

Time Telescope, installation
view at BALTIC Centre for
Contemporary Art. ©BALTIC



Digital futures at the centre of art, craft and design education

Friday 21, Saturday 22, Sunday 23, March 2014

nsead

We are delighted to be returning to and presenting the NSEAD Annual Conference and AGM 2014 at BALTIC Centre for Contemporary Art, Gateshead.

The Society has enjoyed a long relationship with BALTIC, both in establishing the Artist Teacher Scheme, and supporting members and teachers of art, craft and design in the region and beyond with a space to network, create, think and engage with contemporary arts practice. BALTIC is the biggest gallery of its kind in the world, presenting a dynamic, diverse and international programme of contemporary visual art.

The speed of digital and technological innovation and computer science is a cliché but are we keeping up? The gap between digital native and digital

immigrant is closing, and artists, makers and designers are harnessing, hijacking and further disrupting disruptive technologies and applications. How can we best explore and explain these digital futures in the classroom and ensure that through art and design children and young people become the intelligent and thoughtful consumers and producers of the future, within all forms of media.

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 trainers and trainees.

For compelling arguments why we teach art, craft and design join us in Gateshead for our national conference.

The conference will be opened by Helen Goodman MP, Shadow Culture, Media & Sport Minister. Keynote speakers include

Mike Eden, I-Potter; Lorna Evans from Ubisoft; Janice McLaren from the Photographers Gallery and Mark Shufflebotham, Professor of Interaction Design at Sheridan College, Ontario. Presentations and practical sessions will be led by artists, designers, makers and teachers.

The conference will run over three days. On Sunday 23 March a range of practical activities will be hosted by Laing Art Gallery, Newcastle.

Packages and discounts will be available for NSEAD members, PGCE trainees, unemployed and Artist Teacher Scheme students.

Visit our conference blog: nseadconference2014.weebly.com or for more information and to book your place: www.nsead.org

AD MAGAZINE: ISSN 2046-3138



IN CONVERSATION
WITH ELEANOR CROOK

NIGEL MEAGER ON
COLLABORATIVE,
IMAGINATIVE DRAWING

The National Society
for Education in Art
and Design magazine
Spring 2014
Issue 9

nsead

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Editorial

This issue of *AD* includes many questions, ideas and research; ideas that play with classroom and studio conventions; research that looks at the impact of Government policy, and questions, which for Eleanor Crook may take a lifetime to answer.

Eleanor Crook's beguiling poster image *Death teaches us to sweat ice* asks many questions, questions which as both a sculptor and medical artist have shaped Eleanor's work and practice. In conversation with Lesley Butterworth, we see how the impossible and believable link both the science and the art in her work and, if there are answers to be found, they may be located in learning, teaching and making.

Through Rachel Payne's research we learn that the Government's swift policy changes in initial teacher training had an immediate and very detrimental impact on pupil achievement locally, regionally and nationally. By contrast Tony Chisholm celebrates nearly 30 years of the National Arts Education Archive. Tony explains why the archive was formed: 'its value lies in the preservation of

accessible bodies of work, and that they in turn, should provide an historical, cultural and educational framework for further enquiry...If you don't know where you have come from, how can you know where you are going'.

Looking ahead please continue to send in your articles or proposals. Without your case studies and ideas NSEAD has no case to answer: we need research which shows where our subject is going. Throughout 2014 we will continue to respond to consultations and policy changes but it's you and what you do individually and collectively that makes our subject stronger. Please keep asking questions, sharing your ideas and your research.

Sophie Leach, Editor, *AD*

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

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Cover image
Eleanor Crook,
The Yellow Skeleton
Ink on paper, 2011
© Eleanor Crook

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Eleanor Crook

Eleanor Crook, sculptor and medical artist, in conversation with Lesley Butterworth shares her lifelong interest in art and science, the impossible and believable



Left
Eustache 'Jerk' Dupree, the Icarus Man of Pontchartroula
Wax and mixed media, 2009

Above
My heart is a strange cabin
Digital print, 2005

Right
World's End
Wax, mechanical feather heart, mixed media, 2008

Lesley Butterworth (LB) It's wonderful to sit in your studio looking at work in progress. When did sculpture become meaningful to you?

Eleanor Crook (EC) As far back as I can remember I have liked working with clay. Some of the earliest things I ever made are still in my studio. I remember vividly any opportunity to get my hands into clay! My mother had a college friend who was a ceramicist and I spent a lot of time making excuses to get into her workshop. I've liked doing sculpture since the year dot.

At school, the art room was a sanctuary, away from all the academic subjects. I took art up to 'O' level and because it was a very academic school we were discouraged from doing art after 'O' level if we had a chance of getting higher grades in the so called academic subjects. I did English, Latin and Ancient Greek at 'A' Level and I remember my art teachers saying 'Are you sure? You might live to regret this.' They were disappointed. But at that time art was so deprioritised at school there was no way I could have chosen to do it and I didn't think about it again until I left school. I had great art teachers, Miss Hillier who was a very accomplished painter and Mr Nicholls of whom we were very proud because he had a sculpture at Birmingham New Street station; he was a great role model. I remember him being very encouraging of my clay work as I tried to make horses or whatever it was I wanted to make at that age!

LB Then you went to Oxford to read Classics?

EC Before I went there I had been hit by a growing vocation, I had a great vocational wish to do sculpture. I had been living up on Hadrian's Wall in Northumberland and bumped into an artists and writers and musicians colony who were also living up there. I was hanging around with them, they were ambitious, following a modernist project, really having high ambitions to make important art in all these different ways, but the one thing they did not have was a visual artist and there I saw a role for myself. 'Here are these people living highly unconventional but interesting lives, if they can manage it, so can I.'

While I was at Oxford, I committed to it. The Ruskin Art School was very kind to me and let me do all their drawing classes, so I spent time drawing, nearly every day, and began to learn about human anatomy.

The Classics 'thing' came through because there was a paper on classical archaeology which involved classical art appreciation. I began to study statue design and the historical development of pose and gesture within the marble figures.

LB So you don't regret the Oxford years?

EC No because they put me onto the figure as a means of expression and gave me a certain confidence that the figure really matters. I think art school might have trampled that out of me at that time. Figure work was not a priority in the eighties; all the plaster casts had been put in the bin!

LB Did you set up as an artist straight after Oxford?

EC No, I went back to starters and did a Foundation, BA and MA in Fine Art. I learned it all the slow way and I learned a lot about what I do now from a Victorian sculpture manual written by Albert Toft. The art schools weren't really teaching me the sort of stuff that I do now. I had a lucky break in that they let me moonlight at the Slade anatomy and dissection course.

LB There is a tension with life drawing. There is an appetite amongst our teachers to draw from life. But there is also fear of observational drawing. And yet employers within the games industry want young people with those skills.

EC I think art schools have a lot to learn from music schools. I always thought the disciplines of drawing have a lot in common with learning scales. Scales can free up a jazz improviser, they totally internalise it! I play guitar, badly, partly because I like watching the learning process in myself, so I take guitar lessons. I like being in the position of being slightly helpless in front of an expert.

LB You are open to being in the wrong?

EC Yes, it reminds me of how intimidating it is to go to an expert and be taught.

LB What would you say to a young person who thinks they can't draw?



EC Don't just perceive it as something you can either do or you can't. I go straight back to the music analogy and say. 'Can you play the oboe?' 'No.' 'Have you ever tried?' If you want to learn observational measured and perspectival drawing there are ways of teaching it and ways of learning it, it just takes the kind of practice it would take to learn a musical instrument. Want to learn it? Got the time? Go and do it. I always think I am a good example of persistence over a lack of natural born talent because I am not a natural drawer, everyone could always draw far better than I could, but now my stuff does look well observed, it's just practice and persistence.

LB You completed your MA and then did you set up your own practice?

EC I went to the Royal Academy Schools. The RA School is a beautiful purpose built art school at the back of Piccadilly, so you walk out to buy a sandwich and find yourself in Cork Street, and of course the Cork Street gallery people would come in during their lunch breaks to see what we were doing. I came out of art school thinking it would always be this easy. I expected the art world to take me on. I fell off a cliff at the end of art school. Suddenly back on your own resources, nobody very interested and Saatchi didn't buy your degree show. So what do you do next? And I think that is the point where my contemporaries, although many were successful, began to give up. The expectations raised were great. Things were difficult for many years and in a way they still are. I've never been the sort of artist who got invited to parties at the Tate so my career has been piecemeal. I began with teaching, I was always asked to teach my skills, anatomy and life drawing and figure modelling. I taught on Foundation, BA and MA courses. I continued to make and exhibit work. I persisted and had faith in myself. I decided to take a look at forensic sculpting and go to work for the police. I applied and had a very stiff interview, my 'take' on forensic sculpting was met with complete disbelief. I failed the interview on security grounds but was then offered a teaching post at the Royal College of Art teaching anatomy and life drawing. I had a couple of residencies, at the one Byam Shaw art school, one at Cheltenham. The first five years were hard.

LB To make the case for support for our subject we often cite the creative industries as career progression. Did that interest you?

EC No. I am stubborn and turn work down. I don't do film work or special effects although the special effects industry would mop me up. I've still got lofty aims for what I do, I want to make sculpture that will last and be there and of interest in two hundred years time. I think more of the future. Special effects and film would be a compromise, take up too much time and would change the motivation within the pieces I made. If you turn up the 'yuck' factor to make a horror film you are not asking the difficult questions about disfigurement, identity, mortality. You're just trying to make people go 'yuck'. Not looking at the deep questions.

LB What are the deep questions for you?

EC What I keep coming back to is where there is consciousness in matter. I have studied this matter that is the human body, down to the single cell and what is inside you. Research still has not found what consciousness is and what and how the relationship is between consciousness and the stuff of which our bodies are made. What does this stuff depend on? I ask this question over and over again. I try and make these sculptures out of solid matter, wax, or whatever, that look as if they are alive, that look credible and believable.

LB Do you have a dialogue with your pieces as they move into consciousness?

EC No. It's not a doll, not a companion; it's a carefully handmade illusion. You have to be very honest with yourself, is it working yet? And there comes a moment when you technically get there, and the whole thing is credible and you can say 'that's enough really.' I don't do the Ron Mueck thing, every little pore, every little whisker, so long as it's got that thing where you can look at it and its looking back at you, as soon as there is a credible consciousness then its hands off and don't overstate it.

LB So you know when a piece is finished?

EC Yes. I don't always get it right. The better ones I do. Get them to life. Then leave it.

LB Do you see yourself as an artist teacher?

EC Yes. I teach anatomy at the RCA, St Martins and



‘I am not a natural drawer, everyone could always draw far better than I could, but now my stuff does look well observed, its just practice and persistence’

Left
Death teaches us to sweat ice
Digital print on aluminum, 2007

Above
Eleanor Crook at work

Right
Eustache
Wax, glass eyes, fur, metal, 2009



Camberwell. Anatomy is now striding across the big London art schools, driven by student request. It gets under the conceptual radar because it is able to include scientific research, microscopy, study of the cell, and an interesting segment of history around dissection, body donation and ethics. This area was so recently

dismissed, I can't tell you how discouraged I was from doing it at art school when I was a student, everyone said, 'oh no, not that old stuff.'

