



**CREATIVE PRIMARY SCHOOL PARTNERSHIP
WITH VISUAL ARTISTS**

PROJECT ERASMUS+ CREATE

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Creative Primary School Partnership with Visual Artists
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And out of what one sees and hears and out
Of what one feels, who could have thought to make
So many selves, so many sensuous worlds,
As if the air, the mid-day air, was swarming
With the metaphysical changes that occur
Merely in living as and where we live.

WALLACE STEVENS

Esthétique du Mal (1944)

INTRODUCTION

This book represents one of the outputs from the project Erasmus + CREATE - Creative School Partnerships with Visual Artists. The project involved five European countries (Portugal, coordinating country, Spain, the United Kingdom, Sweden and Cyprus) and the international organisation INSEA. CREATE has assumed itself as a project for experimenting pedagogies based on contemporary art practices in primary schools, and has been co-funded with support from the European Commission (2015-1-PT01-KA201-012989). It aspired to foster creative spaces in education that would spark young students' active participation, willingness to experiment, cooperate, imagine, think and learn through contemporary art practices. CREATE focused on offering in-service teachers' training that would promote visual arts and the cooperation with visual artists to transform and enrich young children's school life.

In each of the countries involved in the project, as the reader will be able to assess from each chapter, the interpretations diverged, not just as outcomes from varied theoretical positions and different postures towards contemporary art, but also because of each country's history of the development of arts education. This element of divergence was regarded as one of the project's major strengths, showing us multiple perspectives of approaching the arts within education, through each partner's historical, cultural and political specificities. CREATE thus encouraged diversity and flexibility in designing and delivering the art projects. The chapter by Teresa Eça, Hester Elzerman and Maja Maksimović –all of which participated in CREATE's internal assessment, representing INSEA – makes clear this positioning, from all the information collected in interviews, in surveys, and in the analysis of CREATE's process of development. Teresa Eça brings out the internal discussion occurred in one of the transnational meetings that took place, which focused on the different understandings of contemporary art and its mobilization to the educational field:

After a long discussion about what are contemporary art practices and how those practices can be conducted with primary school students, it was agreed that the group should accept different concepts, acknowledging the diversity of theory and practice. It was agreed that each partner would use their own methodologies for teaching the arts in schools, the common guidelines would be respect for diversity in terms of concepts; strategies and teaching frameworks.

The authors seek out the different perspectives and places taken by each and every project's participant (teachers, artists and researchers), noting, however, that the children's voices could have been more enhanced during the gathering of information. Through the selection of some of the implemented artistic projects, they stress similarities and differences in the mobilization of artistic practices within the classroom, and analyze the pedagogical and didactical strategies, as well as their impact in the students, teachers, schools and local communities.

The addressed themes in each chapter are diverse. There are, however, recurring subjects which span them all: the place in education presently held by the arts, which are frequently relegated to a peripheral position relatively to the literacies, the mathematics, and the sciences; the training of teachers qualified to teach the arts in primary school; the importance of collaborative work between artists, teachers, and children, as a way to enhance and develop arts education; the way of planning and reflecting upon the various implemented projects within the schools; the artist's presence in school, and the numerous forms that that presence can adopt. There is also a feeling that goes through some of the chapters: of working from the notion of risk, of the unknown and, in a way, of creating gaps that resist the naturalization, and the sameness, of everyday life. This means that one of the forces played in this book is that of arts education as a space of resistance before the several powers that not only cross the arts and its mobilization within the educational field, but also our own practices as teachers, researchers and artists.

Alison Griffiths, John Johnston and Aileen Kelly talk about the development of CREATE in a London primary school. Their chapter is inextricable from a critical reading of the current political situation relatively to the investment in arts education within the United Kingdom. Not only has the number of hours dedicated to the arts decreased in the past few years, but also, regarding the teachers' training, this funding reduction has stopped the Continuous Professional Development's evolution. In their text they aim to map a framework to face this training of teachers, describing and analyzing CREATE's development in what it provided for the other directly involved participants. Choosing the artist for the development of the project 'Give a man [sic] a fish and you feed him for a day – Teach him how to fish and you feed him for a lifetime', was one of the main concerns of the United Kingdom's team. It was necessary to have

| an artist who displayed a confidence to articulate the own practice as
| well as having a clear understanding of the context the teachers will be

| working with.

