole class needed to know how to develop their work been working on the compositional elements of their work.

One very memorable moment was when the inspector asked a student who finds school a challenge what inspired his work. I overheard his reply: “My work is influenced by heaven & hell. Just close!”

At one point, I asked the teaching assistant (TA) if the Ofsted inspector had gone as I couldn’t see him in the room – he was stopped down at the students’ level - interacting. He was very carefully monitoring the students and remained for 45 minutes of a 50-minute lesson. Points the inspector liked about the lesson were feedback and marking, control of class and behaviour, high expectations throughout of work and the positive ethos; the variety of questions posed, enquiring minds of all abilities, good pace, displaying good practice of all types of work, celebrating it, the fact the TA was well informed about the scheme of work and knew what two students should be completing. Strong, confident responses from the learners.

Michael Bradley
Head of art and design, Kings International College for Business and the Arts, Camberley, Surrey

Teacher Training: A parent’s view of Mikayla Howard on PGCEs and parenthood

Whilst I am well acquainted with the duality of being a student and a mother (I started my art degree when my son was nine-months old), I must admit I was slightly terrified about embarking on my teacher training year.

Studying whilst navigating the uncertain path that is parenthood is an ambitious undertaking. It is also an immensely positive and invaluable learning tool. I have learnt how to divide my time between family, work and study. Sometimes I’ve got this right, often I’ve got it wrong but ultimately I have learnt from it.

I have learnt that as parents (especially) we are far too critical of ourselves. It is so easy to fall prey to the guilt that poisons our minds with ludicrous notions that we’ve ‘failed’ our children in some way.

Bettering yourself with an education, pursuing a career and doing something that you love is simply not something to feel guilty about. There just needs to be balance. There isn’t time to ‘sweat the small stuff’. Reflect, find positives, learn and move on.

When there’s a will, there’s a way! There is a cliché that I’m rather fond of. If you really want something, do it. Want it badly enough and it will happen.

I started my primary school the week before I started my art and design PGCE at University of the West of England in Bristol. After hearing stories from teacher friends of breakdowns, tears, late nights and drowning in work during their training year, I started to panic. Not only was I about to start my training somewhere two hours away from home, but I was about to start my journey into education just as my son was about to start his. How on earth would I make this one work? I reminded myself of the three important lessons learnt from my ‘juggling’ experience. Don’t feel guilty, don’t sweat the small stuff and don’t forget that where there is a will there’s a way! Don’t feel bad, just do what I can. I’ve got this right, often I’ve got it wrong but ultimately I have learnt from it.

I’ve also learnt to use the transferable skill that is multitasking. I’m writing this article whilst trying to create my son’s ‘Fantastic Mr Fox’ outfit for a Roald Dahl day in his school tomorrow, ‘cooking’ dinner, occasionally putting up to ‘tidy’ things, trying to get my head around schemes of work and wishing I could have a bath.

I see these moments as practice for when I’m teaching, the perfect opportunity to exercise my multitasking skills. However it isn’t just the multitasking and master balance skills that a parent can bring to teaching as a parent you are already teaching. Everyday you are encouraging your child to learn, providing them with a safe environment to explore and make mistakes. You nurture their talents, help them to learn for themselves, and educate them to grow into wonderful curious adults, always with their best interests at heart.

There’s no denying the challenge that a PGCE presents for any prospective teacher. A fellow trainee teacher recently asked me: ‘How on earth do you manage with all the work and looking after your little boy? I replied: ‘It’s not that bad, I just do what I can’. I get on with thinking.

As parents and teachers, surely that’s the key? You just ‘do what you can’. There are obviously things that I find hard, I leave the house while everyone else sleeps, I don’t get to see my son off to school in the morning, I don’t get to pick him up. When I get home I have an hour or so to spend with him before bedtime, so I make sure I cherish it. After a few chores, cooking and quickly catching up on daddy’s day at work, the lure of bed is overwhelming.

It has been hard to then set to work, filing all the handouts, writing lesson plans, brushing up the transferable skill that is multitasking. I’m writing this article whilst trying to enjoy every moment of it. There’s no denying the challenge that a PGCE presents for any prospective teacher.

I have always wanted to be an art teacher. I’m doing it. I do it because this is what I want to do. It has been hard to then set to work, filling all the handouts, writing lesson plans, brushing up on my drawing skills, doing the extra reading, but I do it. I do it because this is what I want to do. I have always hoped to be an art teacher. I’m fully aware that the career path I’ve chosen will involve many more challenges, however it’s the very challenge that makes it worthwhile. This year is undoubtedly hard, there have been tears, there have been doubts but I haven’t been sweating the small stuff (too much). In the grand scheme of things I am about to embark on a wonderful career in what I think is one of the most important jobs in the world and I intend to enjoy every moment of it.

I am not thinking about being a student and a mother (I started my art degree when my son was nine-months old), I must admit I was slightly terrified about embarking on my teacher training year.

Studying whilst navigating the uncertain path that is parenthood is an ambitious undertaking. It is also an immensely positive and invaluable learning tool. I have learnt how to divide my time between family, work and study. Sometimes I’ve got this right, often I’ve got it wrong but ultimately I have learnt from it.

I have learnt that as parents (especially) we are far too critical of ourselves. It is so easy to fall prey to the guilt that poisons our minds with ludicrous notions that we’ve ‘failed’ our children in some way.

Bettering yourself with an education, pursuing a career and doing something that you love is simply not something to feel guilty about. There just needs to be balance. There isn’t time to ‘sweat the small stuff’. Reflect, find positives, learn and move on.

When there’s a will, there’s a way! There is a cliché that I’m rather fond of. If you really want something, do it. Want it badly enough and it will happen.

I started my primary school the week before I started my art and design PGCE at University of the West of England in Bristol. After hearing stories from teacher friends of breakdowns, tears, late nights and drowning in work during their training year, I started to panic. Not only was I about to start my training somewhere two hours away from home, but I was about to start my journey into education just as my son was about to start his. How on earth would I make this one work? I reminded myself of the three important lessons learnt from my ‘juggling’ experience. Don’t feel guilty, don’t sweat the small stuff and don’t forget that where there is a will there’s a way! Don’t feel bad, just do what I can. I’ve got this right, often I’ve got it wrong but ultimately I have learnt from it.

I’ve also learnt to use the transferable skill that is multitasking. I’m writing this article whilst trying to create my son’s ‘Fantastic Mr Fox’ outfit for a Roald Dahl day in his school tomorrow, ‘cooking’ dinner, occasionally putting up to ‘tidy’ things, trying to get my head around schemes of work and wishing I could have a bath. I see these moments as practice for when I’m teaching, the perfect opportunity to exercise my multitasking skills. However it isn’t just the multitasking and master balance skills that a parent can bring to teaching as a parent you are already teaching. Everyday you are encouraging your child to learn, providing them with a safe environment to explore and make mistakes. You nurture their talents, help them to learn for themselves, and educate them to grow into wonderful curious adults, always with their best interests at heart.

There’s no denying the challenge that a PGCE presents for any prospective teacher. A fellow trainee teacher recently asked me: ‘How on earth do you manage with all the work and looking after your little boy? I replied: ‘It’s not that bad, I just do what I can’. I get on with thinking.

As parents and teachers, surely that’s the key? You just ‘do what you can’. There are obviously things that I find hard, I leave the house while everyone else sleeps, I don’t get to see my son off to school in the morning, I don’t get to pick him up. When I get home I have an hour or so to spend with him before bedtime, so I make sure I cherish it. After a few chores, cooking and quickly catching up on daddy’s day at work, the lure of bed is overwhelming.

It has been hard to then set to work, filing all the handouts, writing lesson plans, brushing up on my drawing skills, doing the extra reading, but I do it. I do it because this is what I want to do. I have always hoped to be an art teacher. I’m fully aware that the career path I’ve chosen will involve many more challenges, however it’s the very challenge that makes it worthwhile. This year is undoubtedly hard, there have been tears, there have been doubts but I haven’t been sweating the small stuff (too much). In the grand scheme of things I am about to embark on a wonderful career in what I think is one of the most important jobs in the world and I intend to enjoy every moment of it.

I am not thinking about being a student and a mother (I started my art degree when my son was nine-months old), I must admit I was slightly terrified about embarking on my teacher training year.

Studying whilst navigating the uncertain path that is parenthood is an ambitious undertaking. It is also an immensely positive and invaluable learning tool. I have learnt how to divide my time between family, work and study. Sometimes I’ve got this right, often I’ve got it wrong but ultimately I have learnt from it.

I have learnt that as parents (especially) we are far too critical of ourselves. It is so easy to fall prey to the guilt that poisons our minds with ludicrous notions that we’ve ‘failed’ our children in some way.

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iPad apps for art educators

Tracing Paper – Great for artist studies in the art room as this app allows for quick and easy tracing of illustrations of the artist, artworks to enhance your study. Tracing Paper is a simple universal application for the iPad, iPhone and iPod Touch that helps you practice your drawing, illustration and sketching skills by giving you a blank translucent canvas with a clean and simple grid on which you can trace any image. (Fig 2)

iStudyArt – Great to record and respond to artworks seen in the gallery or for annotation in the art room & then print out their work as evidence for their critical skills. Sometimes students get stuck a short time in the gallery but these photos are the best way to harvest their experiences. This app allows students to see the whole show and record artworks for later study. Students can email the teacher the link to the gallery or print them out for critical evidence. In the classroom students can annotate and respond to artwork on their iPad or iPhones and then print out an A4 sheet with their responses as evidence for their critical skills. (Fig 3)

Paper – Sketch book type app, allowing for free drawing ideas, have to buy all tools to get the best out of it. Paper is where ideas begin. Capture your ideas as sketches, diagrams, illustrations, notes or drawings and share them across the web. No fussy buttons, settings or other distractions. Paper works the way you think, like a familiar notebook or journal. Have all of your ideas with you in one place.

Brushes – An extensive drawing & painting app. Brushes also records every step in your painting. Show off your creative process by replaying your paintings directly on your device.

Simple Mind – Mind mapping tool that turns your iPad, iPhone or iPod touch into a brainstorming, idea-collection and thought-structuring device. (Fig 4)

Paul Letchworth is creator of the iStudyArt app, delivers iPad training courses in art for the Tablet Academy and is head of art at Kesteven and Sleaford High School Selective Academy, Lincs. www.pbletchworth.com

Obituary

Elliot W Eisner 1933-2014

It was with disbelief that the international community of art, craft and design teachers and educators learnt of the death of Elliot Eisner on 10 January 2014 from the complications of Parkinson’s disease. Elliot Eisner was 80 years old.

Born in Chicago on 10 March 1933, Eisner committed himself to art from early age. He graduated from Roosevelt University with a BA in Art and Education and continued with a MS in Art Education, moving from academia into High School as an art teacher. His interest in teaching and learning developed he pursued both a Masters and Doctorate in art education from the University of Chicago and joined the Stanford Faculty in 1965 as Assistant Professor.

Throughout his career Eisner championed the arts in education and defined and expressed his vision through 17 books and numerous papers and lectures. He maintained that the arts are critically important in the development of thinking skills in children and that they offer teachers and educators a powerful tool and rich in their classroom practice. He said, ‘To neglect the contribution of the arts in education, either through inadequate time, resources or poorly trained teachers, is to deny children access to one of the most stunning aspects of their culture and one of the most potent means for developing their minds.’

Eisner argued for an arts curriculum that puts arts education on a parity with maths, reading and science. He championed artistic literacy. He challenged standardised testing and was eloquent in communicating his views and ideas. ‘He knew there was everything’ his daughter, Lisa Eisner, has explained. ‘He wanted people to think critically about things, ask questions and develop their own ideas. If you taught art and design across a wide range of age groups, and in workplaces, studios and in museums and galleries. Whenever I was, the Ten Lessons the Arts Teach developed and composed by Elliot Eisner helped me not only develop my practice but also advocate not just how, but why there was design in the first place’

Ten Lessons the Arts Teach

1. The arts teach children to make good judgements about qualitative relationships.

Unlike much of the curriculum where correct answers and rules prevail, in the arts it is judgement, rather than rules that prevail.

2. The arts teach children that problems can have more than one solution and questions can have more than one answer.

3. The arts celebrate multiple perspectives. One of their large lessons is that there are many different ways to see and interpret the world.

4. The arts teach children that in complex forms of problem solving pursuits are seldom fixed but change with circumstance and opportunity. Learning in the arts requires the ability and a willingness to surmount the unanticipated possibilities of the work at hand.

5. The arts make vivid the fact that neither words in there literal form nor numbers exhaust what we can know. The limits of our language do not define the limits of our cognition.

6. The arts teach students that small differences can have large effects. The arts are truism in substantia.

7. The arts teach students to think through and within a complex web. All forms employ some means through which images become real.

8. The arts help children to learn to say what cannot be said. When children are invited to discover what a work of art helps them feel, they must reach into their poetic capacities to find the words that will do the job.

9. The arts enable us to have experience we can have from no other source. And through such experiences to discover the range and variety of what is possible in life.

10. The arts’ position in the school curriculum symbolizes to the young what adults mean in there poetic form, what a work of art helps them feel, they must reach into their poetic capacities to find the words that will do the job.

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