Performance artists were encouraging! They believe that the figure can 'do' it, that you can learn and express a lot through pose and gesture. I learned a lot from performance artists.

LB That's really encouraging!

EC It is, I've got more teaching offers now than I can do. If I was financially successful I would keep on teaching. I'm really interested in it, I can't communicate everything I am interested in by making sculpture, and through teaching I get the feedback of other people's interest and involvement and their research. I think we are a movement, we people who are interested in morbid anatomy. There is a wish to disseminate that interest and to preserve these making skills as well. I have had to research a lot of them out of Victorian manuals and I'm not the expert! There is a collective wish to keep it all going.

LB You are a learner as well as a teacher?

EC Yes, I'm learning at the moment. I'm working on a series of World War One soldiers and learning about tin plate facial prosthetics to hide graphic injuries. They were made by a woman in France during the war and I've got footage of her doing it. I am recreating her methods and I have to learn a lot of metallurgy to do it. I just see something, and think, well, I can't actually make that, I need to understand a different process, I collect new processes. I am very open to learning new stuff. The week I spent in Austria learning wood-carving was a high point, being taught by people who were so adept. How can people make wood do that? It's much more difficult

than wax modelling. You have to be much clearer about the form you are after before you make a step. You can keep learning about wood until the end of time.

LB So what about the future?

EC I've got some wood carving in the pipeline, with several years work on each figure.

I suppose what I am working on is keeping the realism going, that I've got the hang of opening up the figure and extending it out in a more speculative way. I am very interested in the funerary sculpture of the Malanggan tribe who live on an island off the coast of Papua New Guinea. They have a very special relationship with the body. Their funerary practices include a certain amount of dissection and sculpting of the remains and a lot of their belief system is based on the underlying structure of the body which they understand in a rather different way from us, and the way they think about it. They have a sculptural tradition that opens up spaces in the body in a rather unexpected way and I am interested in combining that with these realistic materials and coming up with something that's both alive, and realistic, and impossible. Not fantasy. Impossible but believable is what I am constantly looking for.

LB Seeking the impossible and the believable. The combination of consciousness and matter. Getting sculpture to 'life' then leaving it. You have a lifetime's work ahead of you, thank you. ■

Eleanor Crook trained in sculpture at Central St Martins and the Royal Academy of Art. She makes figures and effigies in wax, carved wood and lifelike media. Eleanor is artist in residence at the Gordon Museum of Pathology, and is member of the Medical Artists Association. She runs a course in anatomy drawing at the Royal College of Art and lectures on the MA Art and Science course at Central St Martins School of Art. Eleanor has long been a supporter of NSEAD, facilitating successful drawing workshops and presenting at our national conference.

eleanorcrook.com

Art and Design Secondary Initial Teacher Education: A Case Study

Closing a PGCE impacts on regional training and learning; loss of academic expertise and a reduction in widening participation and opportunities for social mobility. Rachel Payne shares the evidence

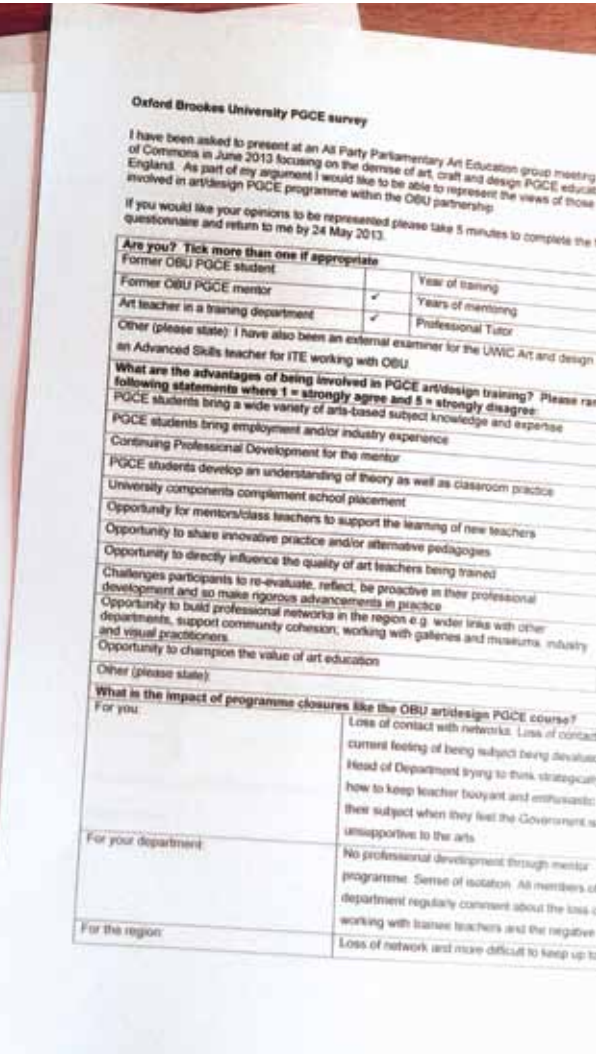
In May 2013 I received an email from the NSEAD president, Susan Coles, with an invitation to speak at the All Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) for Art, Craft and Design Education in June 2013. The focus was the demise of opportunities for teacher education in art, craft and design and conflicting pressures of School Direct (SD) as an alternative route into teaching. Having managed a Postgraduate Certificate in Education (PGCE) at Oxford Brookes University (OBU) from 2004-2012 which had recently closed owing to government reduction in training allocations, I conducted small-scale research across the partnership with former PGCE students, mentors and external partners. A semi-structured questionnaire was distributed to ascertain partners' perception of the impact of the programme closure and examine the value of a PGCE course as a hub for training. I am in their debt as the responses from concerned art educators were plentiful, articulate and in some cases colourful. This short article aims to present our concerns to a wider art education community.

National context
The OBU PGCE closure is not an isolated case; since 2010 there has been a 36 per cent reduction in art, craft and design PGCE programmes,

which correlates with falling Initial Teacher Education (ITE) allocations for the subject. In 2010-11 498 training places were allocated across England (PGCE, GTP and SCITT) but by 2013-14 this fell to 250 (excluding SD offers) resulting in the closure of many small PGCE courses. The government justification for this reduction is cited as an issue of supply and demand: art is not a shortage subject and schools' offer for art in secondary education is falling. However, the reality is far from straightforward. With closer scrutiny it is clear that the reduction of art education provision in school results from government policy, school interpretation of policy and subsequent marginalisation, not falling pupil interest in the subject. For example, the English Baccalaureate has had a pronounced effect on opportunity to study at GCSE as well as teacher recruitment and retention, and the downsizing of art departments (Steers 2012, NSEAD 2013a, Cultural Learning Alliance 2013).

Regional context
Considering the remit set by Susan Coles I examined teacher-training opportunities currently available to those living in the Oxfordshire region. The nearest training providers for 2013-14 include Reading University (6 + 5 SD); Birmingham City University (24 + 6 SD); Institute of Education, London (32 + 10 SD) and Bath Spa University (9) (data sourced at NSEAD 2013b), indicating that if someone living locally to Oxford wants to train but are unlucky enough not to gain a place at Reading University they would need to relocate. So, posing as a prospective student I contacted the Department for Education to ascertain the likelihood of gaining a SD place for art locally. At the time of enquiry only one placement was available (Gloucester) within a 50 mile radius

'The implications of this regional gap in training opportunities are considerable'



The following quotes represent divergent views from a range of respondents; these demonstrate the breadth of concern from the full spectrum of former Oxford Brookes University PGCE partners:

The PGCE students we had brought a different dynamic to the department. It led me to re-evaluate the way I was teaching and challenged me to take on new ideas and look at my own areas for development/improvement. Mentor, 2009-10

The lack of courses available to train Art teachers is worrying for the future of our culture. It cuts off opportunities for future teachers to experience forward thinking and innovative guidance and support when training, which in turn, will lead to state of inexperienced teachers that cannot inspire and lead the next generation to excel and to succeed. PGCE student, 2011-12

It is a damaging loss of expertise nationally that will inhibit this country's competitiveness and ability to innovate in the future. External partner, 2009-12

As a country, we risk failing a generation: the decision to cut the number of art PGCE courses...results in a disastrous situation. Students are given a clear message by the government: art education is no longer valuable. Mentor, 2005-2012, Professional Tutor

of Oxford (source, www.education.gov.uk accessed 31.05.13).
The implications of this regional gap in training opportunities are considerable. Not only does this indicate a reduction in widening participation and opportunities for social mobility, discriminating against those who are unable to relocate geographically, it also indicates significant reduction in rich partnership activity in the region. For example, the OBU PGCE partnership spanned five counties in the South East and Midlands with 58 per cent of student teachers employed in partnership schools since 2004, of which 65 per cent became PGCE mentors on the programme. Sustained regional professional dialogue and Continual Professional Development (CPD) are now reduced dramatically as a result of the course closure. This is supported by questionnaire data where 100 per cent of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that the advantages of a regional PGCE programme includes opportunity to share innovative practice and pedagogy; it challenges participants to be proactive in their professional development and so make rigorous advancements in practice, and provides opportunity for mentors to support the learning of new teachers. Ninety-eight per cent strongly agreed or agreed that a PGCE programme provides opportunity to champion the value of art education.
Partnership data
Forty-three respondents returned the questionnaire indicating a 47 per cent response rate. At the time of conducting the research three external partners were involved in SD and one teacher was a mentor for a SCITT student; no other respondents were involved in ITE or indicated opportunity to be irrespective of the training route.
When asked how partners perceived the impact personally as a result of the programme closure responses include: reduced CPD (35 per cent); loss of high quality local training (33 per cent) and a loss of expertise (21 per cent). Considering the impact on art departments the following aspects were cited: a reduction of breadth of knowledge and ideas in the curriculum (35 per cent); a narrowing of artistic teacher community, including feeling more insular and isolated (21 per cent); concern of the risk of falling standards of art teachers (19 per cent), and concern that experienced teachers have no opportunity to train new teachers (12 per cent). The main concerns that respondents identified in relation to the regional and national context include: the risk of falling standards of art teachers/teaching (60 per cent); lack of diversity and stagnation in employment opportunities (47 per cent); reduced opportunity to share

innovative practice (42 per cent); devaluing of art education (40 per cent); reduction in networking opportunities (37 per cent), and impact on employment, HEI opportunities and creative industries (25 per cent). Respondents also cite an increase in feelings of disappointment, sadness and dismay as a result of the programme closure (49 per cent).

Conclusion
Through analysis of patterns and trends represented in the questionnaire data the following conclusions have been drawn. PGCE programme closures mean a loss of opportunity to train unless successful candidates can relocate or live close to an appropriate training provider; it also results in a loss of regional professional CPD, and a loss of academic expertise. There are fewer opportunities to connect with wider partners regionally, including cultural and creative industries, resulting in a narrowing of curriculum. This will also be hampered by a reduction of student teacher subject knowledge and new pedagogical input in departments. Those in the OBU partnership believe the closure of the programme devalues the subject regionally and will result in a reduction in the quality of teacher training and recruitment opportunities in the subject. There is concern that School Direct is a poor substitute to PGCE, limiting training environments, access to theoretical and complementary knowledge and understanding, and subject specific mentoring support. Art educators recognise the impact will not only be felt locally, regionally and nationally, but will impact on pupil achievement and their future employment and educational opportunities. ■

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Preparing to implement the National Curriculum: Carpe diem?

Peter Gregory on the work of the Expert Group and how, as a community of art, craft and design educators, the national curriculum leaves the doors wide open to seize the day!

I understand that a more accurate translation of the Latin phrase ‘Carpe diem’ would be ‘enjoy the day’ or ‘pluck the day [as it is ripe]’. This seems to me to sum up where we have got to in the development of the National Curriculum (NC) for Art and Design due to be implemented in schools from September 2014. This does not mean that I think all is good and we can be complacent. Let me explain.

In February 2013 I became Chair of an ‘Expert Group’ for the subject convened by the (then) Teaching Agency (TA). The brief of the group was to consider the implications for the new curriculum (which had just been published as a consultation document) for the training of primary teachers (ITE). A similar ‘Expert Group’ was convened for each subject area of the NC.

The group for Art and Design included a number of NSEAD members (although the Society was officially represented by Sophie Leach) inspector/advisers/consultants, HEI and school-based training providers, school staff (heads, teachers to a teaching assistant) and representatives from other organisations with an interest in the subject. Together we started to untangle the concerns (and there were many!), deal with Department for Education (DfE) officials who perceived positives that did not impress us and think through how best to support those involved in training future teachers. We found it difficult to stay focussed on just ITE and frequently strayed into issues of continuing professional development (CPD) for teachers once qualified. Similarly we also were concerned about cross-phase issues.

The brief of the group changed as the TA was amalgamated with the National College for School Leaders (NCSL) and all became responsible to the DfE. The groups’ remit became ITE and CPD and further broadened to include key stage 3 so additional members joined to ensure this spread could be adequately

represented. Together we worked on a number of documents to be able to best report to the Minister for the NC, Elizabeth Truss.

Exactly what did the group do then, which has led me to the conclusion I mentioned at the beginning? The quality of the discussions, fuelled by evidence of some very high quality provision, opportunity, projects and publications indicated that there was much to be proud of from across the country. Significantly, these opportunities were often driven by colleagues within NSEAD or other organisations – for example engage or the Sorrell Foundation – and no longer by central or local government. This could be seen as problematic as often they were regional rather than national and there was a risk of duplication or omission as they lacked a coordinated approach.

As a teacher educator myself, I am acutely aware of the gaps in recent publications to recommend to my students as they consider their chosen areas of research and investigation. Many of the books we have relied on are considered out-of-date and are being removed from university libraries. The ‘Expert Group’ gave us the opportunity to look at this material in detail

and map areas of the subject where new work is desperately needed. I’ll say more on this later.

The DfE expected us to work from the proposed NC: this was difficult because of the deep levels of concern we all expressed. We therefore incorporated best practice noted by Ofsted, curriculum documentation from the earliest level (Early Years Foundation Stage – EYFS) across the statutory years and also mapped opportunities embedded in the Teachers’ Standards document as well. We submitted our own response to the NC consultation process: something which I think was unexpected and somewhat embarrassing to the DfE.

However to summarise: we clearly stated what was wrong with the proposed NC, identified the kinds of materials that could best support teachers and ways in which the ITE community could benefit: in short, we enjoyed the day!

Were we listened to? The answer in political terms is likely to always be ‘in part’. As a result of the complementary voices raised in the

‘The ‘Expert Group’ gave us the opportunity to look at this material in detail and map areas of the subject where new work is desperately needed’

consultative phase, we have seen modest changes in the newly revised NC. The ball is now in a much wider court. The additional words and revisions will allow the art and design community to continue to develop and improve the quality of educational experiences offered to pupils. This is where I want to appeal to all teachers and teacher educators reading this. The revised NC alone will not bring about significant improvement. Without your generous involvement of time and energy in developing and supporting Regional Network Groups; being prepared to write articles in *AD* or *iJADE* and chapters in books; your development of materials and resources to support teachers, little change may be effected. However, with colleagues contributing, developing and publishing we can be sure that there is tremendous opportunity to now ‘pluck the day [as it is ripe]’.

Please do not be shy: ask how you can contribute further to this process over the year so that significant improvements can be brought about! ■

Peter Gregory



Edited by Ken Baynes and Eddie Norman

Design Education: A Vision for the Future

Edited by Ken Baynes and Eddie Norman

Published by Loughborough Design Press

Edited by Ken Baynes and Eddie Norman
Published by Loughborough Design Press
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ePub: eISBN 978-1-909671-04-1 (£2.99 RRP)
ldpress.co.uk/book/design-education-a-vision-for-the-future

Here is a good example of a responsive publication. It grew from a lecture originally given in 2010 by Ken Baynes and is developed as a collection of essays using the same ‘seven key themes around which a future vision of design education could be framed’. In part it celebrates what had already been identified as the core of the subject. The challenging dimension of the book is that those aspects are well used to articulate what the subject should become as a clear response to the ‘astonishing’ proposals

put forward in the earlier (February) draft of the National Curriculum (NC) for Design Technology.

It is not a long book – only 100 or so pages but each of the nine contributors provides clear insight to a particular focus – including aims, encouraging the imagination, the values of learning through making etc. All pose significant questions; all are clearly dismayed at the prospect of losing sight of the fundamental themes in the assumptions made in the NC. In these sentiments there are many parallels to be made with the NC subject content of art and design.

Should you read this book? I would strongly suggest that you do. Some of the concerns raised in it may have been answered in the revision of the NC but that is not the real issue. The contributors writing with passion, from their own experience and reflection raise their corporate voice. Composed through the themes, this invites our consideration and hopes to provoke reflexive action. ■

Peter Gregory
Senior Lecturer in Education
(Creative Arts)
Canterbury Christ Church University

‘I liked the way the same forms were executed in different ways’

Bodies in motion

A whole-school cross-curricular approach to drawing

As part of a whole school cross-curricular approach to the London 2012 Olympic Games I decided, as art leader, to investigate the possibility of developing an art project on the theme of *Bodies in Motion*. My starting point was a particular picture of an Indian dancer by Sussex artist, Janine Creaye. A strong aspect of Janine’s work is based on movement through the media of drawing and sculpture.

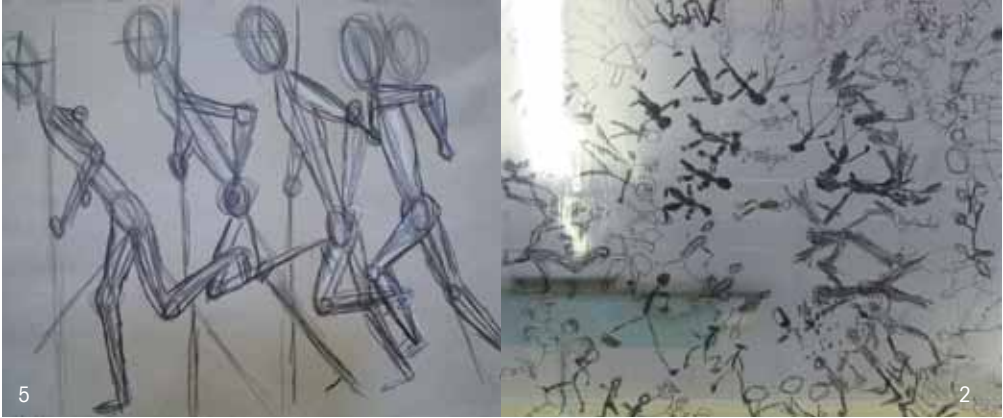
I met with Janine Creaye and together we designed a five-day day residency programme based on the drawing of figures in motion. The residency included a practical professional development session prior to the residency to enable staff to develop a deeper understanding of the skills and techniques the artist would explore with the children.

The project culminated in an exhibition for children, parents and local residents displaying the progression of skills in drawing figures in motion for children throughout the school.

The residency was funded by a grant from the RC Sherriff Trust, fundraising by St Andrew’s School Association and the shortfall was made up by St Andrew’s Primary School.

Pre-workshop Group Sessions: The children were introduced to the project through large group sessions. Each model (an aerobics teacher; Paula, our school gymnast; a tennis player and runner from Reeds School, Cobham. fig. 1) performed a set of movements broken into three parts and from these a series of drawings developed including two-minute sketches on three A6 cards with coloured pencil crayons and two-minute sketches on one A6 card of the second model i.e. one on top of the other. The process was more important than the outcomes.

For some children having a time limit was quite liberating; for others it was quite a struggle to draw on top of a drawing. The younger children had no expectations of what the drawing should look like so were less inhibited than the older children. Using ‘real’ models brought the project to life and added a new dimension to drawing.



Geometric Man
© Janine Creaye

Janine and the children in year 6 (ages 10-11) recorded the models with still and film cameras. Selected pupils made A4 prints by image catching and photo-editing digital films.

Workshop sessions with Janine Creaye based on Eadweard Muybridge and the running man: Reception children worked from photo sequences of the runner and the gymnast. They drew on paper with marker pens at first individually and then created a continuous PVC/acetate drawing where each drawing overlapped the last – this builds drawings with a dramatic sense of movement (fig. 2).

Years 1 – 6 (ages 5-11) were involved in two artist workshop sessions. Workshop one involved three exercises using Muybridge and Janine’s own drawings to show a method for tackling the not always popular subject of drawing people in motion. Exercise 1 were five-minute stick figures that were not only familiar to the children but remain fundamental to the artist’s own practice. This was to set the scale, position the drawing on the paper, introduce proportion and direction of movement. Exercise 2 involved breaking human forms into geometric shapes as a way of fleshing out the body and recognising the mechanics of joints (fig. 3-5). Exercise 3 built on this with four timed, two-minute overlapping scribble style drawings on a single piece of paper to emphasise movement and not detail.

For the second session Janine used Degas and Toulouse Lautrec as a reference for showing light and shade, and hard and soft line to catch the sense of movement. The children went on to make drawings in charcoal on grey paper using putty rubbers to create the negative image.

In year 5 (ages 9-10) children went from stickman to skeletal man drawings recognising the bone structure inside the body, and followed with geometric forms. They progressed to ‘muscleman’ highlighting their understanding of muscle groups and how they perform in motion.

Year 6 (ages 10-11) children edited their films, selected the images they wanted to use and created their own sequences from which they could draw, giving them complete ownership of the project.

Wire Workshop: A group of children (ages 7-11) worked with Janine to create a sculpture of Paula. These pieces demonstrated the children’s ability to transfer drawn images into 3D sculptures (fig. 6).

Artist’s view – Janine Creaye
‘This was a very enjoyable if exhausting project with the key to its success being the positive support from staff at the school. There were many points to learn about running such

workshops and adjustments were made throughout the days, but things that stand out are: That surprisingly young children were very good at breaking a body into geometric forms, but inhibited about being asked to ‘scribble’ and not care about ‘good drawing’. The idea of drawing in negative is a challenge even to adults, but with the distraction of making a mess blending charcoal and rubbing into it, most age groups took to this very well! Control of the pencil is not a given for the very young, and a really useful addition was introducing a ‘tone line’ right at the beginning to stop endless broken pencils because of pressing too hard. The range of innate ability in reception produced some stunningly advanced drawings alongside some very basic drawings, which made some of the most amazing final display (fig. 7).’

Art leader’s view – Liz Collins
‘The project more than fulfilled my expectations. Encouraging the children to draw under timed conditions prevented them from ‘over thinking’; it forced them to focus on what they could see rather than on what they thought they could see. The entire project was based on ‘having a go’. They worked on grey sugar paper with coloured crayons and charcoal and created positive and negative images, which appeared as if by magic, with putty rubbers; nothing fancy, just straightforward simple materials.’

Year 6 teacher’s view – Carrie Taylor
‘The project was meaty. It took me out of my comfort zone. I wouldn’t naturally have gone down the ICT route, and I did have to learn how to use the programme to create the effects we wanted. I loved the way that both drawing and digital technology ran into each other seamlessly. I really saw the children’s drawing skills develop – the ‘quick sketches’ gave them a freedom to put down marks almost without thinking and as they were hurried on from one sketch to the next they didn’t have time to moan how ‘rubbish’ they were, they just started the next one and got better! Drawing one form on top of another also helped free the children up as lines merged and the drawings flowed. I liked the way the same forms were executed in different ways – crayon, shading etc and using different media. The children all produced work they were excited about.’ ■

Janine Creaye,
ARBS
sculptureform.co.uk

Liz Collins,
Art leader at St Andrew’s Primary School, Cobham, Surrey



Marking Time: The National Arts Education Archive

Tony Chisholm on the National Arts Education Archive, its past, present and future

‘Pre-eminent amongst these collections is visual evidence and other material relating to the teaching of art and those emergent philosophies that shaped classroom practice and curriculum development in the twenty-century, and arguably continues to do so’

In 2015 the National Arts Education Archive will celebrate thirty years since its establishment at Bretton Hall College in West Yorkshire. Its inauguration was a direct response to the perceived need for key collections of materials relating to developments in art, craft and design education to be brought together in one place; to secure their future as touchstones in the development of teaching and learning, and as an archive for professional reference and research. The vision that inspired its foundation as a Trust, its structure and protocols, also provided the impetus for future growth under its first Director, Professor Ron George. Since 1985 growth has been exponential and in its purpose built facility the Archive currently holds individual and institutional collections of images, artefacts, books, papers and other documentation spanning the last 150 years of initiatives and developments in art education, thinking and practice. Pre-eminent amongst these collections is visual evidence and other material relating to the teaching of art and those emergent philosophies that shaped classroom practice and curriculum development in the twenty-century, and arguably continues to do so.

The underlying concept for a repository of such distinctive and invariably unique collections was informed by the belief that its value lies in the preservation of accessible bodies of work, and that they in turn, should provide an historical, cultural and educational framework for further enquiry and investigation into the knowledge and understanding that underpins what is taught and what is learnt. In this regard, the notion that ‘if you don’t know where you have come from, how can you know where you are going’, has some relevance. At the very least it provides a sense of the importance of understanding the foundations of current practice as well as something of the profound changes brought about through the experience, determination, commitment and acute attention of dedicated individuals for whom art education was a critical preoccupation.

The National Arts Education Archive now operates under the auspices of the Yorkshire Sculpture Park and as a consequence it has extended its remit to develop work with artists, teachers’ groups, regional universities and a growing network of community organisations. Continuing professional development and outreach activities represent



‘This considerable legacy also reflects the vision, ambitions and innovations of past and present art educators’

Far Left
Sir Alec Clegg Collection

Left
A.E. Halliwell Collection

Above
Franz Cizek Collection

Right
Sir Alec Clegg Collection

an important aspect of the Archive’s intention to make itself available to wider audiences and to support, wherever

possible, their needs and research interests. The incorporation with Yorkshire Sculpture Park is proving to be a significant and increasingly productive relationship that offers scope for different forms of engagement and experience. This is effectively demonstrated in the recent exhibition and seminar to

do with the life and work of artist and educator Tom Hudson. This *Transitions* exhibition called upon many examples from the Basic Design collection and his work with students at Leicester, Cardiff and elsewhere, and as such, illustrates a purposeful, distinctive and potent coalition of interests. This exhibition and others such as Tate Britain’s *Basic Design* (2013) clearly illustrate the way in which materials from the Archive can be used to bridge and define both historical and contemporary contexts.

As part of its recent outreach programme, the NAEA mounted an exhibition at the Batley Art Gallery that focused on teaching and learning through drawing across the twentieth century. *Marking Time: A Century of Drawing in Art Education* provided not only a glimpse into the wealth of material held in the Archive, but offered the opportunity to consider and reflect upon the way in which drawing as an activity has served, and continues to serve, the needs of children, students, artists and teachers in shaping an understanding of the world. The link with Eileen Adams at Power Drawing (UK) and Bob Steele at the Drawing Development Network (Canada) further enhanced this enterprise, as did the close work with two artists in residence who individually and jointly with the curatorial team, hosted over seven hundred children in a range of associated drawing activities related to the exhibition.

This aspect of the Archive’s work continues with forthcoming exhibitions at Sheffield Children’s Hospital (2013); as part of an exhibition at the Mercer Art Gallery in Harrogate (2014) where examples from the Sir Alec Clegg and West Riding collections will be included under the title *Art in Yorkshire: From Turner to Hockney* and at Middlesbrough Institute of Modern Art (2014) which will call upon work from

the Victor Pasmore and Richard Hamilton collections to support the *Art and Optimism in 1950s Britain* exhibition.

The National Arts Education Archive is a resource that is validated by its continuing use and ongoing contribution to creative activity and good practice. If, for example, interest lies in the 1920s Jugendkunstklasse of Franz Cizek, the Revolution in Child Art and the work of Alexander Barclay-Russell, the Basic Design Movement, A.E. Halliwell’s designs from the Central School of Art, the origins and outcomes of the pivotal 1956 Society for Education in Art Conference on Adolescent Expression in Art and Craft, or the 1979 North Eastern Region Art Advisers Association exhibition *Learning through Drawing*, then these and many more key collections are available for closer inspection. They act as both markers and a guide through a dynamic period of art education and visitors are encouraged to view this primary source material as well as the extensive library of specialist art education texts that are available. This considerable legacy also reflects the vision, ambitions and innovations of past and present art educators and is well placed to inform contemporary activity by providing essential insights into past achievements. The National Arts Education Archive at Yorkshire Sculpture Park offers a warm welcome to all who wish to extend their academic research, professional development or personal interest in the evolution of art education. ■

Tony Chisholm
Education Advisor NAEA@ysp

For further information on NAEA@ysp visit:
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t: 01924-830690, Monday and Tuesday
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National Arts Education Archive
at Yorkshire Sculpture Park
West Bretton, Wakefield WF4 4LG.

Children teaching teachers

Angela Findlay on the importance of learning and teaching – aged 10-11

After spending a day on a course, learning how to use ZU3D – a stop-motion animation package – I was very excited about returning to Midfield Primary School to demonstrate it to my colleagues. However, as the days passed during the summer term, time began to run

out in terms of finding a staff meeting slot for training, though my year 6 (ages 10-11) children had become experts!

The animation package, the type of program used to record Wallace and Gromit, allowed the children to make many cross-curricular links when designing their short films and settings: they wrote play scripts during literacy; used modelling clay during art/D&T to create their characters and measuring skills in maths/D&T when creating ‘shoebox-rooms’ as their settings and items of furniture. The children produced their own stop-motion animation movies and soon became skilled moviemakers.

I asked my children if they would mind sparing some of their lunchtime to help me ‘teach the teachers’. They jumped at the chance and were keen to ensure the teachers followed the school rules whilst they were being taught! I organised a lunchtime session and the teachers signed-up to attend. My class made use of ‘hammer’ beads, Lego and modelling clay when demonstrating and teaching how to use the package. The session was extremely successful, with all participants enjoying themselves and wanting to carry on into lesson time (including our head teacher).

The children were able to give the teachers tips such as: only move items a tiny amount after each photo and ensure models made with modelling clay are not too delicate as they break quickly the more they are moved.

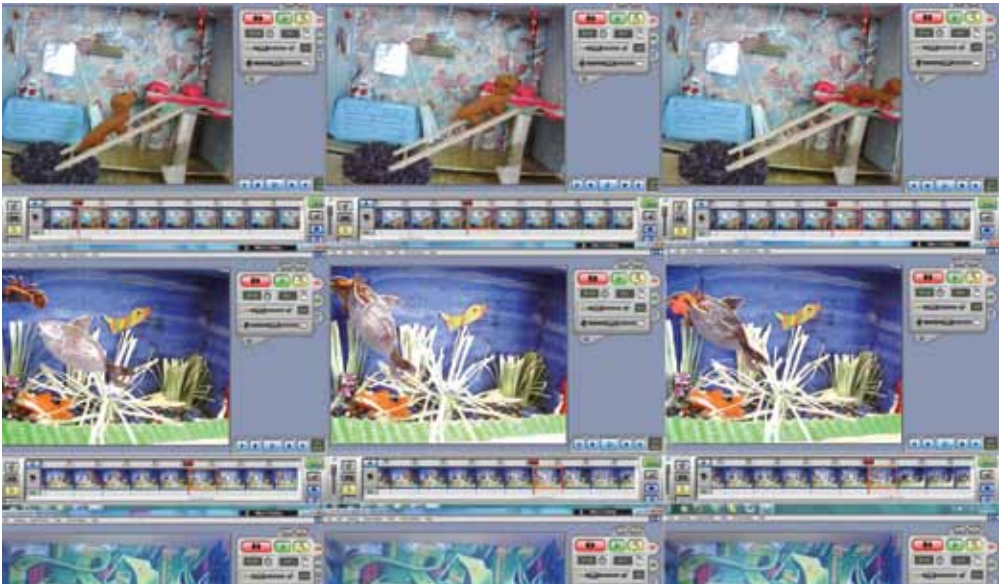
I spoke to the children and teachers after the session. My students said they felt appreciated and skilled, they had been valued as ‘teachers’ and embraced the feeling that they helped an adult to achieve something new and that this had reinforced their learning. The teachers explained how they had become children again – they were the learners and were very impressed with all that the children knew and the skills they were able to demonstrate and teach. It also reminded them of how hard it is to ‘stop’ when you are enjoying your learning!

I would whole-heartedly recommend allowing children to teach adults in situations like these, particularly when there is an artistic/imaginative link apparent – as teachers we aim to inspire, we must remember that children do too! ■

Angela Findlay is art and design coordinator at Midfield Primary School



‘My students felt appreciated and skilled, they felt valued as ‘teachers’



Collaborative imaginative drawings, a photo-story

Nigel Meager on regaining fluency in drawing and banishing the ‘I can’t draw’ syndrome. Here’s how...

It is commonly thought that art offers individual children highly personalised opportunities to come to express their inner world and its complex connections with the objective world. For example, drawing in school can be thought of as an activity where individuals communicate, record perceptions, invent and plan from a personal perspective. In primary school drawing this might mean each child has a piece of paper, workbook or sketchbook, and goes on to produce an outcome which is a personal response to their sensations, perceptions and ideas.

In contrast, the collaborative drawing workshop for 9- and 10-year-olds, described by the photo-story on the following page, was part of a research project which challenged these assumptions about intrinsically personal expression and communication through the production of discreet art objects by individuals – assumptions which are deeply embedded in a fine art tradition of art and art education.

Having said that, children drawing together or alongside adults are established strategies in early years teaching. Research about literacy in the early years shows how young children are at ease making complex meanings in a cross-modal way as they play, talk and draw in the community of the classroom. Adults may look on with sadness as such fluent drawing – so naturally part of thinking and communicating – is replaced with hesitancy and even fear as children progress through school. Our collaborative drawing project sought to unlock that fluency for older children. Something they once had but had lost.

For this project I worked with Whitchurch Primary School in Cardiff. This is a large, new

primary school amalgamated from two older schools in September 2012. The head teacher, Ann Griffin, wanted a project which would support the integration of 9- and 10-year-olds from different schools. Part of my brief from the school was to show how shared drawing could catalyse a high level of collaboration, communication and develop thinking skills. To help with these objectives, children were made fully part of the research project as knowing participants. The teaching also introduced meta-learning concepts about creativity. For example, it is valuable not to worry about mistakes, to take risks, to collaborate with others, share ideas and enjoy inventiveness. They relished the respect implied by the overt interest in their opinions about what they were doing and so, as well as making the drawings, they were very thoughtful about how they were thinking and acting as they drew.

In contrast, representational drawing skills were downplayed to the maximum, to the extent that children were encouraged to think that stick people were fine if that meant they could share, show and build ideas. The hope was that the ‘I can’t draw’ syndrome would be banished as children accepted drawing as a way of creating and expressing ideas together, rather than an activity which required a special individual skill to enjoy. The panels were made from medium density fibre board primed with white emulsion paint. The drawn shapes and lines were made with permanent marker pens and then overlain with of water based drawing inks applied with brushes. It didn’t matter if the ink went over lines; sometimes that effect was very pleasing. Apart from introducing the theme, ‘imaginary rides’, children accepted the challenge of creating all the content themselves. There was the absolute minimum of adult intervention. The photo-story on the following double-page spread shows what happened. One of the finished panels is illustrated here.

Collaborative imaginative drawings, a photo-story continued

It's the ideas which count. Don't worry too much about making 'good' drawings — stick people and animals, words and labels are all fine.

Children start to add colour using inks. There is a reminder that this is also a research project in the background.



The workshop theme is 'rides'.

1



"Have you experienced a ride? What could imaginary rides be like? Think about the imaginary setting and what happens on the ride."

2



"Don't forget this is a research project and you are participating in the research."

3



Children talk about imaginary rides in groups. "What could we do? What are your ideas?"

4



After talking, children first work as individuals. They are invited to create ideas for imaginary rides in visual notebooks.

5



6



Now children share their ideas before making their first collaborative drawings.

7



It's great fun creating the imaginary ride together. The marker pens are easy to use and make clear bold lines.

8



The collaborative imaginative drawing is progressing.

10



Children slightly wet the area where they want to add colour before applying ink so that it spreads easily across the surface. This is a simple technique to learn.

11

This is one the 2.5 sq metre improvisations.



21



Next, all sixteen children created a huge spontaneous collaborative drawing incorporating many of their visual ideas from session one.

20



First children were asked to explore how to make lines on their own and then they collaborated with those around them.

19



The second workshop session started with two large, collaborative drawing improvisations — the paper was 2.5m square.

18



17



One child bought to school a pack of information about real rides.

16



Children take their own photographs, if they want.

15



14

Sixteen children went on to the second stage of the project at a contemporary art gallery. They were invited to do their own visual research at home. Some created new ideas for rides.



The collaborative drawings reached this stage by the end of the first session.

13



12



This is intense work and children needed to take a break.

22

This mixed class of 16 split into four groups of four. Children self selected their groups. They were asked to explore how to go about creating a long rectangular panel for permanent display in the school.

23



Some children immediately thought about colour and explored techniques for applying ink to their panel.

24



Adults took an interest but did not offer advice or suggestions unless asked.

25



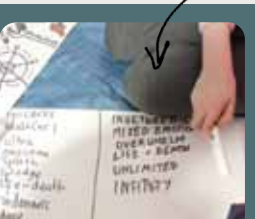
Children were always reminded that this is a research project as well as a drawing workshop.

26



There was a lot of thinking as well as talking.

27

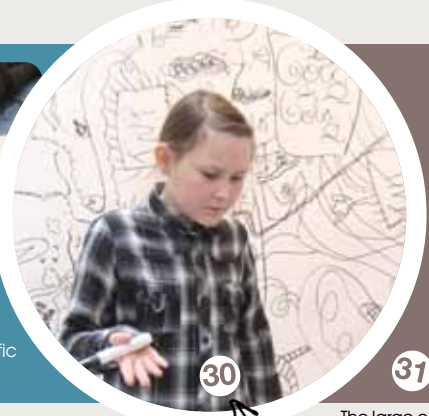


28



Other children were very methodical — in this case deciding on specific colours for specific elements of their ride.

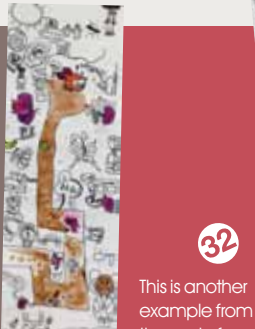
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30

At the end of session 2 each group had a really good plan for what to do on their final panels.

31



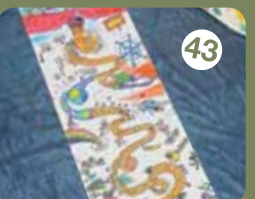
32

This is another example from the end of session 2.



33

At the start of session 3, the following day, children had a chance to look at all the work from sessions 1 and 2. This had been informally displayed on the gallery walls.



43

The panel as it was on the floor of the workshop ready to be taken back to school. A detail from this panel with explanatory text follows.



42

A detail from the bottom of the same panel.



41

Here is a detail from one of the panels at the end of session 3.



40

Coming towards the end of session 3. These panels will be finished back in school.



39



38

In contrast, this group had an informal experiment sheet to try out colours and techniques.



37

Others decided to write very detailed parts of the process as guidelines. This is a set of instructions about where and how to use colour.



36

Some children bought in their own cameras to record what happened.



35

The panels were made from MDF and were made a particular size for permanent display in school.



34

Each group organised themselves in the gallery space, ready to work on the panels.

The panels are progressing well.

‘Our collaborative drawing project sought to unlock that fluency for older children. Something they once had but had lost’



Here is a detail from top part of the finished panel illustrated on page 15. The text is an interpretive synthesis of what children said about their drawing based on recordings of children’s talk as they were drawing and then subsequently with me after the panels were finished. I hope this offers a glimpse into the extraordinary and complex ideas children created together, as well as a suggestion of the potential for collaborative imaginative drawing in a primary classroom both as art and as thought. *AD* readers might find it interesting to critique this workshop in the context of Eileen Adams’ article in *AD* #8 about the value of drawing in the curriculum, which is set in the context TEA, Thinking, Expression and Action, learning through drawing in art and design.

The ride starts from a lovely landscape. The sun shines. There are snow-capped mountains and rivers. Just relax. But perhaps this setting is not so peaceful? Birds are flying... and pooing. People get into a carriage which is shaped like a splattered ice-cream. Ice creams, which melt too quickly, fall on pavements and splatter like this to cue both simultaneous disappointment and laughter. So with birds pooing, ice cream cones splattering and the sun wearing shades, not all is working as usual in this setting. Fun is to be had – playfulness is at hand. And yes, these ideas can be random, not so

much under control. But even so, you are invited to believe at the start you can relax.

But then, hold tight, as the status of each possible lamination of reality takes the form of a ride, as you burst from this scene, which is already make-believe, through a curtain, drawn apart as though on a stage, into another fabricated setting – the ride – still within the first fantasy, which is within the frame of an imaginary drawing, which is also on the floor of a gallery for contemporary art, which is anchored in the ongoing world of a Welsh city.

The curtain is red, dramatic, and stretched across the entrance. It is all for a special effect. Is this benign, just for fun, or exploitative, to trap you from its seductive peaceful beginning into fear and danger? Eyes are wide open; hair is standing on end; the ice-cream-cone-carriage is plummeting. Now you know you are in danger. You have entered infinity. And what could we say about infinity?

So, what is the point of a speed camera? Surely speed cameras are out to slow you down? That’s not fun. Plus, speed cameras come up on you fast. They scare you. Or they scare your parent, who is driving too fast with points on their license, in danger of being banned or attending a speed awareness course, with all the inconvenience or shame involved. Never even

mind the idea that the cameras record an image of your car passing in a digital form, which is real evidence that you were really there, at that time, really speeding. So real, in fact, that it is proof in law. But that is an out-of-frame thought running somehow on another track. And the speed camera is not everyone’s idea. It is not one girl’s idea at all. But if the camera is really to scare you, perhaps it should make a loud noise, which real speed cameras don’t do (unless you have a warning device in your car). But if they ‘boom’ you might be really scared, especially if you know your license is lost. So maybe it is not a fantasy camera, a make-believe camera, which makes a noise on a ride to scare you – it is a real speed camera which takes your license away. This is worse than a pretend speed camera and more frightening. But this idea, in the ride, is fun.’ ■

Nigel Meager

Nigel Meager has published several books about teaching art in primary schools in collaboration with NSEAD. He is currently studying for a PhD in education at the University of Cambridge. Visit arteduaction.co.uk for contact details and more about Nigel’s work.



Washing Line Week at Christleton High School

Hang out with us.....

In the art and design department at Christleton High School in Cheshire, we have established an exciting but manageable format for the termly display of a new piece of artwork by all of our 700 art students. Our regular show, called Washing Line Week, is largely set up and taken down by student curators who relish the experience, develop independence and enjoy a dramatic and rewarding sense of achievement. After involvement with the last WLW, two students (aged 12-13) said: ‘Being involved in Washing Line Week gave us a sense of achievement; this was an incredible display of the creativity of the talented pupils at Christleton High School and it was on show to everyone who entered the school hall.’ And ‘The fun and laughter while pegging and unpegging the artwork made it an enjoyable, crazy experience!’

The termly show started life a number of years ago as an event that lasted for one day. At this stage, the event was called *Washing Line Wednesday* and the procedure was as follows:



- All art students in years 7-9 (aged 11-14) created one special A4 homework during the term leading up to the big day. GCSE and A Level students were required to submit a preparatory design sheet or a final piece. Students put their names on the front of their work and their teacher, room and class on the back.
- At the end of the day before the exhibition, our longest corridor was transformed with washing lines. For speed and ease, we stretched bungee cords around the pillars that line the corridor and then attached the lines (actually long skipping ropes) to the bungee cords.
- On the day of the show, 15 early bird students in years 7 and 8 (aged 11-13) used clothes pegs to hang all of the art pieces on the washing lines. This took about one hour before school.
- During the day of the exhibition, the student curators attended the show at break and lunchtime to enjoy positive comments from passers-by, to re-hang errant pieces and to be rewarded with refreshments.
- At the end of the day, the same students came and took the show down. Using the information on the backs of the pieces, they sorted the art work into piles ready for re-distribution to the teachers of each class. This took about one hour and fifteen minutes.

Following the success of termly *Washing Line Wednesdays* over a number of years, we have rebranded WLW as *Washing Line Week* and we hold the new longer lasting shows in our school hall. Student curators set up and dismantle the event after school and the washing lines have now been replaced with permanent pulleys and steel cables. The profile of the event is higher and the larger and more central venue offers the event an increased level of prestige. It is truly inspiring to see such a wide range of massed experimental preparatory work, final pieces and homeworks from students in Fine Art, 3D and Graphics whose ages range from 11-18. During *Washing Line Week*, our hall is transformed and so are we. ■

We invite you to try WLW and to share your results with us via enquiries@christletonhigh.co.uk

Join us in creating your own Washing Line Week or Washing Line Wednesday and give new meaning to on-line communication.
www.christletonhigh.co.uk/subjects/art.php

Ruth Pritchard
Head of Art & Design

Can you bring contemporary art successfully into the primary art classroom?

‘Yes you can’ says Jo Brown, and here she describes how Seascape Primary School did exactly that (and more)

Seascape Primary School proved that contemporary art is something that can be embraced, harnessed, cherished and nurtured – all in one week of art activities. The theme for that art project was ‘Street Art – Northern Saints’. When this was shared with staff it was amazing to see the ideas, excitement and willingness to try something new. The buzz around school during the art week was like nothing we have experienced before. Adults and children alike tried something new, and if it didn’t work as planned, that wasn’t a problem as we then just tried something different. After all, creativity is taking risks.

The idea behind the project was to involve street art, something that children would see regularly but didn’t know how to approach. We aimed to link this to the traditional form of writing showcased in the Lindisfarne Gospels which were back on display in Durham during summer 2013. The impact of the project was such that children asked their parents to take them to see the Gospels!

So we set about creating giant jigsaws, tapestries, projections, installation pieces, graffiti and street dance pieces that linked the street art and Northern Saints theme. From the beginning we knew that this would culminate in a whole school art exhibition. Process and outcome were important.

When the doors to the exhibition finally opened, parents, colleagues, friends and children queued out of the door to

receive their goody bag and enter our inspirational collection of art. Greeted enthusiastically by children at the door they were guided around the school by our art experts from years 5 and 6 (ages 9-11). Visitors could experience all of the diverse creations and ask questions about the artworks. Every inch of space in the school was alive with artworks.

One of the most striking pieces was installed in the school hall and created by years 2 and 6 (ages 6-11). This tapestry inspired art was made using insulating tape and paint and lay on the floor with candles all around it. A slow motion video of pupils enacting an ancient battle scene was playing on a loop on a large screen in the background. Moments of contemplative silence were interjected with the slow motion battle cries. The children had also made shields that lay across the stage for people to view and handle.

The image of St Aidan at Lindisfarne in a giant jigsaw form proved a big hit, as people strived to recreate the jigsaw picture displayed nearby to help them. Parents competed with each other to get this done! The huge jigsaw was created by children aged 5-10 using florists oasis as the base and a massive tissue paper collage on top.

Perhaps the most striking exhibit was Durham Cathedral and the pathway to it, created by our nursery children. As they rolled paint, splashed paint and laughed they were asked, ‘What are you today?’ they shouted ‘We’re street artists’. One



‘If it didn’t work as planned, that wasn’t a problem as we then just tried something different’

Above
Children creating an installation and performance piece inspired by Yayoi Kusama

Left
St Aidan at Lindisfarne in the form of a jigsaw

Below
Insulating tape and paint revealing the face of St Oswald on the floor as a battle plays in the background



small artist decided that she could save time by placing a piece of card over the top of her painting to create two pieces the same. The nursery cathedral, using card boxes and paper, looked stunning and took pride of place in the centre of the exhibition.

The use of technology was very evident as years 3 and 6 (ages 7-11) built a room installation to be seen in complete darkness. This room was filled with slowly changing projections of children’s portraits, manipulated digitally with a stained glass effect, which were projected onto the ceiling of the room. Cushions and beanbags were in place so that people could sit, lie and experience the installation.

Every teacher, teaching assistant and child took part. Partnerships are very important in doing this, our two-way relationship with BALTIC Centre for Contemporary Art means that they are very supportive and they attended the exhibition to see and film our young people. We are also supported and advised by our partner-artist and Seascape school governor Susan Coles.

So, can you bring contemporary art into the primary classroom? YES! Not just into the classroom, but the entire school! Embrace it, enjoy it, try it! ■

Jo Brown is arts coordinator at Seascape Primary School, Peterlee, County Durham



Art Matters

Ashia Oozeer on the revival of Newham Borough’s art exhibition

The Newham Borough art exhibition Art Matters, proudly opened its doors on 4 July 2013, representing the work of over 50 primary and secondary schools in the Borough including work from local colleges and the UAL Saturday drawing programme. The key focus of the exhibition, ‘Cross Curricular Links,’ explored the power of art and creativity across the curriculum.

The show has been running for 13 years, but was in serious danger of being lost forever following the loss of the Borough art advisor and also funding in 2011. However in July 2013 the show was re-launched, with a bright new future, thanks to support from the University of the Arts London, who deliver a range of creative programmes in partnership with Newham Schools and Colleges, and the fantastic support of the University of East London.

Newham has a thriving secondary and primary art network and this was a key factor in communicating with schools and ensuring that everyone would support and contribute to the exhibition. Planning a successful exhibition requires commitment from all schools and head teachers.

Featuring the work of over 2000 students from across the borough, the Newham Borough show has grown from strength to strength. The show was an opportunity not only to celebrate the incredible work going on in our schools, but also a chance for teachers to gain a real insight into progression and transition across the key stages, to share good practice and consider their own practice in the light of others, build networks and to develop aspects of the curriculum.

The work on display, demonstrated a vibrant and diverse mix of approaches, use of mediums, disciplines, techniques and ideas, from a very moving installation based on the Holocaust and survivor stories to funky recycled chairs, science inspired anatomical studies and conceptual film pieces, looking at movement and self. It was overwhelming

to see the breadth of work that is going on across the Borough. Primary schools showed the commitment that they are making to placing art at the heart of their curriculums, with mannequins inspired by the book *Wuthering Heights* and fabulous three-dimensional trees exploring issues of relationships and community.

Many young people in Newham do not get the opportunity to go to university or to study art and design and this show gave them chance to see what is possible and the self belief to know that university, a career in art and design is something they can aspire to. There was a real sense of pride from students and their families, seeing their hard work acknowledged and on show at the University of East London.

Over the course of the exhibition we had over 2000 visitors, and a full programme of workshops running throughout the week enabling young people and teachers to respond creatively to the work on show. For many young people this was their first experience of an art exhibition and the learning that took place in talking about the work, responding to the work through dance and movement, through writing, drawing and painting was immense and a fantastic stimulus and starting point for further work back at school.

Planning a whole borough art exhibition takes time and commitment and a great deal of hard work. Local colleges and universities are a great place to start having the discussion about venue and even partnership projects. The Newham Borough art exhibition is a fantastic example of how valuable such an exhibition can be. Newham schools are making a vital contribution in ensuring that art must continue to have a secure and significant place in our schools and beyond and the Borough show is a shining example of the exciting, vibrant and innovative practice going on in our schools. ■

Ashia Oozeer is Head of Art at Plashet School and lead practitioner for art across the curriculum and extended curriculum

Art Matters video: vimeo.com/69893473



‘A chance for teachers to gain a real insight into progression and transition across the key stages’





Curriculum for Excellence: a study of art and design and the impact on higher education

Iain Macdonald's research asked: 'What does the Curriculum for Excellence look like in art and design?' His study's findings highlighted existing good practice, the challenges and benefits of CfE in our subject

In 2002 Education Scotland, the Scottish Qualifications Authority and the Scottish Government began the development of a new 3-18 curriculum which was to be 'a forward looking, coherent curriculum that provides Scotland's children and young people with the knowledge, skills and attributes needed for life in the twenty-first century' (Education Scotland 2013). The first Curriculum for Excellence (CfE) cohort are now entering Senior 4th Year (ages 15-16). As they near the point when they leave school the Higher Education Academy Scotland have undertaken a research scholarship initiative to engage subject specialists in higher and further education to examine the impact that the Curriculum for Excellence might have on under-graduate programmes.

Art and design is often undervalued amongst its more academic subjects, but with creativity established as a central theme of CfE, has art and design finally been recognized as an important subject in interdisciplinary learning?

In Scotland the creative industries employ over 64,000 people bringing 3.2 billion pounds to the economy. Pupils who study art and design can go on to find careers in games design, animation, film, television, product design, graphic design, publishing, architecture, advertising, fashion and art and cultural businesses. By the time pupils in Senior 4 (ages 15-16) have graduated in 2022 there will be many other new careers in the creative industries that have yet to be imagined. How prepared is Scottish education to meet that future?

This study asked the questions:

- Will these pupils be better prepared for art college and university?
- Have they had time in the timetable to develop the necessary skills?
- What technologies are they using beyond paint, pencils and clay?

The Scottish Curriculum for Excellence has been designed to meet the challenges of lifelong learning, to motivate people to learn independently, take responsibility for their learning, to be active and collaborative learners, and to be able to apply learning and develop their skills to meet whatever demands the future holds.

What does the Curriculum for Excellence look like in art and design?

This small study was undertaken in two secondary schools in Edinburgh where art and design teachers were willing to be interviewed on video following a semi-structured questionnaire. At Forester High School and Portobello High School in Edinburgh, art and design teachers are finding that the CfE is not so different to their current practice.

'We haven't seen that many changes. It's really just a matter of now being able to identify areas that were probably more discrete before: talking about numeracy and literacy, health and wellbeing. These are now part of our consideration when we put our curriculum together.'

(Head of Art, Forrester High School)

'I think we are fortunate in the art department because a lot of CfE is found there already. We do not have to change and completely reorganise our curriculum, because a lot of what we do is CfE.'

(Head of Art, Portobello High School)

There are some differences:

'I think the biggest difference is there's probably more focus on process and actually getting the kids to understand what they are learning from the process...getting them to talk about it, write about it and evaluate their work and learn what works and doesn't work.'

(Head of Art, Portobello High School)

At the time of writing many teachers were still concerned about how to assess CfE work, especially digital moving image media, despite the advice that they should work to existing equivalents as a default: Scottish National 5 is Intermediate 2, Scottish National 4 is Intermediate 1. The effect of increasing assessment on pupils is well documented (Atkinson 2008), and despite the core values of pupil-centred learning some of the most resistant issues that teachers face remain.

'Because we are teaching them to get through an exam, and that's both written and practical work, to get them to go outside the box is very difficult, because we are constrained by time, by resources, by money and also because we have younger kids because we are early presentation.'

(Head of Art, Forrester High School)

'If they can experiment they can learn something very quickly. It's not always possible in the timescale but that's the ideal way.'

(Head of Art, Portobello High School)

The perennial pressure on timetabling art and design classes may force teachers to approach student independent learning out of necessity rather than conviction.

Independent learning

'We do try to get them to think for themselves, and that's to me is a lot of what Curriculum for Excellence is about. It's about being a responsible individual, and being confident as well.'

(Head of Art, Forrester High School)

'Seeing the bigger picture is critical if pupils are to see the opportunities ahead and to empower them to make informed decisions about their education'

It is important for pupils to develop their skills as an independent learner, so that they can take responsibility for their learning after leaving school, whether in further education or employment. Seeing the bigger picture is critical if pupils are to see the opportunities ahead and to empower them to make informed decisions about their education, but also to help understand the increasingly mediated world around them.

Digital technology

Digital media has long been established in art and design tertiary education in order to keep pace with industry, is secondary education finally catching up?

'When the opportunity arises for new technologies we are very open to it.'

(Head of Art, Forrester High School)

There is a democratic principle at the heart of education in Scotland, one that includes a belief that digital technology should be available to all. A recent pilot by Hull University in twenty Scottish schools found that digital tablets had transformative effects on improving pupils' academic attainment and the working relationship between teachers and pupils.

'[The iPad and other digital tablets] are going to change education because we are going to be coming up with lessons that involve a tablet, and that's going to be completely different. So how do you approach it? Where's your prior learning? Interestingly they are the ones with the prior learning, and we're the ones learning. But that's fine, that's great.'

(Head of Art, Portobello High School)

In conclusion this is a narrow study of only a small sample of Scottish secondary schools. The response and approach to the application of CfE will vary across Scotland. This study illustrates how existing pedagogies of art and design can embrace CfE and be enhanced to meet the needs of higher education. There are clearly challenges facing timetables, resources and assessment, but these are perennial issues that will constantly require negotiation and campaigning. It is not just teachers but the health of the country's economy and culture that require more committed support from art and design academics, creative industry professionals and not least, policymakers. ■

Iain Macdonald

Senior Lecturer in Graphic Design, Edinburgh Napier University



Making not taking

Working with feeder primary school students, King James’s School used digital photography to explore techniques and composition. Lilian Clitheroe describes the benefits of the scheme

The Gifted and Talented Digital Photography project took place over the course of seven weeks. The aim of the course was to further students’ knowledge and experience of digital photography and to improve their visual literacy skills, particularly their understanding of the composition of an image. King James’s students wanted to move away from a ‘snapshot’ mentality and towards a more active choices about composition, lighting and subject.

Students were nominated by their primary schools on the basis of their ability and/or interest in the arts. Twelve students (aged 9-11) participated, attending after school to discuss photography and become familiar with basic digital editing processes.

Our priority was for students to direct their own learning. So our first task was to find out what students wanted to gain from the course. We then shaped the programme of activities around their interests. Their comments from an initial questionnaire included everything from the specifics of ‘How to make the photo clear, the person/object at the front clear but the background blurry’ to the more general, ‘To know all about cameras and taking photographs’.

The students’ interest and inquisitiveness was clear. They were engaged with the tasks and made quick progress. In seven weeks we covered a practical photograph taking session, editing, cyanotypes and a final exhibition, which parents and staff were invited to. The students’ subject matter included still life and portraits.

In order for students to understand and recognise the different types of photography, one of the first exercises was to match the camera to the method of recording – 35mm film, SD cards and instant, which they largely matched correctly. They were fascinated by the instant camera and watched with anticipation as an image that I took appeared in the frame.

In this short time we managed to cover technical issues including angles, lighting and even the work of photographers such as Richard Avedon and his use of strong lighting and contrast in portraiture, and Josef Sudek’s still life work which made everyday objects interesting through his imaginative use of angles and composition.

In terms of equipment we used a digital SLR Canon EOS 1000D. I showed the students the macro function and how this affected the sharpness of the objects when used at close range. The students then captured enigmatic images of natural objects (figs. 1-5) making use of the close-ups to create images that became almost abstract. The editing software we used was Picmonkey and Photoshop. Students used these to crop images and to experiment with increasing the contrast.

The photographers were asked at the end of the course what they thought they had learnt. Their answers included: ‘How to take a good photo which is in focus and with different objects’ and ‘I have learnt how to edit photos in lots of different ways and different settings on the camera, like macro’. We were reminded of Ansel Adams who says: ‘You don’t take a photograph, you make it’. The students were agreed that taking your time, having fun and enjoying it were also major factors in their progression on the course.

As an introduction to digital photography, it is hoped that the course provides a starting point for the students to explore the world visually and with the authority to make active choices about what they present to the viewer. At the final exhibition of work students were delighted to see their work displayed alongside the High School work and I was able congratulate them publicly for composing, editing and presenting their work successfully. What really powered this course was the students’ enthusiasm. ■

Lilian Clitheroe
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Time for a change or looking for your first teaching post?

NSEAD members’ top-tips on applying for art and design posts

Read, read and read again each job description and person spec and make sure you understand and have experience for the specific job advertised.

CVs and supporting statements are very important. A good CV and statement tells me not just what you have done, but what you can do for the organisation.

Sounds obvious, but, dress the part. And, remember to include active membership of NSEAD and details of any CPD you have participated in!

Make sure your application is relevant to the school and not just general, they [schools and universities] appreciate the extra effort when you mention them specifically.

If it’s a school – visit and explore their website and read the most recent Ofsted report(s).

For an interview, whether a school or college asks to see a portfolio or not, always take both your own and your students’ work. Even if they’ve not asked for a portfolio, when you bring it in they are usually tempted to have a look. If they don’t ask to see work, be a little suspicious of the quality of the interview process. Also, make sure the students’ work is clearly labelled e.g. ‘Y10 print project based on...’ The interview panel may look through it while you’re not present to explain.

I add images to my letter of application to try to make it stand out amongst the others!

When short listing recently, the applications that stood out for me were ones with letters to support the application which showed a real understanding of why we teach art, craft and design.

DON’T send a letter that’s not true to you and full of jargon that’s generic; the letter should tell me about you and your stance and experience not what you think I want to hear.

It’s tricky with the standard forms, but sometimes it’s possible to add a web link to a place showing visual info. I have looked at teacher’s websites, blog pages and even MySpace when this was popular. A picture can speak a thousand words as they say.

I am a firm believer that the candidate is interviewing the school/dept to see if they are right for them. It’s not a one-way process – as a candidate you can own it!

Always include a cover letter especially if they are County Council ones! We were encouraged to highlight three bullet-points to quickly acknowledge why we applied to that school.

In everything you write (CV, letter, personal statement) tell the school how you can meet the school’s needs, not how it’s fulfilling your own.

A collective thanks to NSEAD’s Facebook group for these top-tips. Contributors include: Frances Akinde, Lesley Butterworth, Susan Coles, Ross Corser, Bill Hall, Lisa Murphy, James Nairne, Nathan Nugent. Thank you to everyone who shares their advice in our Facebook forum. Everyone is welcome: <http://on.fb.me/19mUYBj>



Art in a suitcase, a sketchbook and in a Mumbai school

Isabel Mullery on a personal identity and exchange project

After much planning, discussing and excitement all was ready and I left my 17 year-old-son alone at home for a week and flew to Mumbai. It was the first time in 17 years that I had travelled alone and it felt like a rite of passage for both of us. The UK-India Education and Research Initiative (UKIERI), through the British Council, had funded a teacher exchange between my school, St Andrews in Worthing and Mukangan in Worli, Mumbai.

An art project exploring personal identity across cultures is the focus. Year 7 students (ages 11-12) in my own school created a package of information about who they are: in art they made handmade sketchbooks documenting themselves; in English the used written language and in RE they focussed on their identity in a spiritual sense. The project's aim is to exchange the work with the Standard 5 students (ages 10-11) at Ambedkar School and then to paint each other's portraits, holding exhibitions both in Mumbai and Worthing of the results.

My luggage was heavy with my students work as I boarded the plane to Mumbai. Arriving at Chhatrapati Shivaji International Airport, simply an address in my hand, one of the cities many black and yellow taxis took me to Worli to stay with the founding directors of Mukangan.

Muktangan is an educational programme that offers alternatives to orthodox educational practices in India. The project seeks to offer a sustainable model of quality education at an affordable cost for the economically deprived sections of the society. Mukangan was created as a small retirement project by Liz and Sunil Mehta. Liz had worked in education in Mumbai for many years and started by creating a child-centred English medium preschool to serve the bustee areas (more commonly referred to as 'slum' areas) in Worli. Ten years ago this one-class project was a success and as a consequence the original school has carried on up to standard 10 (age 16). There are now six other centres and a training centre enrolling 100 adults in child development and the philosophy of Mukangan to work in its schools as teachers and provide an income for members of the local community. As an NGO it is constantly in need of funds but Liz and Sunil, now past retirement age, are an inspiration and work tirelessly to keep the project going.

School buildings in Mumbai house a number of schools, each school building seems to accommodate a Hindi medium school, a Merati medium school and an English medium school. The schools are housed on different floors of each building. Due to the limited outdoor space in the city, social times are usually taken within the corridors of the schools and PE in a classroom. Stackable furniture in Mukangan's classrooms means that the space is flexible; many lessons take place cross-legged in circles on the floor. There are three teachers with 40 children per class, each with a class space, a chalkboard and 13-14 children in each sub-class group.

My second day in Mumbai was spent in Ambedkar School (one of Mukatangans seven schools) and we began to the make sketchbooks. Coloured papers to represent spaces in each student's life; colours and textures used to express the emotion felt in each space. Working on A3 paper everyone worked enthusiastically and with much more purpose – more so than my students at home, who by their own admission would take three-times longer to complete the same task! With their fingers as glue brushes they made paths to join their spaces and added adjectives to describe the spaces they were representing.

'I handed out my students' sketchbooks. The same series of work but completed by students over six-thousand miles away'

I worked daily for an hour with students building up their sketchbooks with passport type stamps of achievements, desires for the future, drawings of themselves, their family, food, clothes etc and on the final day, On Saturday, since students attend school on Saturdays, I handed out my students' sketchbooks. The same series of work but completed by students over six thousand miles away. A fascinating session emerged, the students in Ambedkar needing to know about our uniform, badge, the logos the students had put in their books. Many of my students had filled their sketchbook pages with logos and a lively discussion took place about the influence of global branding on young people.

On my return to Brighton, my son was fine and my students very excited to meet the students from Ambedkar through their sketchbooks. They went on to make paintings, inspired by the sketchbooks, and in July we welcomed Zainab Bhindawarla to our school. My students very much enjoyed learning Warli painting with Zainab, a traditional technique from the Warli people in Marsharatha, and an exhibition of all the work was held. ■

Isabel Mullery

The National Curriculum in England

In May 2010 the Coalition Government announced a review of the National Curriculum as part of its White Paper, *The Importance of Teaching*

The Society has responded to the consultation process for the review of the National Curriculum, and a final version was published in September 2013. As it stands, throughout the consultation process, the Society and its members have been listened to, but not enough. The final version is neither inspirational nor aspiration and certainly not 'world class'. The final version does not describe the unique nature, depth, breadth and future of the subject, nor fully meet the needs of children and young people living and engaging in the twenty-first century.

In May 2013 the Society formed a Curriculum Writing Group to move the statutory National Curriculum for art and design forward, and further support teachers in its interpretation. The aim is to support subject specialists and non-subject specialists interpret and extend their reading and implementation of the curriculum in differing contexts. This is now available on the NSEAD website alongside material available from the Expert Group for Art and Design supported by the DfE.

The government has confirmed its intention to disapply elements of the national curriculum for a time-limited period in order to give schools greater flexibility to manage the transition from the existing national curriculum to the new one. This will mean that while maintained schools will still be required to teach national curriculum subjects, they will not be required to teach the centrally prescribed programmes of study (or use attainment targets as part of statutory assessment arrangements) from September 2013 for the following subjects:

- English, mathematics and science for pupils in year 3 and year 4
- all foundation subjects for pupils at key stages 1 and 2
- all subjects for pupils at key stage 3 and key stage 4.

Lesley Butterworth
General Secretary, NSEAD

Lessons from Venice

Nicholas Houghton asks what can we learn from the Venice Biennale and contemporary art?

What can art education learn from contemporary art? A visit to the Venice Biennale - the oldest and biggest contemporary art jamboree - provided an opportunity to reflect on this. In recent years, art biennials (and triennials) have cropped up all over the world, but this is the only one where attendance for the preview by the many makers and shakers of the art world is more or less obligatory. There is never enough time to go to the many attractions on offer: an official selection filling two massive exhibition spaces, 88 national pavilions, 47 officially sanctioned collateral exhibitions and many other unofficial events and shows.

It used to be a kind of World Cup of art, with nations vying with each other for the prize for the best pavilion. The prize still exists, but (unlike in sport) a good part of the art world finds this association with nationalism quaint and rather embarrassing. These days some nations present work by artists from other countries and this year the Germans and French swapped pavilions.

Artists tend to produce an artwork for a particular venue and few will miss the opportunity to put something inside which has instant impact. A typical national pavilion will present an array of ‘found’ objects together with some photographs, some text and a film to watch. These will be linked by a theme which might be thought provoking or mysterious, but the work will very rarely be concerned with

aesthetic concerns such as beauty. In 2013, the artist Lara Almarcegui filled the Spanish pavilion with large heaps of building rubble, while upstairs there was an accompanying film about poisoned, reclaimed land in Murano. In the Hungarian, Zolt Asztalos presented photographs of unexploded World War 2 bombs found in that country, together with a film that leisurely panned over the sites where the bombs were discovered. In the British, Jeremy Deller had arranged for somebody to paint on the wall a giant hen harrier clutching in its talons a Range Rover car. The accompanying explanation told how in October 2007, Prince Harry and his friend William van Cutsem were questioned by police after reliable reports that a pair of these very rare and protected birds had been shot over the Sandringham Estate. (The case was dropped).

The official selection for the Biennale by the New York based curator Massimiliano Gioni confounded expectations by presenting work by many unknown artists, or by people better known for other reasons, such as Carl Jung. Moreover, out of the 165 named artists chosen, about a quarter are dead, which is a curious take on what is contemporary. Many of the artists he included are categorised as ‘outsider’, because they will have worked completely outside the mainstream, often have been living in institutions and probably be untrained. It is hard to escape the power that emanates from the innocent sincerity and raw clumsiness of this work, but disquieting questions also arose about such unknowing artists being patronised or exploited.

The bigger chunk of the official selection is situated in a vast, long, single-storied, proto-industrial building of the

‘Context and relevance is horizontal, not vertical: it comes from what is happening, not what once happened’

Above
Pawel Althamer
Venefians, 2013
90 sculptures, plastic on metal construction.
55th International Art Exhibition, Il Palazzo Enciclopedico, la Biennale di Venezia
Photo by Francesco Galli; Courtesy la Biennale di Venezia

Right
Jeremy Deller,
English Magic,
British Pavilion 2013; courtesy British Council, photo: Cristiano Corle

Jeremy Deller's British Council commission was at La Biennale di Venezia and will tour national UK venues in 2014.
britishcouncil.org/visualarts

Arsenale. It takes stamina and a dogged determination to march from one end to the other while at the same time trying to take in the all the art. One's senses are forever bombarded by an overabundance of images, flickering screens, dark and light spaces and an almost overwhelming choice of things to look at. Imagine a school decked out for the mother of all Ofsted inspections and multiply by a thousand. Most artists are represented by a profusion of works and sometimes each work can itself be of multiple images. This cannot be art for the educated eye to leisurely scrutinise: it is art as spectacle, art to be glanced at.

Gioni's selection seemed to present an alternative history of art of which, he implies, there could be countless others. The accepted, western history of art includes two transformations, one in the 1860s that heralded Modernism and one a hundred years later, which brought about contemporary art. After gazing at its navel for a time, contemporary art moved on from examining the art world to everything beyond. Artists engaged intensely with theory, but not with materials and making. It might be art because the artist said it is, but there are no common features that enable it to be recognisable as belonging to a certain style. To the extent there is still such a thing as evolution of style attached to contemporary art, it is dictated by changes in technology, such as the evolution from grainy black and white videos to high definition film. Gioni seemed to be demonstrating that contemporary art rejects all canons. The authorised, linear history was an illusion, art was never going anywhere and still isn't.

But all selections are not equal. Those visitors to the Biennale who were powering from one event to another in a

water taxi at a hundred euros a throw (as if this were small change) have a vested interest in the creation and perpetuation of art stars.

Are there lessons for art teachers in all this? It will be familiar that art should have a theme, but contemporary art teaches that work should do much more than be a mere illustration of that theme. Creativity comes out of grappling with a theme rather than engaging with materials. Lens-based and digital media sit as equals alongside painting, drawing, modelling and carving. Self-expression is a myth: we now know there is no such thing as a self to express. Moreover, the meaning of a work is for the viewer to determine, albeit artists now incorporate critical discourse into their work. Context and relevance is horizontal, not vertical: it comes from what is happening, not what once happened.

This last point came home to me when I took time out to see an extraordinary Manet exhibition, at the Doge's Palace. This included a once in a lifetime chance to see Olympia side by side with Titian's The Venus of Urbino. When I told people what I was doing, they looked at me quizzically, as if I had taken leave of my senses. This isn't to imply that contemporary art rejects traditional painting. The point is that you can take whatever stance you like as long as it can be justified through the discourse of contemporary art, which (along with the market) has replaced art historical canons. The alternative is to appear naïve (like the outsider artists). This, above all, is what art education can learn from the Biennale. ■

Nicholas Houghton, Academic Developer (Learning and Teaching), University for the Creative Arts

Sew into Fashion Academy

The Sew into Fashion Academy is a CfBT programme aiming to support students studying fashion and textiles. Schools can select options which enables them to work with professional designers who can link with schemes of work and assist pupils in making garments to model at the catwalk show later in the year.

The Sew into Fashion Academy was set up in response to a lack of fashion and textiles skills within further education. The programme teaches students sewing, cutting and machining skills and opportunity to work with professional designers who currently work in the industry. I have been part of the Fashion Academy since it was established in 2008, and love the challenges and the competition it provides for the students. More importantly it contributes to our GCSE Art Textiles and BTEC Art and Design courses at Cherry Willingham Community School. Our collection this year ‘Insectichic’ was inspired by the OCR GCSE exam theme Creepy Crawly. Eight of my students ages 14-16 designed an insect inspired bodice which they completed

in their ten hour exam. They used their remaining art lessons to design and construct the bottom half of the garment. The cost of this programme is expensive but encourages fund raising within the school too. £700 is the cost of being in the fashion show alone, however should the school wish to work with practitioners it can cost up to £3,000. Having been part of the programme for five years my own fashion and textiles skills have developed and strengthened so I no longer need to get a practitioner in school. We raise funds through parental contributions, non-uniform days, making and selling bags and jewellery and even staff-car washing. The pupils involved enjoy the experience so much that they are willing to support and help raise the money required. The Fashion Academy programme also provides opportunities for photography students and those interested in textiles but are not interested in modelling their own work. Through the ‘Accessory Competition’ and the ‘Fashion Photography competition’ pupils are able to produce work on the same theme as the schools chosen fashion collection. Their work is exhibited and judged at the public show, and fits in perfectly with the BTEC specification too. The whole programme opens the eyes of the students to real ‘textiles’ expanding upon any preconceived notions gained in technology

lessons that textiles is purely designing and making a pencil case. It is so much more, the range of materials and techniques is endless; pupils make felt, heat-treat and steam fabrics, use embossing powder, free machine embroidery, applique, printing, fabric paints and wire. As a result the garments created are stunning. For the past three years Cherry Willingham Community School has won an award for their work on the evening of the fashion show. These have included: Most Wearable Collection, Most Creative Interpretation of the Theme and this year, Most Innovative Collection. Each year my eyes well up, the hairs on my neck stand on end and there is a lump in my throat at the sheer pride I feel for the pupils I teach who take part. To see them as confident young women on stage gliding to the music showing off the clothes they have constructed independently in front of a public paying audience is just overwhelming. I am just the proudest art teacher. ■ Charlotte Capp Art AST Cmc17@me.com For more information: www.artsduck.info/fashion-academy



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Notice of the annual general meeting 2014

All members are invited to attend the 126th Annual General Meeting of the National Society for Education in Art and Design.

This will be held in the BALTIC Centre for Contemporary Art, Gateshead Quays, South Shore Road, Gateshead, Tyne and Wear NE8 3BA on Saturday 22 March 2014 commencing 13.30 as part of the annual conference.

- The draft agenda is:**
1. To record attendance and to receive apologies for absence
 2. President's opening remarks
 3. To approve the minutes of the last AGM held at Oxford Brookes University on Saturday 23 March 2013
 4. To consider any matters arising from the minutes
 5. To receive and approve the General Secretary's report for 2012-13
 6. To receive and approve the Honorary Treasurers report for 2012-13
 7. To receive and approve the report of the Auditors for 2012-13
 8. To award a Fellowship of the Society
 9. To appoint auditors for the financial year 2013-14.