In the artist's words, one of the chapter's authors, this was especially about working

with no defined outcome and trusting the process to reach a conclusion. It is important that teachers learn from art –that is that lessons can be open ended, students can find things out for themselves, find new avenues which helps their individual voice to come to the fore.

Nicoleta Avgousti and Fotini Larkou describe the work carried out in Cyprus and the way in which the children's personal histories were the starting point for all the mobilizing of the artistic practices within the classroom. The projects developed towards the approximation of children to the artists and their practices, always from a set of questions that put personal narratives at the center:

1. How did students interpret their personal stories and experiences verbally and visually? How do the students' artworks express their thoughts and feelings about their experiences?
2. What is the role of contemporary art as a strategy to help students express their personal stories and experiences?
3. Did the artist's engagement in the project inspire and bring new ideas and strategies in the process of teaching/learning?

From the start, the collaboration between artists, students and teachers was regarded towards the "demystification of contemporary art", be it through a direct contact with the artists, or, mainly, with their work processes and artwork production. This proximity was viewed as the possibility of one making art, thinking about art and teaching art in school.

To think about the artist's presence in school is also the goal in the chapter of two artists who developed projects in primary schools, in Portugal. Inês Azevedo and Joana Mateus acknowledge the school, because of the time spent there, and inscribe themselves in it with well-defined intents. They have opted for an intervening posture with which they define their action in the possibility of provoking changes in the children and in the school community. Seeing themselves in a place of mediation, and not as mediators, they have considered collaborative work as that place where

the processes of creation and production of knowledge could occur. The choice they made has determined that the curricular ingredients would be those that would feed artistic projects as well. However, it wasn't about a gesture of resignation before a set of true knowledges uttered, for example, by the sciences, but an attempt on cracking the curricular alchemy itself. As they argue,

We've considered that our ground and our matter should be the same as the teachers and students' and that we had to contribute stopping the curricula and the textbooks' aseptic aesthetic.

If the aseptic character they talk about refers to the curricular space that encloses itself in the face of a contamination of disorder-inducing agents, so does the text "(Im)possibilities and challenges of the arts in primary education. Can the art educator be a virus?" reflect upon that possibility of ripping the school apparatus's order. It's not about an easy change, as it states, but a(n) (im)possibility, as school structures itself in a set of naturalized practices that inhabit us as well. This chapter seeks to position CREATE within the Portuguese context, in the face of recent developments that put the arts under the eye of tests and assessment. Catarina Martins, Valentina Pereira and Ilda Sousa suggest glancing at an artist educator as a virus:

We contemplate a disobedient art educator entering a school as some entity going into an organism, starting to challenge its capacities. As a disobedient agent it enervates power and order, but it is also a movement against itself in which the art educator questions not only the normalized representations of pedagogy and schooling, but also those that come from the art world. What interests us in this idea, is to make room for an educational event through the 'artistic', that is not predicted.

The unknown is the place in which to be moved in Karin Hasselberg and Cecilia Wendt's work, the project developed in Sweden, also reported on by Katarina Back. The concept *utforska*, which could mean 'to explore', 'to delve' or 'to dig' in English, represented the intertwining between art and education, and the way in which artists, teachers and students inscribed themselves in that gesture. Karin explains that

instead of working with a specific medium, such as painting, or photography, our artistic practices are based in certain inquiries. It is the act of *utforskande* of these inquiries, that our work is entangled

with, thus part of the medium. (...) We never know what the next step will be. Nor do we know where we will end up.

Two time capsules were the outcome of the work:

both time capsules carry the message that they should be opened by the ‘third-graders’ at Kirsebergsskolan in 50 years from now. Present third graders are planning to attend

The idea of future is, perhaps, inseparable from each of the developed projects, be it as the artistic projects’ focus, like in Sweden’s case, or, for example, as a way to relate to the world and to integrate it, such as in Spain’s project. Maria Isabel Montoro, Ana Tirado, Karen Brow and Yolanda Espinosa describe a learning process in which the school is not contemplated as a ghetto where, every morning, childhood is placed, but as a space in “which we live and understand the world”. In a space of shared responsibility, arts education is understood as a field of action and of reflection in a community of practice. The attention to the world, to the being in the world and to the way in which we relate to the world around us, is one of the most remarkable aspects of the projects developed in Spain. Contemporary artistic practices were understood as a stance capable of generating action, much more than by the possible technical contents that they would inevitably mobilize:

It is for this reason that in artistic education, as content, contemporary practices substitute artistic techniques in a traditional concept and other means that today no longer have an objective. And most importantly, the way in which traditional techniques have participated in education used to be conceptually incorporated, and at the most procedural, performative or installation practices are incorporated into the structure of thought to become action

In another chapter called “The Artographic Experience in the Implementation of Artists in Primary Education”, by means of a visual essay, the reader will have access to captured fragments of the projects developed by the team of Jaén.

Mariana Delgado, another artist who developed a residency in Portugal, reflects upon the developed work, raising the doubts, the blocks and the impasses that intersected it. The school’s order and the imaginaries about the arts and about education tended to prevail. The shock brought up by the rise of themes (such as ‘violence’) and a

way of verbalizing them outside the school's grammars, imposed itself as the reality whose strength could mobilize the project that Mariana ended up developing with the children. In that place, she aimed at installing a workshop of story generating makings:

I didn't seek out to scrutinise the truthfulness of the episodes the children narrated because the truth and the lie in art are fundamental to operationalise experience. Imagination, memory and fiction are structures which allow the subjects to act and to position themselves in the re-interpretation of the reality that surrounds them, also providing the construction of meaning(s) within the artistic experience.

This gesture involved conflicts, challenges and disobediences, failures and successes.

Here, I've learnt with the children that disobedience is not an option, it's an urgency of discovering. It is urgent to disobey so as to provoke and to be provoked, to disturb and to be disturbed. It's urgent to disobey so as to think and to think ourselves. And we disobey searching for a place, even if unstable and temporary, in order to keep breathing in the asphyxia of school. The complexities of the discovery, and their unprecedented paths, belong to life and there's not (nearly) a place for them in school.

Artist Margarida Dias also worked in a Portuguese school. Her starting point was the idea of 'death', a theme which, despite having been a target of a great deal of attention for various fields within science and the arts for the last years, remains veiled to childhood. Through illustrated books and a process of discovery, where the artist sought to inhabit the same unknown she proposed to the children, the exploration of death was occurring:

The feeling of not knowing how the students, the teachers and the artist would react and what could happen was present across all the sessions. Although the sessions were thought in a way that we thought would avoid non-controlled situations, the fact is that unpredictability always followed the work. The adults (teachers-artist) had the control over the choice of the books, but could never predict the response of the students to the situations. With the role of an artist, I never had in mind to teach anything, but to offer opportunities for exchanging experiences and

| ‘opportunities for thinking’.

In her chapter, she seeks to cross a work process’s description with a critical thought about her place as an artist in the classroom. The questioning came and, even though her presence was seen as a ‘specialist’s’, she tried to go around that feeling, benefiting a work of collaboration and of deconstruction of the figure of the artist as an exceptional subject, even taking to the school one of the illustrators from the books that the group worked with.

In its whole, the texts here presented are revealing of the already pointed out different viewpoints, but precisely because of that, they are the clear expression of how contingent and arbitrary the ‘good practices’ here generated would always be. The local specificities and the time of arts education in each country are today very different, although there’s a common struggle: that of not making the artistic disappear from education.



he started building way before i was born

**CONTEMPORARY ART
AS A CURRICULUM STRATEGY**

TERESA EÇA | HESTER ELZERMAN | MAJA MAKSIMOVIC

ABSTRACT

This chapter brings out the issues regarding the different approaches to art education and to contemporary arts within the CREATETE projects. Similarities and differences in the experimented local CREATETE projects are discussed, illustrating the great variety and diversity of contemporary art tools used in the schools. Finally, curriculum strategies are analysed taking into account the impact of the project on the direct and indirect participants (students, artists, teachers, schools and local communities).

DATA

This chapter considers internal documents, such as reports from coordinators, project descriptions and photos and videos of the working process of the Portuguese projects – available at the official website of the project <http://createate.up.pt> and at the InSEA website <https://createate2016.wordpress.com> –, the answers of the teachers and artists to the final evaluation questionnaire from Spain, Portugal and Cyprus, the visual/audio questionnaires produced by artists, teachers and students from Cyprus, and the field notes taken by the Evaluation team during the CREATETE meetings and international training sessions. The data were analysed using text mine methods to find out frequencies of topics that resulted in a set of conclusions and recommendations grounded on the artistic practices that took place in the schools from the five European countries where the project took place. The principal categories obtained were: *Techniques and materials; Influence/role of the artist in the classroom; Identity; Artistic process/contemporary art; Influence on education/teaching process and Children learning (including motivation, empowerment, self-esteem)*. The conclusions of the study helped to set an evaluation list that may be of interest for further developments of educational work projects based on contemporary art in schools.

INTRODUCTION

**THE PROJECT: ON DIVERSITY OF APPROACHES:
PERMEABILITY**

The CREATE project was implemented in very different ways by the participating countries. Each partner adapted the objectives of the project to its own reality, respecting the local contexts. The project was flexible enough to allow the necessary plasticity to integrate different approaches to art education and contemporary art within a main framework of European education. The central question in this chapter is: How is contemporary art used as a curriculum strategy in the CREATE projects in five European countries?

After a long discussion about what are contemporary art practices and how those practices can be conducted with primary school students, it was agreed that the group should accept different concepts, acknowledging the diversity of theory and practice. It was agreed that each partner would use their own methodologies for teaching the arts in schools, the common guidelines would be respect for diversity in terms of concepts; strategies and teaching frameworks.

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NOTES FROM TRAINING SESSION / TERESA EÇA, EVALUATION TEAM
28 JANUARY 2015 / QUINTA DA CRUZ, VISEU (PORTUGAL)

The partnership was characterized by dialogue between Northern and Southern cultures. The participants from Cyprus, Portugal, Spain, England and Sweden were able to build a common ground for experimenting arts-based educational methodologies in primary schools considering the different approaches to education in each country. The number of schools; teachers; artists and students involved varied from country to country, as well as the methods of implementation. In Portugal and Spain, the artists proposed the local projects to the generalist teachers. In Spain, artists and generalist teachers had strong support from the University of Jaén to develop the projects in four primary schools of the Province of Jaén. In Portugal, fourteen artists worked with generalist teachers in fourteen schools in different areas of the country. In Cyprus the project was led by a team of researchers from the Pedagogical Institute; art teachers and artists who designed the thirteen projects with the support of the Ministry of Education in different parts of the Greek side of Cyprus. In England the approach was based on initial teacher training: one artist trained the generalist teachers in the first year and, in the second year, the teachers

used contemporary art processes in their work with students in a primary school at the city of London. In Sweden, the two artists worked closely with the teachers in one school of Malmö city. Despite the huge differences in numbers and educational contexts, in all the local projects analysed at the CREARTE website and presentations during the partners meetings there was a common concept about the arts in education, as a subject to explore and experiment without having predetermined answers reflecting the findings of Winner *et al* (2013) in the OECD report about art education:

But for all children, the arts allow a different way of understanding than the sciences and other academic subjects. Because they are an arena without right and wrong answers, they free students to explore and experiment. They are also a place to introspect and find personal meaning.

- WINNER ET AL, 2013, p.21

In the projects, the methodologies and practices were characterized by flexibility and adaptability to the local contexts. The arts were approached as the domain of the unknown, the constant discovery of multiple pathways and solutions. The art practices observed in the project reflected a wide array of methods, processes, and productions. Through them, artists and teachers engaged the

participants in dialogue, questioning and interacting; new pedagogical possibilities were created in relational spaces of learning, implementing participatory methodologies of teaching and learning. The common pedagogical approach based on artistic processes of discovering and experimenting raised questions within specific contexts of action, echoing Atkinson: ‘pedagogies of the event, in order to respond to acts of learning that involve leaps of becoming into a new or reconfigured world’ (ATKINSON, 2012).

From the results of the *International Questionnaire* conducted by InSEA, 27-11-2016/26-01-2017, aimed at collecting the responses from the teachers, the most important aspects of the cooperation for teachers were related with learning about new methods, art materials, techniques and sharing practices at an international level. According to the teachers, students had the opportunity to learn from real artists how to develop their imagination and creativity through artistic processes. However, the questionnaire was very limited and only fourteen replies from Cyprus, three from Portugal and four from Spain were received.

It was observed, through the photographs and videos in the website and those presented during the meetings about the project in progress, that students were involved in activities that provided new ways of understanding

a problem situation, and were a source of new ideas, thus fostering creativity. The teaching strategies were deeply influenced by artists' process of questioning: reflection and discovery. Like other creative processes, artistic work involves memory and researching relevant resources, response generation and response evaluation (AMABILE, 1990). Creative activities were carried out in all the CREATTE local projects in different ways and through very different art languages, materials, and techniques –from the most traditional to the most contemporary. One example of this creativity aspect of the projects can be found in the Project developed by artist Mara Maravilha for the primary school of Torredeita, Portugal:

Empty box. This box can become what you want, what you imagine... From an empty box can things grow? How can an empty space transform itself in something else? What is a box? For what good is a box? What's the meaning of empty? (...) And if from an empty box we could give birth to things? What would you do? What you would need?

MARA MARAVILHA, PROJECT DESCRIPTION, CREATE WEBSITE

During the project, artist Mara, teacher Rosa and students from the primary school in Torredeita, had the possibility to 'materialize' their own thinking and

capacities of creating in past, present and future, experimenting and sensory testing objects and materials, with their characteristics / technical and expressive potential; the children were asked to invent from a card box.

The empty box was "a project where children explored time and space fostering the power of dream, imagination and appreciation to feel, to think; to invent..."

MARA MARAVILHA, NOTES FROM FIELDWORK, MAY 2016

Similarly, other projects in the different countries helped children to discover, explore and experiment time, space, and identities through artistic processes of memory and by researching relevant resources, response generation and response evaluation.

HOW CONTEMPORARY ART INFLUENCED THE CONTENT OF THE PROJECTS

[1] THROUGH THE TEACHER TRAINING

In Cyprus an important training for the teachers was held, including an artists' seminar, keynotes about 'citizen identification and contemporary art' by Rachel Macon and Susan Ogier and workshops 'craftism', and 'collaborative artworks'. The influence of the training

is found in the projects accomplished in the primary schools, for example, 'A Better School, a Better Society, a Better World' and 'Cultural traditions: Unique and Unifying'.

We developed a model of collaborative learning between trainers, teachers and artists to construct ongoing learning through sharing ideas, theories and experiences.

This model was explained to the artists in the local training session held in January in Viseu. In this model the trainers are not separate elements, they are part of the implementation acting with artists and teachers in peer learning. This approach to training follows philosophy and theories on contemporary art and relational aesthetics, where knowledge is constructed collaboratively by artist actions that are reflective and projective.

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IN PORTUGAL, THE UNIVERSITY OF PORTO AND INSEA DEVELOPED A TRAINING FOR TEACHERS

The projects '(Un)predictable landscapes' and 'Appre(e)nder – dialogue map of artistic practices and local cultures' show traces of this training. The training in the United Kingdom, at Goldsmiths University, was developed and conducted by the artist Aileen Kelly. A group of teachers from a primary school, graduating students from Goldsmiths'

primary school teacher education programme, tutors and the head of primary teacher education at Goldsmiths participated in this training. What was very important is that the artist put an emphasis on the process instead of the product.

I wanted to build the participants' repertoire of skills and develop their understanding of contemporary art and the various issues that artists work with in current times. Once they had developed some techniques the participants were in a position to use them later in the project if they wanted to but not necessary

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AILEEN KELLY, ARTIST, UNITED KINGDOM

While the project did have a theme, it was very open ended, and the artist encouraged each person

...to focus on the process of making, letting each stage influence the next. This open ended approach encouraged a process of trial and error. For some this was difficult, as they really wanted to have a clear objective – something to achieve. This is something that I feel is important to contemporary art – that is the openness and possibilities to find new ways of thinking and making through

the process of actually making. So it isn't really failure, it is taking risks to go somewhere that you didn't intend to and this is important to be creative

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AILEEN KELLY, ARTIST, UNITED KINGDOM

The result of this training was that the participants made very unique and individual sculptures and *brought their own personal stories and ideas into solid form*, even though they had all started with the same materials.

[2] THROUGH THE ARTIST / TEACHER COLLABORATION

Different projects – different aspects

The artists and teachers were connected in different ways in the five countries. In Cyprus, the teachers selected the artists and communicated directly with them so that they would have a close connection from the start.

Some teachers have chosen the artist, knowing his art work, to learn his technique

-
TEREZA LAMBRIANOU
COORDINATOR, CYPRUS

The teachers led the process, because they are the experts of “the needs and peculiarities of the school and the students”, according to the coordinators. One of them continues:

But the artist / teacher collaboration was influential in developing ideas and connecting with specific artists' works or techniques. Our goal was to ensure the pedagogical validity of this collaboration, which would be enriched with new ideas and techniques. Within this framework, the educators and the artists worked together for designing and implementing the project

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GENETHLIS GENETHLIOU
COORDINATOR, CYPRUS

After the teacher selected the artist and had contacted her or him, they planned and organized the project together.

The project was designed according to the Visual Arts Curriculum

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GENETHLIS GENETHLIOU
COORDINATOR, CYPRUS

Another reason to let the teachers have the lead is their knowledge of this curriculum. But the artists also had influence:

Some project ideas were directly connected with their specific artworks, others were indirectly influenced by artists' themes or artistic interests

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GENETHLIS GENETHLIOU
COORDINATOR, CYPRUS

In Sweden the coordinators coupled the teachers with artists whom they knew were preoccupied with learning. In the United Kingdom teachers were trained themselves. In Portugal some artists found teachers to work with, and in other projects InSEA/APECV coupled artists and teachers, as did the University of Jaén in Spain.

So, there were different starting points: teachers who wanted to learn from artists, teachers who were trained to work as artists, teachers who were coincidentally involved and artists who were chosen because of the use of specific materials or techniques, or because they showed in their work a dialogue provoking method. But in all five countries the teachers and artists collaborated in the preparation and performance of the projects.

[3] TEACHER AS A PEDAGOGUE - ARTIST AS A SPECIALIST

When a teacher and an artist are working from their own roles, their collaboration can have very positive effects, as is shown in *Reggio Emilia*. In this child centre the ‘*pedagogisti*’ and ‘*atelieristi*’ work together to let the children take the lead. In most of the Create projects the teacher and the artist collaborated at every stage of the project.

| We complemented each other;

one passing knowledge and technique, the other organizing the teaching process to the children

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ELENA HADJIPIERI
TEACHER, CYPRUS

I think that is really important to have collaboration between teachers and artist, and students, because it is not just to give an experience, it is to construct an experience together

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LORENA CUEVA RAMÍREZ
ARTIST-RESEARCHER, SPAIN

The importance of the role of the teacher as pedagogue is emphasized by a Portuguese artist. She noticed that sometimes the children were very disconnected from each other. The teacher can manage the dynamics of the class and keep an eye on the wellbeing of each child. In Spain an artist says that she worked every moment with teachers, who were interested in the project.

I needed that our work was totally collaborative, and it was only possible if they were really involved in that. It was really good to work in this way, because the teachers knew who the students were and they helped me to have a nearest contact with the students

-
LORENA CUEVA RAMÍREZ
ARTIST-RESEARCHER, SPAIN

Different roles / qualities of the artists

In these complementary roles the artists strongly influenced the content of the projects. Artists teaching in schools adhere to a long tradition of teaching-artists in different contexts.

JAMES DAICHENDT discussed the concept of the artist-teacher (among many others) and listed characteristics applicable to both old and contemporary practices. He derived them from the notes of a 19th century artist-teacher, George Wallis:

- 1) teaching should be a direct extension of studio life;
- 2) artist-teachers manipulate classroom techniques, materials and characteristics similar to the artists' manipulation of the elements and principles of design;
- 3) they apply artistic aptitudes (drawing, painting, performance) in educational contexts to enrich the learning experience.

EXAMPLE: exploring lessons in a sketchbook (DAICHENDT, 2010).

In the CREATE projects influences of the contemporary art background of the artists are clearly visible.

However, there is a danger to misunderstand the role of an artist

as Messiah that brings salvation to the obsolete school system. Such vision centralizes power and feeds the myth of the genius artist. