

NSEAD Annual Conference 2013

Creative Futures at the heart of art, craft and design education

22, 23, 24 March 2013

A date for
your diaries



We are delighted to be presenting the NSEAD Annual Conference and AGM 2013 at Oxford Brookes University and Modern Art Oxford

The Society has enjoyed a long relationship with Oxford Brookes University, both in establishing the Artist Teacher Scheme and more recently in supporting the regional network group Oxford Art Teach. Modern Art Oxford is a visual art gallery dedicated to the presentation of innovative exhibitions of modern and contemporary art and welcoming teachers of art, craft and design from across the region.

Art craft and design education continues to be challenged and teachers of art, craft and design need to consistently advocate for the depth, breadth, value and future of the subject. The conference will provide that advocacy and more, considering the contribution art, craft and design brings to the curriculum, to society and as a pathway to future careers within the cultural sector, creative industries, visual arts and beyond.



The conference will be of relevance to teachers of art, craft and design working in primary, secondary and further education; museum and gallery educators and initial teacher educators.

The conference will include presentations and practical sessions led by artists, makers and teachers.

The conference will run over three days, packages and discounts will be available for NSEAD members, PGCE trainees, unemployed and Artist Teacher Scheme students.

For further information and booking forms visit www.nsead.org

For compelling arguments why we teach art, craft and design across all phases join us in Oxford at Creative Futures.



nsead



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SOKARI DOUGLAS CAMP
SHARON HODGSON MP
THE ARTIST TEACHER SCHEME

The National Society
for Education in Art
and Design magazine
Winter 2013
Issue 6

nsead



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Editorial

It is heartening to know Sokari Douglas Camp's poster will be displayed in thousands of classrooms and studio walls across the UK and overseas. In our interview with Sokari we learn more about *All the world is now richer* and the slave saga as represented by each of the figures – in the poster they stand, temporarily resident in House of Commons: an apposite reminder of the histories they describe.

Staying with the House of Commons, we are delighted that Sharon Hodgson MP, Shadow Minister for Children, had a vision for an All Party Parliamentary Group for Art and Design Education which is beginning to take shape – read more about this emerging group in her article Creativity, choice and a curriculum for the future.

Finally, many of you have already joined the Bacc for the Future campaign which is calling for a creative sixth pillar in the EBacc. If you haven't already added your voice please visit baccforthefuture.com and sign the petition today! We wish this campaign, the emerging All Party Parliamentary Group for Art and Design Education and artist educators everywhere a very successful year ahead. ■

Sophie Leach, Editor, *AD*

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Please send article proposals or submissions to sophieleach@nsead.org

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Cover image: Sokari Douglas Camp, *All the world is now richer*, 2012 © Judith Burrows

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The AD interview

Sokari Douglas Camp

Sokari Douglas Camp CBE's sculptures have featured in solo and group exhibitions throughout the United States and Europe. In this interview with Sophie Leach she reflects on her education, cultural traditions, the stories and global histories in her work

Sophie Leach (SL) I'd like to begin by asking about your own education?

Sokari Douglas Camp (SDC) I tried for a four-year art degree in America but had credits from my A levels and my credits made it possible to finish my degree in just two years. This is too short, I wanted to practice and take time to learn. It wasn't about credits, I wanted to practice being an artist for life, and I needed time. Also, I met my husband and we decided to leave the States and we went back to Nigeria. I couldn't get into school there but I studied under a traditional carver Lamidi Olonade Fakeye, a royal carver. I carved wood for about six months and travelled with my husband who was doing research into traditional buildings. I went to parts of Nigeria that I never imagined, places where you had shoulder carriers, places where people were practically naked. Their only kind of adornment was filing their

teeth to a point. The women were incredibly bent because they carried things on their shoulders. The men hardly did anything except stand around, decorate their bicycles and pose. They used to pose on the landscape looking absolutely stunning – you would see a silhouette of a man – like a peacock. This was at the top of the River Niger which I had never been to. It was a fantastic year out.

We decided to come back to England because Alan, my husband, wanted to practice as an architect. It was a bit of a struggle trying to find a school because England didn't believe in credits so I had to go back to square one. I worked in shops and went to Sir John Cass and got my portfolio together and went for interviews. I was accepted by Central [Central Saint Martins College of Arts and Design], which was my second choice. I had hoped to go to Goldsmiths but the only thing I remember from

Above: *All the world is now richer*, 2012 photo © Judith Burrows

Opposite: *Feast of Neptune*, 2004, H 2m © Sokari

my interview was their asking why I spoke English the way that I did, meaning why did I have a posh accent, as in New Cross black folk didn't have posh accents – but I wasn't from New Cross. But at Central they just listened to my interests, which was wonderful.

SL In your second year at Central, you went to the Africa Centre because...

SDC ... because my tutors didn't get me. I went to the Africa Centre and met a wonderful man called Tony Humphreys who had started an artistic programme there. I suggested to him that I wanted to have an exhibition and had my first show in my second year. I put up work in the atrium area, the main hall, and had a show for four days. I met wonderful artists that were in exile from South Africa, great intellectuals who were in Africa Centre bar, drinking cheap beer, discussing everything. I had the opportunity to talk about masquerades – opportunity to talk to people that were excited by dance, structure and forms. Really marvellous, marvellous guys.

SL Some young people, indeed some teachers and artists, will recall similar experiences. In some schools you will learn only about European or American art – what would your message be to those young people today.

SDC The art education system still undervalues attitudes from different parts of the world, which is just so cheeky because in England you are surrounded by cultures that aren't your own – even drinking tea doesn't come from here. Grace Ndiritu did a piece called *To Africanise is to civilise*. All she does in the video is drink a cup of tea – she slurps from a cup. She holds the cup with her little finger cocked up the whole time. And she is Kenyan. Of course tea is grown in Kenya and Sri Lanka and various parts of the world that are very far away from England. This is what I'd like tutors to keep in mind when they look at student's work. It's a global world and more so now. Tutors should read up on where things come from! There is so much to talk about when it comes to context and what you actually present.

SL A lot of schools will look at masquerade, at masks and artefacts. Whilst there is a lot of goodwill that goes into looking at these artefacts, at a mask in a museum, sometimes it only serves to compound the disconnection. Your work, your figures,

your use of the whole figure reduces the disconnection.

SCD It is so complicated – isn't it? Because the West has made it a sort of unreasonable truth, that's what I say in my head, to say that masks live on their own, and

can be seen on their own, on poles or on a wall, and that's perfectly all right – well it's not perfectly alright, but it is perfectly alright, that's the world that we live in. But it's terribly important for educated educators to know that a mask comes with a costume, a philosophy, a performer and a stage that can be a town square – and this is something that Picasso didn't know, but students (today) would know because they come from cultures where they would have seen live masks with a performer, with all the excitement of that. To have somebody like myself 'complete' a mask, by having it fully dressed and sometimes kinetic, is describing a truth. It's as simple as that

– it's very, very direct, and there are so many angles you can look at it from as far as art is concerned – I find that my work talks on many levels. It's happy with its African heritage but is quite into Futurism because it's into machines and movement, and the figure, and shapes being changed and environment as well. I've always been interested in a 'picture' of a situation rather than just a tiny object, it's only now I'm looking at things in detail rather than a panoramic view.

When you look at someone like the photographer Rotimi Fani-Kayode, he has a mask next to his face, and it's talking in a very European sense, he's thinking about Africa but he's thinking about it in a very romantic way, it's like a Pre-Raphaelite picture rather than talking about a masquerader in its full costume. The important thing is to have room for all these conversations because it's part of the artistic experience is to be involved – like knowing the conceptual artist, Joseph Boyce, that worked with felt and fat went through an incredible experience of being traumatised by falling out of a plane and freezing and was kept alive with fat and felt – it's just important to know a little bit of history which really helps with what you see and what you understand.

SL Your work has been described as 'protest art' and 'activist art'. What do you think of this description?

SDC I don't know what my work is! It's not exactly protest art, I mean the pieces that I've done, like *Bin Laden Pieta*, I wouldn't say it was a 'protest', it was a totally emotional piece. As an artist, as a human being, just reading the papers, the shocking experience that we went through with 9/11, we're fed shocking images every single day and not to react to that is rather amazing. It's just my reaction to my environment, and speaking up as an artist and ordinary person is what my work does. It's a reaction to media, because it is part of the world we live in and a



reaction to where I am in that world. I am a black woman living in the West. When shocking things happen, like 9/11, I thought of all the mothers that lost their children. What was contradictory with *Bin-Laden Pieta*, was that I put Bin Laden’s face next to this mother figure. Why did I do that? Because he’s an iconic human being, would you believe that? Some people admired him for what he did, he was as famous as Jesus Christ. Considering that he comes from the same part of the world as Jesus Christ, it resonated with me... it was religious, and the only way that I could express it was by making almost an alter piece. Which is what *Bin-Laden Pieta* is almost like, it says more physically than I can ever say in words. It is crying out to be looked at – we should have been looking and listening to why such a violent thing happened.

SL You were once asked: ‘What is the cause in your work?’ and your reply was ‘The only cause I have is to say I’m here’. In your second year at Central St. Martins you looked to the Africa Centre, to say ‘I’m here’. Do you think our education system offers space for young people to say ‘I’m here!’?

SDC There is a chance for everybody to try to voice their opinion. Supposedly, in the West you have more chance of speaking than many other places in the world. I come from a heritage where you are told who to marry. Here, there is an element of that as well, but it’s far less – taken to someone’s bed where you just don’t have a choice. However you can, you should try to make a difference cause you are only here for a second. But it is hard to get the strength to say what you need to say. I’ve been very lucky with good family support. If you have a story, tell it, you are allowed to here. You shouldn’t throw it away.

‘If you have something to say you have to find a platform to say it’

SL Your work tells a story for people who aren’t able, or are not here to tell their story – I’m thinking of your work *All the world is now richer*. We learn from the stories you tell.

SDC Here being off-the-wall is allowed. In China it’s not. In our education system, there aren’t Chinese icons and there aren’t Algerian icons – there are so many people who are not mentioned. What matters is educating yourself and listening to your culture, if you are from Sierra Leon, or you are from Vietnam and happen to be British born you have something to aspire to in this society, as you are you, and you are unique in this

society. You are Vietnamese and English or Black English. The twenty-first century gives you license to say your piece – you can. To take *All the world is now richer* to The House of Commons, was a mad idea, but I was allowed to. I said to people in The House of Commons, I am so grateful. It was almost like slapping the cloak of the Queen! We can do that; I just have to concentrate what I have learnt so far to make the work speak for people. It’s taken a lifetime for me to realise that the Caribbean people in this country, and in the Caribbean, are survivors. It’s taken a lifetime for me to get that information, that education, and a lifetime to register it enough and look at my friends of Caribbean heritage and show them respect because they are survivors. With the Wilberforce bicentenary celebrations in 2007, I went in for a competition, to make a memorial to commemorate the abolition of slavery – I began proposing different things, making sketches, I learnt just how important this was in global history. That is why the format has evolved: having words as well as figures. I love words, and I like graffiti, even in Asia they like English words so much they mishmash words and statements together and put them on their t-shirts. *All the world is now richer* is a celebration of words, and the figures and things stand for different stages of the slave saga. I keep on thinking as an artist how many times do you have a good idea – and for it not to have a home was a little too much for me. If you are not supported by Tate or something, your ideas do die, they fall by the way side, so it’s up to you to promote and push your work. So that’s what I am doing.

SL They are determined and they are strong characters, can you say what they are?

SDC The first character was outside the Mayor’s office for a year, sponsored by Southwark Council and made in bronze. This figure, people kept saying, ‘it’s a woman’, and I say, ‘No some parts of the world men wear skirts.’ David Beckham wore a sarong, in India, Sri Lanka and West Africa they where wraps. The first-stage man says: ‘From our rich ancestral life’ and he’s talking about being in Africa and fairly comfortable, wearing a wrap as a way to present himself.

And the next man is very powerful and nearly seven foot in height. He has a cutlass in his hand. This would have been used for cutting sugar cane in the Caribbean. In the House of Commons I told people this sugar cane cutter, was terribly important because without sugar, and the trade of sugar, there wouldn’t be estates like Harwood House and the company Tate and Lyle, so many important assets including Tate gallery wouldn’t be, without this man sweating and probably falling into vats and things, being treated abominably in the Caribbean. But the thing is, this particular figure is strong and very, very tall and looks as if he is incredibly brave and the words behind him say: ‘We were bought sold and used.’ He was the most abused of the line up.

And the next person says: ‘But we were brave’. She has fairly touchable breasts – she probably had to nurture her own and other children. She is still in practical clothing. She has quite an innocent face.

And the next lady has the words behind her: ‘We were strong’. This lady represents a lady from Sierra Leone: black people fought during the America Civil War and the British promised them freedom from slavery and from their owners in the Americas, if they helped fight against America becoming independent of Britain. Slaves joined the British troops to fight for their freedom and the British, once they lost the battle,



Above: *'Bus' Living Memorial*, 2006 H3m © Martin Lesanto-Smith

Right: *All the world is now richer*, 2012. H 216cm x W 560 cm x D 118cm. © Judith Burrows

Opposite: *Bin Laden Pieta*, 2002 H 140cm x 88cm x 125cm © Sokari

‘helped’ these slaves by taking them to Nova Scotia of all places – Nova Scotia is cold and freezing and they couldn’t build on their freedom there. So the British then ‘leased’ Sierra Leone for these people to be repatriated to the African continent, and the Sierra Leonean people who I’ve met in South East London actually celebrate that history in that when they dress up, they where damask Alice gowns with various prints of carrots and potatoes on. They also wore plaid or tartan fabric underneath these dresses as an extra skirt. This kind of fabric is made in Madras in India – it has a resonance for me as Kalibari people in the Delta, in Nigeria, also wear this material. It’s actually worn all over the world, in the Caribbean, in West Africa and might have been created by the Scottish. The figure has a bandana as well as boater hat, and she has a walking stick, a bit like a Victorian man to show his status, but you can’t get over how this Sierra Leonean figure looks, as you can just imagine her picking cotton and having this boater hat to keep off the sun, but it’s worn with elegance and grandeur now as she’s celebrating her ancestry: She says: ‘We were strong’.

Next to her is a businessman – a leap. It shows you twentieth century attainment, another step in the way that you live your life. This man wears a suit and he’s quite casual, like any kind of businessman whether white or black, except this figure is a black man. To make him, this time in my life, is a reminder of Obama and men like him who are black men working, manning the world.

The last man is in jeans and a t-shirt and has a little pot-belly because he’s a twenty-first century man, and obviously spends time on his iPad and computer and doesn’t have to wear suits or a uniform of any kind as he is truly freed from all that sort of thing. Behind the suit man the words are: ‘We survived’, and behind the t-shirt man the words are: ‘All the world is now richer’ because you need to remind the world that people of black heritage were used as building blocks for cities like the city of London, Bristol and Liverpool. The greatness of England is an echo of these people’s suffering and the world should recognise that. You should salute people of this heritage – that’s the idea behind the work. So to take these figures to the House of Commons was quite something because I wanted to remind people and also to try to attract sponsorship to make all the figures in bronze and have a permanent site. It was quite moving for me to stand there every day in a palace where Wilberforce and his contemporaries made noise about changing the laws on slavery. To stand there in the twenty-first century, as a black woman with my artwork, in the same house, the same bricks that would have heard what Wilberforce and his team did, was quite moving. It was also a little bit cheeky of me, because it’s biting the hand that feeds you. If you have something to say you have to find a platform to say it.

SL I have one final question. Your exhibition was called ‘It’s Personal’. Has there always been a personal element to everything you have made?

SDC As an artist you tell your stories in a cathartic way just to get over and get to the next chapter. You open up and whisper these things at people, it’s part of the learning curve of what I do. So yes, I have a loud megaphone voice when it comes to the abolition of the slavery work, but my quiet voice isn’t necessarily that quiet. I find there is a lot of passion in the little pieces at Tiwani Contemporary: it’s about the confusion of sweating and swearing!

SL Thank you Sokari. ‘Sweating and swearing’ is a good place to end.



Sokari Douglas Camp was born in 1958 in Buguma, Rivers State, Nigeria and was sent to boarding school in Britain as a child. She studied fine art at Central School of Art and Design and the Royal College of Art and has had more than 40 solo shows worldwide, which include ‘Echoes of the Kalabari’ National Museum of African Art, Smithsonian Institute 1988-89 ‘Spirits in Steel – The Art of the Kalabari Masquerade’ at the American Museum of Natural History. Her public artworks include *Battle Bus: Living Memorial for Ken Saro -Wiwa* (2006), a full-scale replica of a Nigerian steel bus, which stands as a monument to the late Niger Delta activist and writer.

In 2003 Sokari was shortlisted for the Trafalgar Square Fourth Plinth. Her work is in permanent collections at The Smithsonian Museum, Washington, D.C., Setagaya Museum,

Tokyo and the British Museum, London. Last year Neil MacGregor, Director of the British Museum, selected *Otobo (hippopotamus) masquerade figure*, 2005 as the number one artifact from the British Museum’s permanent collection to represent *London – A World City in 20 Objects*. In 2005 she became an Honorary Fellow of University of London and in the same year was awarded a CBE in recognition of her services to art. In 2012 *All the world is now richer*, a memorial to commemorate the abolition of slavery was exhibited in The House of Commons.

Our teachers

Members of NSEAD's Council represent every phase of education. 'Our teachers' looks back on the people who had impact on their education and careers



It is quite hard for me to pin the position of 'most influential art teacher' down to just one person. Different phases of education brought new influences for me stage by stage, and my own confidence and passion for the subject accumulated and grew over many years and in many contexts.

However, as a child I was not the most confident pupil in the world, but I was able to realise some success in the art room. My then art teacher, Miss Oudilon, wrote on an end of term report that stated that I had a 'natural talent' for the subject. At the age of 13 this was enormously reassuring and important, especially as the rest of the report was not so positive! It is an extraordinary position in which to find ourselves in the year 2013 that, under current government strategy, some children will not experience this kind of *raison d'être* at a crucial time in their lives.

Susan Ogier

My Art History Lecturer

In 1966 I escaped the stifling claustrophobia of school to enter Luton School of Art and begin a two-year foundation course in art and design. This hugely liberating experience was for me enhanced by the teaching of Anthony Slinn. Art history may have morphed into liberal or complementary studies by then, preparing students for the new Dip. A.D. courses. Whatever Anthony's brief or the curriculum was, he transported us into a rich and fascinating cultural world beyond making images and objects. Anthony opened up not only the history of art but brought in music, literature, film and any representation of culture that got us thinking, feeling and debating ideas. I remember happenings, performance, readings and events that might have seemed quite anarchic at the time yet were part of the vision and passion of this extraordinary lecturer who is still lecturing today.

James Hall

I want to write about a more recent experience which really did make me think. It's the year 2001 and I'm sitting in a conference room at the Stadium of Light in Sunderland. I'm there as one of a group of the first ever ASTs appointed in Sunderland. Our guest speaker is a lady called Gill Steele from York Local Authority. What an engaging speaker she is, talking to us and not at us. So straight away she has me 'hooked'.

I remember two really important points from things that she said that day. One was the need for all of us to stop and 'sharpen the saw', and not feel guilty about having thinking and reflecting time. The other was about how to facilitate meetings, she told us that, of course, content mattered but, as far as teachers were concerned, the way to win their hearts and attention was to have an agenda, feed them (tea and biscuits), keep them warm and finish on time. I have never forgotten that session and I have always followed that sage advice. I loved the way she engaged with her own audience and have always tried to emulate that in my own facilitation. And, I still make sure that I 'sharpen the saw'.

Susan M Coles

An outstanding painter and demonstrator, Frederick Johnston SGA.FRSA., was my art teacher and inspiration throughout seven years of secondary school at the newly created Grammar Technical School in Enfield in North London. As the author of five books on painting technique he believed in teaching you how to draw and paint using lessons that involved a practical demonstration, often in the form of a ten-minute complete painting. Use of colour, tone, composition and technique were the content of each lesson leading to the creation of numerous paintings. At A level the use of oils was taught with lessons in the landscape and several of these paintings are still around today. As president of the Enfield Art Circle he encouraged me to join and exhibit and we remained in contact during the start of my teaching career until his death. Today an oil painting by 'Fred' hangs on the lounge wall, a gift from my first teaching school in London, while many of his larger works hang in the corridors of my current school left to me by Fred and his widow.

John Childs

'Yes and' – the great enabler!

At the age of 16 after years of experiencing life as a square peg being forced into a round hole I plucked up enough courage and gingerly approached Miss Jarvis the art teacher in my school to find out whether I could take up studying art 'O' level. Her response became one of the defining moments of my life.

Well meaning parents had discouraged me from pursuing art qualifications that left me feeling unfulfilled and unaccomplished.

'She enabled the opening up of doors to pursue my life's passion...'

With her 'can do' response and commitment, going over and above her call of duty to support me, a vulnerable individual student, to compile a portfolio worthy of acceptance at Goldsmiths College of Art. She enabled the opening up of doors to pursue my life's passion and professional career. So much of what I do now as a Creative Education Consultant, teacher and facilitator is driven by those early positive and fulfilling experiences.

Marlene Wylie

It takes just one teacher to shine a light and reveal possibilities in life not previously considered. In my case at Luton Sixth Form College, that teacher Godfrey Samuel simply asked, 'Have you considered going to art school?' Many years later, having been a teacher, adviser

'It takes just one teacher to shine a light and reveal possibilities in life...'

and inspector, two intellectual and influential giants, Norman Binch and Bob Clement articulated the purposes of assessment in the context of the new national curriculum. In early 1990's they rightly emphasised the latin root 'assidere', to sit beside and the pedagogic strength of formative assessment borne of interactive practice.

Oliver Nicholson

The 'teacher' who has influenced me most in my career was not at school, or art school, but at an NSEAD power drawing event in Glasgow. In fact it was so inspirational that in two subsequent Power Drawing weekends I opted for the same workshop, led by Saied Dai.

His ability to break down the process of observational drawing into key points have stayed with me since and become my mantra in the classroom. I went on to do a week's painting course with him in Corsham a couple of years ago and now use his 'three questions to ask yourself about mixing a colour' on a daily basis.

Patricia McKenna

The first teacher to really influence my experience and thinking in art taught me when I was eight years old. Until then, although I'd enjoyed art activities my parents had only taken me to visit museums rather than an art gallery. It was a young student teacher – Miss Bird – who took us to see a special exhibition. With adult eyes I now realise it was an exhibition of student teachers' work at her college but nevertheless her enthusiasm and willingness to widen and develop her pupils' experience opened an entirely different pathway for me. Many years on I can still visualise some of the artworks I saw!

Peter Gregory

Victoria Liddle wasn't my mentor, but the support she offered and the belief she had in me as a trainee teacher, had a huge and lasting impact on my future. About four weeks into my PGCE course, following what can only be described as a dodgy lesson with a middle band year 8 class, she looked at me with genuine belief and said, 'you will get it.' At a time when I didn't believe I would, her encouragement was not only well timed but the way in which she made sure I did 'get it' was and still is greatly appreciated.

Ruth Robinson

At GCSE-equivalent level, my art teacher was Gavan Carkeek. He had strong ginger hair. When most other teachers came dressed in conservative tweed jackets, Mr Carkeek sported a baby blue suit or a bright yellow one. He took what I thought of as 'real' art classes, showing images of ancient sculptures or Renaissance religiosity. We went on trips to draw ships or developed images inspired by cubists. By the end, I had won the school art prize and my parents had framed most of my pictures.

As A level drew nearer, I chose maths, physics chemistry, biology and English. One day Mr Carkeek pleaded with me to take art as well. Inculcated in the school ethos that boys did sciences and girls did humanities, I was not persuaded. Mr Carkeek went on to become a headteacher but he still doesn't know I went on to become an art and design teacher.

Adrian Montana

I believe I had a good art, craft and design education, in that I learnt independence and self-reliance. Too few teachers really taught me how to become more skilful. At worst, they provided me with time and resources to experiment, but the best got to know me, coached and challenged me to progress. Gerard Carey was my primary school head teacher, a trained artist with a love of sculpture. He taught me to get my hands dirty, to think about form and surface by casting and carving, encouraging my interest in other cultures. At art college I was blessed with two great tutors, David Nash and then John (Paddy) Paddison; sculptors of great intelligence, skill and absolute integrity. David taught me the importance of a personal philosophy, being truthful to and respectful of the materials. As a former friend and assistant to Jacob Epstein, Paddy was technically superb. He taught me how to carve stone and the values essential to a craftsman. I like to think of this as their legacy to me in my education role, as much as my own creative work.

Ged Gast

Creativity, choice and a curriculum for the future



Sharon Hodgson MP explains why we need a forward facing education system

For me, few things sum up the differences between the last government and the current one more poetically than the loss of the colourful rainbow from the Department for Education (formerly Children, Schools and Families)’s logo.

I am under no illusions that Labour education Ministers were universally popular among the teaching profession – few ever are – but I strongly believe that the department under Labour was moving in the right direction. It was about standards and qualifications, as it must be, but it was also much more focussed on the whole needs of children themselves – hence the name, and the rainbow.

Under Michael Gove, the department is all about him and his pet interests – free schools, cutting local authorities out, and the teaching of dead languages and poems by rote rather than helpful skills for the modern world.

The Secretary of State says he wants pupils to have a rigorous education, as we all do, but equally important is to have a rounded one. Facts and figures are fine and well for those young people whose brains are set up to work in those terms, but for many that isn’t the case. What is important is that children and young people are given a broad base of education right up to key stage 3, and the choices to pursue their interests at key stage 4 and beyond.

The government did, to their credit, commission Darren Henley to report and make recommendations on cultural education, and have ostensibly accepted the bulk of his recommendations. However, there are serious questions as to how committed Ministers really are to ensuring that all pupils receive a rounded education.

I think that ambiguity in their thinking is perhaps best demonstrated by the financial backing they have given to Henley’s plans. £15m over three years is not going to go far – schools aren’t going to be able to do much with less than 50p per pupil per year. The Government says it is pump-priming money, but I fear they may find that the well on which they seek to draw is running dry.

Despite promises to the contrary, most schools are finding that their budgets are being cut (don’t be fooled that the pupil premium is ‘extra’ money – it’s not), and that many things they used to get from the local authority for free are now coming at a charge. Given those constraints, it is unlikely that they will be able to find any extra money for art and design courses and resources – especially now, for secondary schools at least, creative courses will not count towards the government’s favoured measure of school performance, the Ebacc.

Gove has also undermined the value 14-19 diplomas have in school league tables, making it far less likely that schools and colleges will support them. One of the diploma subject areas was ‘creative and media’, reflecting the fact that the sector is so important to the UK’s economy.

And while cuts to the Arts Council and British Film Council grab the headlines, it is what is going on under the radar that is most worrying, such as cuts to teacher training places and CPD which will whittle down the workforce.

We need an education system which looks forward to provide the skills that our future workforce will need in the future and if there is one area this country can excel at in the twenty-first century, it is the creative industries.

Creativity is vital to our economy. Already, around one and a half million people are employed in the creative industries, which account for 10 per cent of the UK’s exports, sustaining

more than 100,000 businesses. This needs to keep on growing.

Our schools therefore need to be breeding places for the next Jonathan Ive or Norman Foster, the next Christopher Bailey or Vivienne Westwood.

We also need to find the next Toby Gard and Paul Douglas, the men behind the phenomenally successful Tomb Raider video game series. I’m hoping my son can be part of something similar in the future – he’s just starting a computer games art degree at Teeside University.

To get to that stage where schools are bringing on talent, above all else we need excellent educators, who can encourage and nurture expression, but also guide young people in how to harness their talent, and develop it into meaningful and rewarding careers.

Unfortunately, in a Parliamentary answer to me last year, Nick Gibb said that he expects the number of art teachers in schools to decrease by between one and two hundred a year over the coming years.

He says this is a result of declining rolls, but how many will actually be forced out of schools which no longer have to follow the curriculum and choose to focus on the Ebacc subjects, which now look set to replace the broad choice of

GCSEs currently on offer entirely if Michael Gove gets his way. And how many will be forced out if Ministers decide that the various strands of design and technology

‘The Government must support the development of the creative industries through the policies it pursues, including in education’

don’t deserve to be compulsory parts of the curriculum for the remaining schools that have to follow it?

Even if a young person doesn’t see their future in a creative role, a rounded education will stay with them for the rest of their life – giving them an appreciation of the arts as a source of pleasure, encouraging them to patronise and support those who are artists and designers.

Labour has been clear that the Government must support

the development of the creative industries through the policies it pursues, including in education.

Our Culture and Education teams work closely together as part of the policy review process, and we partnered with the Creative Coalition Campaign to launch our Creative Industries Network last year, through which we are engaging with the sector to ensure our policies across the board reflect its importance to the country.

My fellow Shadow Education Minister, Kevin Brennan, is also currently undertaking a review of the curriculum, and from the drafts I’ve seen of that encouraging creativity – both from educators and pupils – plays a big part.

Barry Sheerman, former Chair of the Education Select Committee, is also leading a review focussing on School to Work, and I know he is very keen on looking at programmes used in New York where creative education is used to help and encourage young people from deprived backgrounds to engage with the rest of the curriculum.

For my part, I’m putting the finishing touches to establishing an All Party Parliamentary Group to bring together MPs and Peers from across the political spectrum who have an interest in art and design education, and provide a forum for the discussion of these issues, thereby creating an opportunity for the sector to speak to politicians and vice versa. Hopefully we’ll have things up and running in January.

In the meantime, I would urge AD readers to use your creativity to fight for the recognition your sector deserves. I want to hear of more colourful and inventive postcard campaigns – even if all they achieve in the short term is brightening up the DfE corridors.

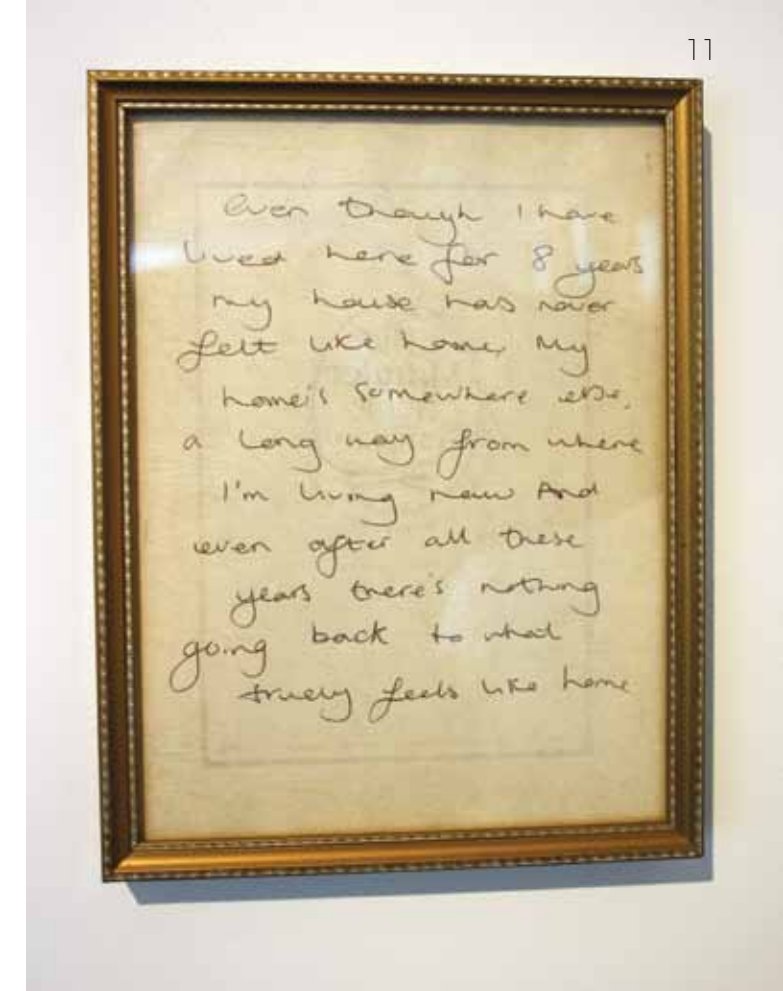
The DfE is a department that acts like it needs brightening up – it really needs its rainbow back. But in the meantime, I’d settle for a change of tack, with Ministers working towards providing the kind of education system children need to prepare them for the economy of the future.

The louder you shout that, the more Michael will have to listen. ■

Sharon Hodgson MP
Shadow Minister for Children and Families



Right: Sharon Hodgson speaking at the NSEAD Annual Conference at BALTIC Centre for Contemporary Art, 2012



Decade

Henry Ward, Anthony Williams, Howard Hollands on Decade and the first ten years of The alTURNERTive Prize

In 2002 Welling School was designated as a specialist visual arts school. The school had benefitted from having a very strong art department for many years. Indeed when I took over as head of art the following year I was only the third person to hold the role in forty years! Partly to celebrate the designation and also to acknowledge the innovative practice we were beginning to develop as a faculty, I set up an exhibition, entitled The alTURNERTive Prize.

The idea behind the show was to select a group of particularly promising students who were studying for GCSEs or A levels in art subjects and give them the opportunity to exhibit their work in an exhibition that would ape the Turner Prize at Tate. The award was intended to celebrate the innovative approach that the faculty was taking in its teaching and the embracing of contemporary practice by its students. So 2002 saw the first alTURNERTive Prize exhibition. I had no idea then that it would develop into such an important event in the school's calendar.

In the ten years since, over a hundred students have participated in the exhibition and the award has seen the involvement of an illustrious number of artists, writers, critics, gallery directors and educationalists including Michael Archer, Richard Wentworth, Nathan Cohen, Howard Hollands, Anna Barriball, Rebecca Sinker, Mary Doyle, Ryan Gander, Julia Alveraz, Ben Lewis, Lucy Davis, Eleanor Crook and Hew Locke. Growing from its inauspicious beginnings the exhibition has developed into a highly professional showcase for the most exciting work going on at the school. Every year looks different, reflecting the shifting interests of students and staff. The award has featured paintings, drawings, sculptures, photography, video, sound and performance.

As the tenth anniversary approached I decided that I wanted to commemorate it. Education, it seems, shifts ever more quickly and it is increasingly rare to see projects that span such a sustained period of time. One of the most overwhelming aspects of The alTURNERTive Prize has been the attendance, at the private view, of so many ex-students. Every year we are thrilled to see alumni who, having taken part in the exhibition whilst students at the school, come back to catch up and see what is currently going on. It seemed a

perfect idea to host an exhibition that would both celebrate ten years of the exhibition and also act as a 'where are they now?' So the idea for *Decade* began to grow. I contacted students that had been involved over the past ten years, wanting to ensure that every year of the award was recognised. It seemed an ambitious proposal, but we were amazed by how excited and enthusiastic everyone approached was. A list of twelve artists was drawn up and plans for the exhibition began to come together.

One of the most interesting experiences, in putting this exhibition together, has been the difference between working with students in the school and working with a group of practicing artists. Even putting aside the logistical difficulties of bringing together artists from different parts of the country, working or studying in different places, all with busy lives, the negotiations that took place about space and so on were fascinating. Seeing how the ex-students had developed into competent articulate practitioners was a tremendously rewarding experience. Talking to one of the artists, whilst he installed his piece, he spoke about the strange feeling of me telephoning him to discuss the deadline and how it had brought him straight back to being in the sixth form.

As my own practice, and that of the faculty, has developed over the past ten years, the question of education itself has played an ever more important part. In recent years, much of the work included in The alTURNERTive Prize has tackled issues about education: Camilla Price, winner in 2010, creating an audio piece using interviews with women who had been at the school in the 1950s and that she had tracked down after discovering the school's archive; Layla Fay, winner the year

before, with her installation of exercise books charting the development of her handwriting; and Joseph Smith, winner in 2008, with his blackboard upon which he had drawn, and then erased, portraits of deceased relatives. Rachel Robertson, currently completing her degree in fine art, installed an interactive piece, inviting the audience to attempt to follow instructions for making a paper model based on one created spontaneously by an under-five year old she was working with, whilst Tiffany Webster, the current holder of the award and still in the sixth form, showed a fascinating pair of films; one showing an interview, in Spanish with subtitles, with her half-sister, about an African-inspired mask she had made at school that day, coupled with footage of Tiffany smashing a piece of her own African-inspired primary school artwork.

‘Growing from its inauspicious beginnings the exhibition has developed into a highly professional showcase for the most exciting work going on at the school’

Decade saw an even greater number of ex-students coming back – at the private view the atmosphere was one of celebration and reunion. It is a testament to the incredible strength of the faculty. The alTURNERTive Prize will continue. In September we will begin the process of short-listing for the 2013 exhibition.

Henry Ward, Deputy Head and Director of Specialism

Images left to right:

David Lockyer Nominated
2004 & 2005

Nicky Field Nominated
2002, winner 2003

Camilla Price Nominated
2009, winner 2010

Anthony Williams, on the art department and The aTURNERtive Prize

For anybody that has been lucky enough to have anything to do with the art department at Welling School, they will know that there is something in the water – something a bit special.

I was nominated twice for The aTURNERtive Prize. Although I never won the prize it creates an amazing opportunity for young artists – sometimes people hadn’t previously realised that what they had made was ‘art’. It is an opportunity to get their work seen, discussed and contextualized. Putting your weird and wonderful creations on display is daunting and to this day I remember how terrified I was about being interviewed and filmed for the video that was screened at the private view.

The approach to teaching art at Welling School is akin to that taken on a foundation course. The focus on skills and the freedom to experiment can be the torch to the touch paper that makes people thrive. It also gives anybody planning on undertaking a foundation course or degree a head start.

‘The focus on skills and the freedom to experiment can be the torch to the touch paper that makes people thrive’

Since my time at Welling School I have completed a foundation course in art and design at Byam Shaw School of Art and then went on to complete a Foundation Degree (FDA) in fine art skills and practices also at Byam Shaw (Central Saint Martins) for which I achieved a 2:1. I am currently applying for the design trainee scheme at the BBC.

Welling School planted a seed in my head and in my heart and it has changed my life.

Anthony Williams, was formally a student at Welling School



Left: Decade catalogue, 2012

Below left: Anthony Williams nominated 2005 & 2006

Howard Hollands on Decade and The aTURNERtive Prize

My copy of the catalogue for the *Decade* show at Welling School resists its own timeline and the linearity of the ten-year development of The aTURNERtive Prize at Welling. Unintentionally, the pages detach themselves from the spine and fall out, so that each time it returns to the shelf the artists, and their year in the limelight, become out of order. I like the way it challenges its own trajectory and it epitomises the way The aTURNERtive Prize project needs to regularly resist and restore its own institutional framework. This meta-level engagement is very unusual for art in school. The physical frailty of the catalogue is at odds with the robust school exercise book on which it is modelled. There is an echo here of the way that children find transgression and risk-taking such a natural process and one which gets beaten out of them through schooling. Not so at Welling, where there seems to be an unwritten objective to reverse this tendency, so that youngsters can challenge themselves through art, as part of the lifelong creative process. Welling seems fascinated by this connection and it is the reason why the pupil-teacher relationship is one of creative interaction and mutual respect. More than any school I have observed the stimulus provided by pupils in the creative development of their own teachers is unprecedented.

Behind *Decade* lies ten years of intense documentation using digital and traditional formats – a parallel world to that of National Curriculum leveling (in every sense).

The institutional constraints that feed the developments at Welling are varied. The rapid educational changes initiated by the Government, which serve to undermine stability in schools, are countered by the sheer sustainability of a *Decade* of aTURNERtive with its much healthier approach to notions of change through lateral thinking. This is thinking that does not conform to superficial or headline-grabbing notions of creativity. It is real.

I have sometimes likened the art in classrooms at Welling to the Tardis. There is far more going on both practically and theoretically than can possibly be accommodated in one classroom. So, Welling is not *the* model of good practice, beloved of Ofsted but simply a model of what is possible.

Howard Hollands, PGCE Leader, Art and Design Education

LIGHTBOX

A new online resource for teachers and learners

In 2009 following a celebratory season of artists using creative technology in Welsh Galleries, *Vision On*, WJEC and Ffotogallery (Wales’ National Agency for photography and lens-based media in Wales) staged a CPD conference for art and design teachers to examine new directions in visual art, through multi-disciplinary approaches and digital media.

In the collision of ideas that followed, it became clear that the knowledge and expertise of delegates were not always aligned with contemporary art practice, or, more importantly the skills and aspirations of pupils. Art and design had evolved to adapt to a new digital age and, daunted by rapid technological changes, teachers with long expertise and a successful record in traditional media, highlighted the challenges they faced in attempting to reflect current, creative practice in the art room and identified a critical need for training, support and resources.

The result has been Lightbox – a unique collaboration between the examination board and creative sector in response to the demand for up to date training, support and information.

Consultation with schools revealed a lack of confidence in the interpretation of assessment criteria in relation to less traditional media; sparse opportunities for exposure to new art, artists and ideas; and little advice and information available on progression and career opportunities in the art and design sector – despite a growing creative industries sector in Wales unable to meet demand for artists, designers, animators, filmmakers, etc.

Addressing these gaps, Lightbox will be an online portal, for art teachers and students. It brings together the most relevant international contemporary art practice, assessment guidance (including video assessment guides and tools), learning resources, training and technical support, whilst providing opportunities for sharing good practice for teachers and students alike. The resources will feed directly into the objectives of the WJEC Art and Design programme.

Under the headings Learn, Assess, Progress, this free online resource is aimed at the needs of teachers and learners from all levels, to demystify contemporary practice and its relationship to formal assessment and professional development.

The resource will be launched in early 2013, followed by a national programme of practical training for teachers delivered by artists and

designers, building the repertoire of new skills and knowledge that they require to equip twenty-first century learners for a rapidly changing HE and work environment.

Lightbox’s aim is to support art and design departments in delivering and assessing the cross-disciplinary skills that our new creative professionals need. The creative industries have been the fastest growing sector of the UK economy in the last 10-15 years as artists and

creative practitioners employ a wider spectrum of media to explore their ideas and skills. .

Offering a simple set of categories linking to artist websites, creative institutions, assessment advice and vocationally led films, Lightbox contributes towards a wider understanding of contemporary art practice and its relationship to education, the creative industries, technology and the changing landscape of the twenty-first century. ■

How Lightbox works



Learn contains a selection of contemporary work by a wide selection of national and international artists and artists’ groups exploring contemporary and creative technologies and highlights new technology and the multi-disciplinary approach prevalent in contemporary art. In addition, you will find art education resources and useful CPD content, and helpful advice on resourcing your department with creative software and digital equipment. A project gallery showcases some examples of innovative approaches across GCSE, GCE and beyond. Other tools include glossaries of key art terms, and information on arts venues and activities in Wales.



Assess supports teachers’ and candidates’ understanding of the WJEC assessment objectives, particularly in the face of rapid developments in creative media, Assess features a selection of videos showing examples of assessment by senior examiners, teachers and candidates which include Photography,

Animation and Graphic Communication. There is also guidance on how to compile and present digital workbook submissions. Answers to the most frequently asked questions on assessment and administration of GCSE and GCE specifications are found here.



Progress provides practical advice on progression to careers in the arts and creative industries. This section will allow you to meet leading arts practitioners in Wales through short informal video interviews, giving teachers and learners and understanding of the many professional possibilities within art and design. With increasing university fees it is vital that students understand what they hope to achieve in HE and are equipped to choose the right course for them. This section also contains constructive information from lecturers and course leaders on the right questions to ask before making this important decision and advice on portfolio content and preparing for an interview. In, ‘Making a case for Art and Design’, advice on how to promote the importance of the subject to candidates, colleagues and the wider school community is provided.

Visit www.wjec.co.uk for news of the Lightbox launch in early 2013 or subscribe to email bulletins on the Art & Design pages of the WJEC website for an automatic update and notice of release.



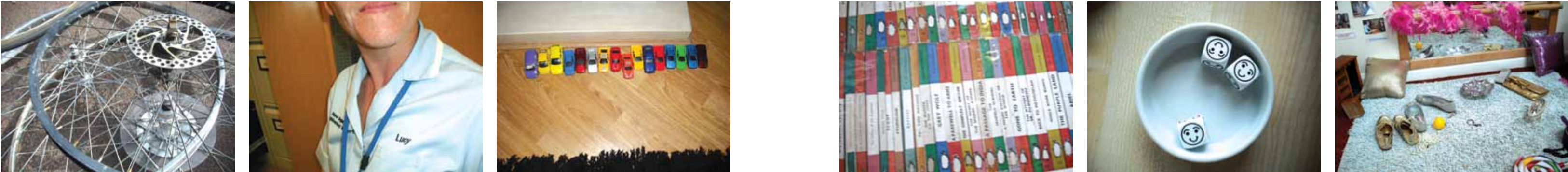
The way we see our world

Lucy Taylor-Hall, deputy manager at New Beginnings Neighbourhood Nursery, describes how the language of photography enables children to express their thinking and understanding – the way they see the world

Photography has always played a huge part in my family’s life as my dad was always there with his camera clicking away documenting in pictures all the magical adventures that we experienced as children. I remember Christmas 1981 when I received my very first camera. Of all the photographs that I must have taken there is only one that I still cherish. The photograph is of my Grandma Jackson. She would always make me feel so very proud of my achievements and her love was endless.... How lucky I was as a child to be given these opportunities and such praise.

When New Beginnings Neighbourhood Nursery was asked to take part in the Sightlines Initiative ‘The Language of Photography’ project I was delighted. Sightlines have studied and researched the pedagogical approach that has been developed in the preschools and infant toddler centres of Reggio Emilia and have set up a national ReFocus Network member’s project in the UK. The late Loris Malaguzzi, founder of the Reggio Emilia approach, believed that children should be encouraged to use symbolic languages which include dramatic play, writing, painting, photography to express their thinking and understanding: **‘For centuries, children have expected adults to believe in them – in their talents, their sensitivity, their creative intelligence and their desire to understand their surroundings. We have to understand them through the things they want to do and show that they can do. Children use a 100 ’languages’ to teach us and show us.’ Loris Malaguzzi.**

Photography was chosen as the focus for the project as it is an accessible, versatile and expressive language for young children. The project started with an interest of each child which would then naturally lead into a discovery of their learning. Alex, Harry, Macy and Olivia, all between three and four years old, soon developed their own photography styles. Macy produced very magical photographs, her style so spontaneous. Olivia knew exactly what she wanted to photograph and always executed it with great precision. Harry would give a running commentary about every photograph that he took and Alex used his photographs to often portray his own emotion which was very powerful. By following the Reggio approach it created a learning framework which wasn’t manufactured, made sense to the children and was therefore delightful and meaningful, not pressured.



In June 2011 Alex, Harry, Macy and Olivia had their first public exhibition of their photography, entitled *The way we see our world*. Pre-exhibition I had introduced the children to the work of Rankin one of Britain’s most acclaimed

“I am blown away by the photographs you have taken – they are all fantastic! They are a true insight into what children see”.

photographers. They were fascinated to look at his work and would critique his photographs very honestly! We emailed Rankin before the exhibition and the children chose some of their favourite photographs for him to look at. It was incredible to see their faces light up when he emailed them back.

Rankin wrote: ‘I am thrilled you have been looking at my work, it’s such a huge complement! I am blown away by the photographs you have taken – they are all fantastic! They are a true insight into what children see. Keep up the good work and good luck with the exhibition.’ Their journey had just begun... the children were invited to become regional partners with Sunderland Museums. What an honour as New Beginnings was the only early years setting in Sunderland to have been given this fabulous opportunity. The Museum had been inspired by the children’s previous work and wanted them to visit and photograph their favourite museum. The children and I visited each museum and then the children individually chose their favourite. Their decision was unanimous it was Monkwearmouth Station Museum. I spent a day with each child and they planned and designed their own individual pieces relating to their photography. Alex made a model ‘The art gallery museum and the super sticky

silver train’. Harry made a go-kart. Macy made a sculpture using only circles called ‘Alfred’ and Olivia made mosaics of each letter in her name. The children’s photography and three-dimensional pieces were exhibited at Sunderland Museum and Winter Gardens during the Easter holidays 2012. I continue to be so very proud of Alex, Harry, Macy and Olivia and feel exceptionally privileged to have been part of such a magnificent project. Their work takes my breath away. The impact that this project has had on the children is clear to see. They believe that they are the best photographers in the world and they are confident young children who are so very proud of their own achievements. As a practitioner the children have led me through their exciting journey and their enthusiasm and passion for photography was inspirational. They naturally communicated their ideas through pictures, demonstration, voice and song using me as a vehicle to support their expressions as they made sense of the world around them. ■



A user's manual

Victoria Houghton would like more primary schools to use clay. Here's how...

I have spent the last eleven years running clay workshops in infant and primary schools and in that time I have had such positive feedback from teachers and children that I am on a mission: to reintroduce clay into schools in the hope that it is used regularly instead of once or twice a year.

Children get very excited at the thought of using clay and when they do, the experience doesn't disappoint. They have a fascination with this soft tactile material that is open to endless possibilities. This short user's guide provides a few tips to help you get the best possible results.

1. Make sure the clay is soft

The most important thing to take into consideration before you begin is to check the softness of your clay. This might sound obvious but it really is the one thing that will make all the difference! If your clay is soft, your children will have

much longer to handle and play with it before it starts to go dry and crumbly. If the clay is fairly hard to start with then the children will not only find it more difficult to make shapes, but their window of opportunity in which to do so will be much shorter. To check its softness, press your thumb into your bag of clay. If it goes in easily, it should be perfectly soft to use. It can be puzzling sometimes to discover that your clay is not as soft as it was when first delivered to your school. This could be because of a small hole or tear in the bag that has happened during transit. Even though this is a rare occurrence, it is a good idea to check your clay when it is delivered and cover any tears with parcel tape straight away. Another reason that it may have gone hard could be that the bag has not been re-sealed properly after use. Making sure your bag of clay is airtight will ensure that it stays soft indefinitely. To make your clay softer, take a long handled paintbrush and make as

many deep holes as you can. Next, pour a jug of water into the holes. This is the moment when you will find out if your clay is hard because there is a hole in the bag, so be careful! Keep pouring water in until the holes are full. You may need to repeat this a few times until your clay is soft again checking its consistency every now and then. It will soften, eventually!

2. Which clay to use in the classroom?

I always use a stoneware clay in my workshops. The good news is that this clay is available in most school catalogues and is described as 'stoneware buff' or 'school buff'. Buff just means smooth as opposed to 'grogged' which is really clay with bits in! One more thing, whilst you are looking in your school catalogue, remember to invest in a potter's wire or clay cutter as they are sometimes called. They make cutting the clay a breeze.

3. Feeling hot?

The weather does make a difference. Children's hands are usually hot in the first place. Add a classroom on a summer's afternoon and the clay will dry out quickly. To ensure your clay stays soft for as long as possible, keep it in the bag until just before the children use it.

4. Health and safety

Children love to get messy! However, dried clay on their hands can sometimes feel a bit strange for them. Children sometimes react in the same way that they would when eating a sugary doughnut. Instinctively they want to lick their lips when eating a doughnut to get rid of the sugar and, instinctively, children want to rub their hands to get rid of the clay. Whilst licking your lips to get rid of sugar is fine, rubbing or clapping your hands is not as the dry clay on your hands goes into the air as dust and is not good to breathe in. Also, when tidying up, throw all newspaper that has covered the tables away and gather all the little bits of dry clay on the tables with a wet cloth, don't sweep. Lastly, it is a good idea to get into the habit of using two buckets of water for the end of the lesson. One for children to rinse their hands before they wash them with soap in the sink; the other bucket is for washing tools. Pour the water from both buckets outside on some earth. This will help prevent any possible blockages with your sink.

5. Watch and listen then make

This idea may sound obvious, but it really does make a huge difference. Children are often so keen to get started that as soon as they have the clay in front of them they may start, even though you are still giving them instructions. This can lead to all sorts of confusion! Ensure that the children are watching each stage before starting as this is your opportunity to highlight any possible pitfalls.

6. Decorating

When the models are dry you can use any water-based to paint them with and then varnish with PVA glue. It is important that all children are able to experience using clay at least once at school. It improves their dexterity and allows their creativity to flourish. I have worked with children who have struggled with drawing and painting and yet have excelled when using clay. When children get their moment to shine – we know that clay is indispensable. What can be better

than a lesson where learning is fun and rewarding. Let's ensure the next generation of children are able to enjoy this fabulous material – as one child (age 8) said as he left one of my workshops: 'I enjoyed that more than having fun!' ■
Victoria Houghton, Clay Workshops for Schools

If you need more information please visit
www.clayprojectsforschools.com or
www.clayprojectsforschools.blogspot.com



Driven to Abstraction

'Is it possible to express our emotions through colour in purely visual terms? How can we denote rhythm though the use of lines and marks?'
Anne Wilford and her class were driven to abstraction when they tried to answer these questions

With his work offering an introduction to the world of colour, line and form, Wassily Kandinsky is often referred to as the 'Father of Abstract Art'. Abstract art liberates children from the confines of what things are supposed to look like and catapults them into a world where they are free to explore colour and emotions in pure form. Kandinsky's idea that colour, sound and shape exist in a continuum or a holistic cycle of understanding seems similar to a child's intense vision of the world. We try to explain colour – is red hot? Is blue cold? But is it possible to express our emotions through colour in purely visual terms? How can we denote rhythm though the use of lines and marks?

These are questions I wanted to explore through a class project (with children aged 8-9), which investigated the place of sound, colour, rhythm and emotion in art. The aim of the project

was to synthesise the senses, concentrating on colour as emotion and sound as linear movement.

The first step was to discuss simple colour theories and to talk about primary, secondary and complementary colours, offering the class opportunities to explore the meaning and emotional facets of colour.

The primary colours had special symbolic significance for Kandinsky. He felt that yellow was aggressive, like a brassy trumpet blast, while red stood for warmth, life and movement and blue meant coolness, peace and a reminder of the sky. I asked the children what meanings and associations they had with different colours and they came up with these ideas:

Red – 'hot sunset, love, fire, anger, embarrassed'

Blue – 'sad, shy, calm, like waves, sky, cold'

Yellow – 'fresh, tulips, sunny, happy, tanned, mellow'



'It soon became apparent that colour meant different things to different children and I felt that this realisation made the process of creating patches and geometrical shapes of colour more personal to them'

White – 'light as a feather, lonely, strange, like strong bones, sleepy, clouds, makes you think'
Black – 'death, black hole in space, evil, bored, spooky, infinite'

The children were given A1 sheets of white paper and asked to paint patches of colour to show different feelings. For instance, a large patch of red could mean anger, balanced and enhanced by patches of blue, orange and yellow. Areas of the paper left white could be powerful parts of the composition – Kandinsky felt that white was pure and full of possibility. It soon became apparent that colour meant different things to different children and I felt that this realisation made the process of creating patches and geometrical shapes of colour more personal to them.

We listened to Stravinsky's 'The Rite of Spring' to develop the idea that colour and marks can interpret music. The black marks and dots in Kandinsky's paintings are similar to musical notes, symbols and signs and my aim was to encourage the children to depict sound by linear marks and symbols. The children used black oil pastels on their patches of colour paintings to make marks that showed how they felt when listening to the music. Finally we reflected on how children had made their pictures and talked about the emotions we



felt as we looked at the artwork. The children were articulate and confident in their discussion and I was impressed with the manner in which they talked thoughtfully about complex abstract concepts.

The second section of the project was to complete a wall hanging inspired by Kandinsky and abstract art. Each child was given a felt square, rectangles of white cotton and fabric crayons and pens to create lines, patterns and geometrical marks. They then selected a variety of material scraps and cut, sewed and glued their design's onto the felt squares, which were sewn onto backing material and hung on a wooden dowel.

Kandinsky once said: 'Colour is the keyboard, the eyes are the harmonies, the soul is the piano with many strings. The artist is the hand that plays, touching one key or another, to cause vibrations in the soul.' I felt that the weeks spent

exploring abstract art had been a deeply rewarding experience and all of us achieved a deeper understanding of the concept of colour as emotion and the spiritual possibilities of abstract art. ■

Anne Wilford, Art Specialist
Queen's College Prep School



When a school finds itself in a downward tailspin, floor targets hurtling towards it, senior leaders can be forgiven for putting the ‘lighter’ side of the curriculum onto the backburner, whilst working on the ‘heavy stuff’. But, can a school that does not nurture the arts really be said to have improved? Attitudes to the arts when the pressure is on reveal a deep divide and very different success criteria for whole school improvement. One school in East Kent is showing how a strong, mutual partnership with a forward thinking arts partner can transform learning.

The partners

Bromstone School is a large primary school in East Kent. In recent times, SATs scores have seen a dramatic increase across the board and confidence throughout the school is growing. The school recently achieved Artsmark Gold – recognition of the success of a creative curriculum that places the arts and creative enquiry at the heart of children’s learning. The leadership team have invested significant resources and commitment to embedding a dynamic arts culture in the school.

Bromstone have worked with many artists and organisations with great success. Now, with Turner

Contemporary in Margate they have begun a partnership that is breaking new ground, learning about and through the arts to enhance the whole curriculum.

Turner Contemporary launched an innovative learning programme to coincide with the opening of the new gallery last year – ‘We are Curious’. An approach has been developed that is based in philosophical inquiry techniques and the use of unique artist made handling resources.

At Bromstone the headteacher introduced Philosophy for Children two years ago, and the approach is becoming well embedded throughout the school. Working with the gallery and the ‘We are Curious’ programme is a natural extension of the school’s approach to opening up the curriculum for all learners.

In November 2011, the school took part in the Prince’s Trust ‘Great Art Quest’. Two teachers took part in a training day at the National Gallery and worked with Turner Contemporary to develop their confidence and ability to critique an artwork.

The children then visited Turner Contemporary. The visits were followed by creative art and writing sessions in school led by visual artist Tracey Falcon and storyteller Emily Parrish, before the participating children and their friends and families got to see the work exhibited in the gallery.

School Improvement the fun way

How working with arts partners to foster an ‘Artsmark’ culture can raise standards and enjoyment of learning throughout the school



‘The characteristics that make this an Artsmark Gold school are the key to the ongoing culture of improvement that runs through the school’

The CPD provided through the project helped the teachers to feel more confident about their own skills, to support students to develop their own analysis of the artwork, making links and connections to other areas of learning. The children were able to explore their responses through philosophical inquiry and to test their ideas during their work with the artists.

When other groups visited the exhibition *Nothing in the world but youth*, these approaches were used to engage with the artworks. Teachers noted a very high level of discussion flowed from focused inquiry into the Martin Boyce artwork Gate (*We don’t meet here. We are always together first.*). This was not a work that the teachers would necessarily have expected the students to be drawn to, much less engage with at such a deep level.

Other year groups and teachers have worked with the gallery’s Object Dialogue Box – combining a unique handling collection with Philosophical Inquiry.

Thinking like artists – what happens when we take the rules away?

A powerful example of learning inspired by arts practice is the way that all pupils in the school use their topic books. In a simple but powerful initiative the management team took away the lines. There was a very real sense of risk and anxiety from both staff and students, concerned that standards of handwriting and presentation would fall. This new way of using exercise books was modeled with examples, and staff continued to insist on high standards of presentation. The students were then given responsibility to decide how to fill the blank (unlined) pages.

In time, something special emerged. Books are now like sketchbooks – a real playground for ideas. They are presented with high visual sensitivity. Concepts and ideas are linked, combining graphic mapping of numbers, text and images. Significantly, handwriting has improved. This is an excellent example of what can happen when teachers give up an aspect of control, handing responsibility to students to navigate their own learning. Everything apart from maths work now goes in the book. The school plans to develop this further and bring in a fine artist to show how they use sketchbook for staff and students.

When they adopt the practice of artists, pupils are seen to be increasingly open to excitement and inspiration in their learning. Children at Bromstone recognise that they are free to choose both the medium and the thinking techniques for learning. They reflect upon their methods of learning, and are challenged by their peers to justify their choices. They are learning not only to work like artists, but to think like artists, craftsmakers and designers – to observe, gather information, process, be open to nuance then make well timed judgements where there are no rules. Children are



looking beyond surface meaning and digging into their own experience and knowledge to make meaningful connections. Pupils are actively encouraged to push forward, taking higher order thinking to the next level.

The characteristics that make this an Artsmark Gold school are the key to the ongoing culture of improvement that runs through the school. The leadership are confident and secure in their belief that the good practice of artists provides a rich model for teaching and learning in all areas of the curriculum. Arts partners can’t provide an off the shelf recipe for school improvement. However, when a school defines success in terms of the quality of children’s thinking, independence in learning and ability to make meaningful connections, then the arts partner can be the catalyst for real change.

Walking the tightrope between excellent arts provision on one side and using the arts as a means to other ends on the other, requires vision and no small amount of courage. The headteacher at Bromstone puts it simply: ‘We value the arts as an entitlement for children. Music, art, dance and drama are at the heart of our curriculum, but this is more than art for art’s sake, it is preparing them for life.’ ■

Michele Gregson
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Thanks to Nigel Utton, Headteacher, Alison Monroe, Deputy Head and Amanda Dissington for sharing their inspiring practice.



Craft collaborations

A challenge to respond to the theme of the Olympics resulted in stunning textile installations in Hampshire. Using the ring formation as a starting point, Jane Stillman describes how, where and why the large-scale craft collaborations were made

The project took its inspiration from the form of the ring. Ideas and planning started and an early meeting with French artist, Françoise Dupré fuelled the vision. Her works are inspired by ring and circle formations, working in craft and textile techniques and often with an element of social participation the results are large sculptures.

The ring formation also has a connection to the thirteenth century Round Table that features in The Great Hall in Winchester where the exhibition was to be exhibited. In addition to this there was of course the familiar Olympic ring design and also various pieces of sports equipment that are 'ring' shaped.

Following two early workshops with the artist, I disseminated ideas and techniques in fourteen workshops across Hampshire. Craft techniques were cascaded to teachers, children and their school's community, to staff in a Children's Services Department office and community groups. All who participated were set the challenge of constructing rings.

The textile rings were created using French knitting, wrapping, crochet and a range of other craft techniques. The rings were made in variations of the Olympic colours: red,

'Schools reported that the craft elements united school communities with parents, staff and families combining newly acquired with remembered maker skills'

blue, yellow, green and black. They could be made from wools, threads, ribbons, fabrics, plastics and virtually anything that would work with the techniques used. Where possible materials used were sourced by recycling. A wide range of materials, sizes and individualisation took place. Some responses combined paintings, batik and even metal work. Schools reported that the craft elements united school communities with parents, staff and families combining newly acquired with remembered maker skills. Craft techniques also captured the imagination of some children who otherwise didn't always consider art to be their favourite



subject. Contributions were very unique and innovative in order to try and be identified!

The project took place over two years, momentum increased in autumn 2011 as everyone learnt to French knit and wrap rings. Work came from infant, junior, primary, special and secondary schools in Hampshire. A Brownie group and a knitting group were also involved.

Over the weeks the rings were connected and combined to produce a collaborative art installation hanging high up in The Great Hall. It measured 18 metres long by 4 metres deep and consists of many rings. It provided a backdrop for the lots of celebrations and events that took place during the Olympics. It will travel and be exhibited throughout 2013.

Another separate and smaller installation (6 metres by 2.5 metres) featured in the Winchester Discovery Centre and moved to additional venues in Hampshire in 2012. A smaller installation featured in the Southampton City Art Gallery. Any requests for a permanent home for these pieces will be considered!

To capture Hampshire children's artwork and creativity in 2012, schools also produced an outstanding display of A1-sized artwork that responded to the Olympic colours and values. The artworks were made using a variety of skills including painting, drawing, collage, mixed-media and printing and were exhibited in a magnificent A1 sketchbooks. ■

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County Inspector/Adviser for Visual and Performing Arts
Hampshire Inspector and Advisory Service, Children's Services Department
Thanks to Seawhite of Brighton Ltd for combining and binding the A1 sketchbook pages



Right: Françoise Dupré *Fleurs (bonnes mamans)*, Royal London Hospital, 2012 © FXP

Creative connections

in South Lanarkshire



Making creative links between schools and professional designers

South Lanarkshire Council's Education Resources department has taken an innovative approach to art and design working with our Cultural Co-ordinators to focus on a creative learning between schools and professional designers. The scheme is designed to include all art forms for children and young people.

For the past eight years the scheme has included a design project where secondary pupils work with professional designers. Each year the project has taken a different theme as its focus. The themes have included 'As Others See Us'¹ linking into the year of homecoming and 'Cultural Kinetics', linking into Lanarkshire's International Children's Games' in 2011. In recent years the project showcase has been hosted at the National Museum of Rural Life www.nms.ac.uk in East Kilbride.

Course Content

The annual design project aims to develop pupils' participation in specialist design areas. It promotes and reinforces the importance of the design process and gives pupils an opportunity to meet and work with practising professional designers. For pupils it provides a unique opportunity. As one pupil commented: 'Making the hat and being able to model it in front of an audience gave me the motivation and inspiration to continue with design in the future.'

The annual design project is a ten-week course of designer-led workshops. The course is split into three distinct sections including the research and exploration of themes and resource materials, the creation and development of ideas and the execution of the final pieces at the event. All designers involved in the course are specialists in their design areas including jewellery, textile design, millinery, graphic design and animation and film making. The

'The annual design project aims to develop pupils' participation in specialist design areas.' It promotes and reinforces the importance of the design process'

project usually takes place as an extra curricular activity although some schools choose to link it in to curricular time. Both have worked well.

Pupils who take part in the course are given a project brief which sets out the theme, explains the course content, including the research and development work to be undertaken. The designers introduce the project with reference to their own practice and background. They then lead sessions throughout the design process including: drawing and construction techniques, developing skills to enable investigation, generating design ideas and discussing the development process. The students further their skills in invention, interpretation, presentation, problem solving, decision making and communication.

Outside the classroom

As an integral part of the project pupils get the opportunity to visit a range of cultural venues and designers' studios. Previously, these have included The Centre for Advanced Textiles at Glasgow School of Art, Trongate 103 and WASPS Artists Studios. These visits have two aims – to inspire the pupils in their own work and to help them to make links with the world of work within the creative industries. One teacher involved in the course explained: 'The designer was an inspiration and showed that art and design can be a route to successful and enjoyable employment. The trip to Glasgow School of Art was inspirational and gave pupils an insight into a world that they might otherwise not have had the confidence to access.'

Under the Microscope

'Under the Microscope' was the title of the most recent project and this focussed on the art and design and science curricula. Each school worked on the same theme with designers working in the fields of textiles, jewellery, illustration and fashion. Pupils gained specific skills and techniques relating to each designer's discipline. The project also enabled a close working between art and design and science departments in the respective schools.

More than 60 pupils (aged 14-17) from five South Lanarkshire High schools took part and they had the opportunity to showcase their designs on the catwalk in January 2012 in front of an audience of invited guests and local dignitaries. There was also an exhibition of their development work.

Curriculum links

The South Lanarkshire project is an innovative way of developing creativity in pupils. The new Curriculum for Excellence challenges pupils to work with materials and explore the potential of different media that tests their practical ability. They are also expected to consider contemporary professional practice in art and design alongside more traditional approaches. This project provides a new context for learning. Pupils learn how designers work and make vital connections to the world of work and possible career options.

The South Lanarkshire project has been a success and it is a scheme which could provide a creative model for other authorities and schools to follow. ■
Kimberley White, Cultural Coordinator
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¹Rabbie Burns. Quote from *To A Louse*, 1786



Flourish

A national programme to promote artwork by young people with a diverse history of care

Flourish started as a one-off exhibition, responding to feedback from care-leavers in Newham, East London. The exhibition includes artwork made by children and young people up to 25 years old from throughout the UK. Since 2007, this has been at The Foundling Museum in Bloomsbury. We have shown the work of over 280 individual artists and groups since 2006.

Flourish shows the creative output of those who are cared-for by someone other than their parent – including those looked-after, adopted, fostered, with special educational needs, youth offenders, with another family member caring for them and care leavers. Artists are invited, amongst other things, to help select and install exhibitions, be interviewed for publications and write for the catalogue as well as contributing to qualifications through Arts Award.

For those who have taken part over the last five years, there have been tangible long-term benefits. Some of the artists have gone on to university or to college. Some have gone out into the world of work with increased confidence and self-esteem. One had a solo exhibition – at the age of 17. Many have sold their work.

Nikou Nazaripour, a Flourish artist said: 'Making stuff makes me happy – it has the power to make me question my choices, learn new skills, meet new people and have great conversations. The challenge is to enjoy every process, even when things go wrong! Exhibiting in the Flourish show was an experience I shall never forget. It sends out a positive message that there are a lot of very talented and expressive young people in care.'

All exhibiting artists are invited to the private view of their exhibition and this is often the first time they have been into a gallery. For many it is the first time they have been to London and they visit other galleries and cultural venues while they are here. It promotes arts practice as a viable career and a source of adaptable skills. Work is selected in a professional manner and a full-colour catalogue is produced.

Flourish works with a unique and often misunderstood and certainly misrepresented group of young people.

The work is interesting, challenging and inspiring for the audience because it represents a voice that is rarely heard or recognised. ■

Beatty Hallas, Curator

The 2012 selection of artworks will be shown at The Foundling Museum, Bloomsbury in 2013 For more about Flourish, visit www.flourish-art.org

Celebrating the Artist Teacher Scheme

Lesley Butterworth on the aims, development and importance of the Artist Teacher Scheme

The Artist Teacher Scheme was initiated during conversations in 1999 between NSEAD, Arts Council England and the Tate. The Society was in receipt of funding from the Department for Children Schools and Families, Creative Partnerships, and Arts Council England until 2012, and the Training and Development Agency (now Teaching Agency) until 2013 to support and develop the scheme.

The Training and Development Agency (TDA) funding was significant at a grass-roots level. From 2007 to date the TDA provided over £280,000 worth of bursaries for over 500 qualified teachers studying on the Artist Teacher Scheme at Masters Level. Awarded on a yearly basis these bursaries made all the difference between a teacher being able to afford to join a course, or not, in a climate of recession, pay freezes and dwindling CPD budgets in schools.

The Artist Teacher Scheme comprises Masters Level and taster courses in contemporary arts practice in centres across the UK, to include an MA Maker Teacher course at Manchester Metropolitan University. A typical programme runs between a university and cultural sector venue, to include the University of Northumbria and BALTIC Centre for Contemporary Art, Birmingham City University and Ikon and the New Gallery, Walsall, Oxford Brookes University and Modern Art Oxford, Liverpool John Moores University and Tate Liverpool, Goldsmiths and Tate Modern, Colchester Institute and firstsite. All the centres provide a course unique to the region, the University of the West of Scotland providing a distance learning model, and Bath Spa University offering a studio-based short course. Several centres have supported artist teachers to take their research to doctorate level.



The central ambition of the Artist Teacher Scheme is to dismantle the contradiction between the complementary, symbiotic roles of artist and teacher. The scheme rests on the premise that teachers in the various disciplines of

‘The teachers, and artist teachers of tomorrow need training in classroom practice, agreed, but alongside deeper, more immersive learning models rooted in subject knowledge and research and enquiry’

the visual arts who maintain their own creativity within the context of contemporary professional artistic practices can be significantly more effective in the classroom or studio and more likely to be satisfied with their work in education. It proposes the teacher as artist working alongside students in joint creative enquiry. Teachers on the Artist Teachers Scheme join communities of learning in which they can immerse themselves and concentrate on developing personal thinking and practice in a focused and supported environment without distraction.

The Artist Teacher Scheme develops a professional who operates unselfconsciously and confidently as both artist and as teacher; a person who does not see ‘artist’ and ‘teacher’ as mutually exclusive concepts. That is to say, someone who is her/himself a learner, an experimenter, someone who wants to find out, test, discover, wonder, figure out alongside pupils. If one accepts the assumption that a teacher will have the kind of regular and sustained direct contact with a wider range of pupils than an artist engaged for a short, or even prolonged, project cannot have, then the value of the concept of teacher as artist, of artist as teacher, becomes clearer.

The Artist Teacher Scheme now has active alumni who are working both in schools and other settings, many communicating through social media and exhibiting together, one currently tweeting and blogging from a residency in the USA.

There is now overwhelming evidence that the immersive model of professional development offered by the Artist Teacher Scheme can make striking and lasting differences to artist teacher confidence, development and achievement and in turn a significant difference to pupil attainment. For the artist teacher, balancing classroom and studio practice will always be a challenge, not least of time and energy. But you don’t have to leave your creative practice at the classroom door, and the scheme has proved the value of the professional development, and the sense of community that surrounds the participating teachers long after the taught sessions have concluded.

In its White Paper for Schools 2010, the Coalition Government laid out its plans ‘for giving outstanding schools a far greater role in teacher training’ and implicitly turning its back on teacher education within the context of a university. Since 2010 numbers of places on PGCE Art and Design courses, dictated by the Coalition Government have dropped to the extent that five centres have now closed.

The teachers, and artist teachers of tomorrow need training in classroom practice, agreed, but alongside deeper, more immersive learning models rooted in subject knowledge and research and enquiry.

The Artist Teacher Scheme provides a model of integrity, challenge and inspiration and we celebrate all the artist teachers who have been through and are moving towards this programme. ■

Lesley Butterworth, General Secretary NSEAD
www.nsead.org/cpd/ats.aspx

Opposite: MA Fine Art & Education students meeting at BALTIC November 2012



Christine Egan-Fowler artist teacher

In 2012 Christine Egan-Fowler became the winner of the fourth Artist Teacher Award, a national award, presented to a teacher from one of seven university MA courses. Christine received the award for her MA show displayed in Baltic 39. The selection was made by Godfrey Worsdale, Director BALTIC Centre for Contemporary Art. Previous winners were Lisa Lodge, Ruth Robinson and Siobhan Verrall.

The MA in Fine Art and Education has made a huge impact on my teaching and my approach to learning. Being in the position of learner for a sustained period has made me aware of the complexities necessary in the learning environment. I offer opportunities for my students to exhibit, select and present, read, think, discuss and research. I enjoy more of a tutorial approach, expecting learners to show evidence of their own process and development. I have changed my role and become a hub for supporting the students. I lead rather than direct. I aim to provide opportunities within which contemporary practice can thrive. I have my



own work and research in progress and I join in with all workshops I set up. I have many roles, not just one. I want to offer an experience that I would have loved and thrived in as a school student.

I am very proud to be able to show work at Baltic 39 and now a show at BALTIC too. Of course my work has meaning for me but I have been very moved by how for the ‘audience’ the choice of folded pillowcases and folded paintings prompted memory and reflection. I can still paint in the way I used to paint, but I’d rather tell stories through my paintings using significant materials, I have a huge backlog of things I want to say! ■

Christine Egan-Fowler



Inspirational. Memorable. Enjoyable. That’s our main aim for pupils when visiting an art gallery. As art educators we know the importance of visiting galleries and exhibitions, we know the feeling of being overwhelmed by seeing an artwork in the flesh, being stunned by the scale, materials, emotion. Sometimes being caught by surprise at just how moving the experience can be. And, maybe best of all, finding a new artist who becomes your latest obsession.

Maybe we take it for granted? We are so familiar with it. Google images and the interactive whiteboard really can’t compete with coming face to face with art. Fact. We need to make sure our pupils understand this too. It really is our obligation, if we don’t we risk children growing up thinking Michael Craig-Martin’s wall installations are nothing but a thumbnail image or Pollock’s gigantic action paintings are nothing more than a PowerPoint slideshow with its size depending on the screen on which it is viewed.

From a teacher’s perspective the experience of organising a gallery trip can be a bit daunting to say the least. We all know the paperwork mountain attached to taking pupils out of school.

As I write this I am in the midst of said paperwork. Allergies, health care plans, risk assessments. No fun unless, like me, you break it up with a little doodling. Well why do forms have to be so boring anyway?

We normally run an annual gallery visit for all our GCSE pupils but have never attempted the logistic hurdle of a whole-year group lower school

‘I thought it was going to be boring sir, but it’s actually pretty mint!’

visit. Eager to organise the visit but mindful of hassling parents for money to pay for the trip, I decided to chance my luck and apply for funding from the Eridge Trust who I heard about through NSEAD. I sent off the application with just a sprinkling of optimism and the wonderfully positive reply was swiftly received. Our head is very supportive of the arts and we decided year 8 (ages 12-13) would be the lucky bunch we would take to Manchester Art Gallery. Two classes per day would visit over a period of four weeks. Cue several art department preliminary visits to plan

and structure the tasks. The main focus of the visits was to work directly from the work on display and to find out exactly what pupils like. And dislike. We are really keen to push pupils towards explaining their opinions about art, justifying what they think and challenging it as much as possible.

Manchester Art Gallery (MAG) has an unrivalled collection of work from various historical periods including a stunning number of Pre-Raphaelites. The temporary exhibitions included *We face forward* showcasing contemporary art from West Africa and *Focal points* exhibiting photographic work. A fantastic mix to stimulate, challenge and excite.

We thought the pupils would benefit from working through the gallery as chronologically as possible so they could see the changes that have taken place in art history. We organised the pupils in two separate groups with one art teacher leading each. Support staff deployed to help herd and steer as necessary. Thinking of the tasks was the easy part, such a wealth of possibility – the hard part was matching it to the time we had available.

My minor neurosis regarding the visits was, as I suspect it is with most of us, centred on the conduct of pupils. Would the pupils listen? Behave? Respect the work? What will members of the public think if they don’t behave perfectly? I am proud to say that I work in an outstanding school where behaviour is not a problem but that is in the controlled environment of the classroom. The rules, consequences and rewards are clear. There is always a risk involved in taking pupils off site, but it is a calculated risk that is well rewarded and the outcomes are far reaching. With this in mind we delivered a series of short introductions to the visits over a couple of weeks prior to the pupils going. It really was surprising how many pupils had not visited a gallery before, further cementing our determination to make this visit a memorable experience. After all, we want this to be the first of many throughout their lifetime.

The gallery staff were really helpful prior to and during our visits. The wonderful thing about MAG

is the amount of space within which to work. The pupils and public jostled nicely along with each other, each finding enough elbowroom to enjoy the work without hindrance. Linking our work to literacy, pupils selected a work and imagined themselves actually within the landscape. Pupils then wrote a postcard from that place, sharing their responses upon completion. Pupils sketched endlessly, working with their pencil in different ways, recording quickly and spontaneously. Pupils discussed the use of materials and how this has changed over time. They debated the importance of photography and its place in art history. Pupils experienced the different ways work is exhibited and how this affects our responses and understanding of the work. Discussions erupted about the issues contained within the work – migration, poverty, culture, history, values, pollution, life and death, right and wrong. Pupils discovered what they like, love, and dislike. Opinions were established through experience. One or two pupils found it difficult to suppress the urge to touch the work. Some pieces are so tactile who can blame them? We have all struggled to resist that emotion at one time or another, haven’t we?

And all the while my only concern was that time was running out. My sleepless nights about letting the pupils loose in public really were futile.

The visits have given us a good grounding for next year. We know we can build on this experience and at the very least all pupils have a shared experience which we can refer to during future projects. The feedback from pupils has been overwhelmingly positive and as one pupil put it ‘I thought it was going to be boring sir, but it’s actually pretty mint’.

Dan Firth-Powell, Head of Art, Craft and Design, St James’s CE High School
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The Eridge Trust makes grants to schools, colleges and others for school trips to museums, galleries and centres of art at home and abroad. Grants are also made to UK museums and galleries for projects aimed at young people. Visit www.eridgetrust.co.uk for more information.



TEA

An update and taste of TEA

I have been lucky to be part of a great art and design education experience since summer 2012. One which has brought together a group of pro active and passionate art educators through a common aim and through the use of online collaboration and sharing.

TEA stands for Thinking, Expression and Action. A wonderful collaboration between NSEAD, NADFAS and the Campaign for Drawing, it offers 85 selected teachers (from all over the UK) a chance to reflect upon how and why they use drawing in their classrooms and work places. It offers them the chance to reflect, through creating case studies at the start of the 14 month long project and towards the end of it. It offers the chance to share experiences, swap ideas, exchange viewpoints, create new knowledge and to be a part of a community of practitioners with a common purpose. Before Web 2 technologies, TEA would have initially operated by mail shot and through the face to face days that the programme has had in each of the three geographical regions (Bristol, Birmingham, Gateshead), in our current times the possibilities for sharing

and exchanging ideas and case studies are endless.

Because of technology, this has gone successfully to another level, and I have been delighted and surprised at the growth of the learning and the breadth of knowledge shared. This has been done through the use of the popular social media platforms such as Facebook, Twitter and Flickr (and through regular email postings). It let me create the opportunity for online collaboration from July 2012 to the present day, through a summer project where we drew on the back of an envelope, through participants coming up with such clever and quirky mail art projects including Russian dolls and lonely heart adverts, through a daily gallery of teachers sharing work done both by themselves and by their students. We have created a virtual staffroom full of passionate art and design teachers. The company is great, the ideas are stimulating, the discussions are relevant and the comments are heartfelt. And we still have more to do! Bring it on TEA. ■

Susan Coles, Artist, Creativity & Educational Consultant

Visit – twitter #teacpd
flickr.com/photos/teacpd/
facebook.com/groups/teacpd/ (Closed group)



A fine Day Out

Dan Firth-Powell on the idea, the reality and the importance of whole-year group gallery visits

Creative Ecology

Making sense of our world

James Aldridge, artist educator, on learning through creative place-based learning

When asked what I do, I introduce myself in a range of ways, depending on what I’m working on at the time. I’m an artist and creative learning consultant, and run an organisation called Creative Ecology, but tell someone that you’re an artist and the usual response is, ‘What do you paint?’ In our culture art is generally seen as an end product, something that is made, and often for sale.

I am a maker, and I am interested in the role of making in learning, and see my art objects as evidence of an ongoing learning process, rather than end products. I create work for exhibition and to commission, but most often I work with other people, using my arts practice and learning to support theirs.

My work is practice-led research into the role that creative sensory investigation of your environment, and reflection on that experience through making, can have for learning. The learning that I am interested in is that which comes from

individuals experiencing themselves as continuous and integral parts of their environment, through their bodies, minds and imaginations.

I graduated with a fine art, sculpture degree. On leaving university I gained experience in museum education, schools and working alongside disabled people, I wanted to feel that I was equipped to provide for the needs of whoever wanted to work with me.

Since then I have run projects in a range of formal and informal educational settings, and with people of all ages and needs. In 2004 I started working as a freelance artist and mentor with 5x5x5=creativity. Their ethos fits well with my own, and it gives me the opportunity to develop longer-term partnerships with teachers.

Drawing on these experiences, I now deliver professional development for educators and artists through Creative Ecology on creative, place-based learning. Making Sense of the Outdoors is professional development for schools, where individual staff members are supported in exploring their

Below: Researching the benefits of creative outdoor learning - Residency for 5x5x5=creativity at St Saviours Infant School, Bath



Above from left to right

Connect and Create Project with Salisbury and South Wiltshire Museum – exploring the school grounds with clay

Stonehenge Explorer Backpacks: developed through creative consultation with local families and National Trust staff for English Heritage

Making Sense of the Outdoors: changing spaces and structures - Crane Park Primary School, Hounslow

Right: Journeys (detail), J Aldridge – Installation in a bird hide, College Lake Nature Reserve, Herts. For Outdoor Culture/BBOWT

own imaginative and emotional response to place, to better appreciate the value of such approaches for children.

Connect and Create is a project I set up with Laura Bullivant, then learning and outreach officer at Salisbury and South Wiltshire Museum. It consisted of a series of after school sessions for families of EYFS children in areas described as being ‘rurally isolated’. Project sessions were run once weekly at the end of the school day, either at school or

‘We need to enable children to experience themselves as innately creative and capable, born into an ecological system and a social one, with all the responsibilities, anxieties and sense of belonging, which that can bring’

with transport provided to the museum, and offered the participants an opportunity to respond creatively to the Museum’s collections.

During each session the participants were provided with a brief/activity which responded to their observed and recorded interests from previous sessions. A variety of artefacts and materials were used which encouraged interpretation and the creation of new objects and images – these ranged from body-masks to books.

Working with heritage and environmental organisations also involves the development of interpretation and learning materials with children and young people. Recent examples include developing interactive interpretation for English Heritage’s new Stonehenge Visitor Centre.

My work for SEARCH was part of the Green SLIME (Science Learning in Museum Education) initiative from Renaissance South East, and drew inspiration from early natural history illustrators and explorers, and contemporary artists who draw on the relationship between art and museology/classification.

The education staff at SEARCH developed a new *Habitats* session for school visits. The children I worked with made

biodiversity diaries and used these to explore their wildlife garden, recording the animals and plants that they found and using a range of media, paying attention to colour, texture, sound and smell.

This helped the development of a teachers’ toolkit, which provides ideas for how other art forms/media such as movement/film can be used to record and measure the biodiversity of a school’s grounds.

Such creative place-based learning combines my passions for art, natural history and working with people, and is central to my practice as an artist and consultant, but I also believe that it is crucial to our future. As a society we have come to perceive ourselves as somehow separate from the ecological systems on which we depend, and despite all the evidence on the impact of our behaviour on our environment, we still find it so hard to change that behaviour.

We need to enable children to experience themselves as innately creative and capable, born into an ecological system and a social one, with all the responsibilities, anxieties and sense of belonging, which that can bring. Art has a key role to play in the development of environmentally sustainable societies, by enabling us to know the world and ourselves more fully, utilising our senses, imaginations and emotions as well as our intellect, learning through our relationship with our world, and our place within it. ■

James Aldridge: www.jamesaldridge-artist.co.uk and Creative Ecology: www.creative-ecology.co.uk





A subject leader’s view

Jessica Austin-Burdett on why transferring skills and relevant learning experiences should be at the heart of the curriculum

Our most important role as teachers is to engender and nurture a sense of enquiry in our students alongside their ability to think and learn actively. Providing a curriculum that does this, tailored to students’ learning needs, challenging them to explore the world and their part in it, is what the twenty-first century curriculum should do, rather than train students to pass tests like rats in an experiment. So many students seem disaffected and behave badly, they are not engaged in any kind of learning process and can feel disenfranchised by the system as it exists now.

The responsibility for learning needs to be put back on young people, helping them to be responsible for their assessment results, progress and choices, not just because it is unfair to put all that burden on teachers, but more

importantly to give the students a sense of responsibility and control over their lives and futures. If students feel that they have no stake in their education why would they want to participate in it?

Arts educators are often proclaimed as ‘creative’ practitioners, and I suggest that most of us are, however, I became an art teacher because my art teacher was so uninspiring! In my department’s approach to teaching, learning and planning, we cover a lot of information that is seen as ‘belonging’ to other subject areas: why? Because it is applicable to art and design, our subject synthesises information from many other subject areas, helping to make it real for students. How many times have other subjects used images or film to bring meaning to the facts or stories they are communicating? We need to explore ways to allow students to explicitly transfer skills.

Where students can see why they are doing what they are doing and apply their understanding to real world situations, they are

more engaged and motivated and their skills and attainment are improved. At the V & A *Power of Making* exhibition a sign read, ‘Advanced skills may take a long time to learn but the feeling of being in the zone can be experienced by anyone’. Which parries nicely with Colvin’s observation: ‘The joy of discovery, a new way of solving a problem is more important than ...getting the teacher’s praise.’¹ This is what it means to experience deeper learning through deliberate practise. Creating time and space for students to be able to connect with the how and the why of what they are doing, and to explore and experiment is vitally important to the creative process.

In 2007 I participated in the Cape Farewell Youth Expedition and travelled to the Arctic with a group of young people. The project shared science and art explorative approaches, with students making artworks that communicated their scientific findings relating to climate change. Time was spent gathering scientific data and ways of visualising this information. Their ideas became collaborative piece (figs 1&2). We have since expanded our collaborative and experiential learning approaches which are now embedded into our department schemes of learning. This includes a project developed with the National Maritime Museum ‘Designing for Greenwich’ (figs 3&4). Students generate ideas for products for the NMM shop, they visit the museum, talk to staff, explore market needs and design a product showing inspiration from visual research, meeting the needs of their target audience. These project-based, immersive learning experiences give students the opportunity to take risks, master skills and share and celebrate progress and success.

Howard Gardner says: ‘The personality of the creative individual ...needs to be cultivated from early on, but apt challenging of disciplinary thinking awaits at least a rough and ready mastery of that discipline’². Project-based learning, alongside mastery lessons, philosophical debate and coaching will give students the greatest opportunities to develop the ‘pentad of minds’ Gardner advocates. This would mean students leaving our schools should be well on the road to being lifelong learners, engaged with their world and able to contribute effectively to society.

Ken Robinson³ says that there are ‘two modes of creativity: Playing with Ideas and Making Judgements’, skills integral to art, planning, teaching and learning, and should be directed towards creating a framework for students to explore and play. Students can make judgments about what they have done, decide what’s of value, think about what has worked, and explain why. So, can we move even further towards creating a curriculum that encourages students to play, take risks, fail, develop resilience and synthesise experiences in order to understand the world from their own perspectives? ■

Jessica Austin-Burdett, Art and Design Subject Team Leader and PGCE Professional Tutor in a secondary school in South East London

¹ Geoff Colvin, *Talent is Overrated*, Nicholas Brealey Publishing, 2008, p.190

² Howard Gardner, *Five Minds for the Future*, Harvard Business Press, 2008

³ Ken Robinson, *Out of our Minds*, Capstone Publishing, 2001

Notice of the AGM 2013, the auditors report and annual review 2011-12

All members are invited to attend the 125th Annual General Meeting of the National Society for Education in Art and Design to be held at Oxford Brookes University on Saturday 23 March 2013. Please look for further details on the website. A copy of the Annual Report 2011-12 to include the audited accounts, and the minutes of the AGM 2012 are also available on the website. www.nsead.org

Welcome to our new President

A very warm welcome to our new President, Susan Coles. Already active on our Council and Boards, and a frequent contributor to *AD*, Susan has been a regular attendee at Artist Teacher Scheme, National and iJADE Conferences and I am sure is very well known to the majority of our members.

Having worked in secondary education for a number of years, Susan became an independent advisor and consultant in 2007. Although her specialism is the visual arts and creativity, Susan works generically in the educational context, across the UK and in the Channel Islands. Susan is an Associate of Granada Learning, Facilitator for Futurelab Enquiring Schools programme, an Associate of the Big Draw/Campaign for Drawing, a Consultant Leader of the National College for School Leadership and visual arts consultant for Durham LA Educational Development Services. Susan coordinates the very successful North East Art Teacher Educator Network and works in close partnership with the schools and colleges programmer at the BALTC Centre for Contemporary Art as a consultant and as a network organiser. Susan considers it important to be active in the classroom and spends time each week in schools, with teachers and with young people and also speaks regularly at conferences and whole school training days.

Alongside her commitment to the Society Susan is a practising artist with a particular interest in photography, working in schools as an artist and artist in residence.

We look forward to working with Susan and celebrate her massive commitment to the Society and to art, craft and design education. Find out more about Susan on her website and blog: www.artcrimes.org.uk



...and welcome to new Board members

The Society is delighted to welcome new members onto our Boards. Nathan Nugent, Jono Carney, Eileen Adams and Peter Gregory are joining Publications Board. June Bianchi, Jenny Sutton-Kirby and Paul Carney are joining Professional Development Board, and Louise Gill, Patricia Brown and Jono Carney are joining Curriculum Board. Thank you all for the time and energy you are giving to the Society and for your interest in our work.

May we contact you by email?

The Society is keen to be responsive to the needs of the environment and communicate effectively and efficiently with its members. If you have not already done so, we would be grateful if you could let NSEAD know your email address. This will enable you to receive our E-bulletin once a fortnight during term time and be alerted to new information and opportunities. If you would like to engage with us in this way please send your email address to info@nsead.org

We do not pass on information about our members to any other parties.

Subscriptions Reminders

A final reminder if you have not already renewed your subscription please do so today! We don’t want to lose you and we need your support!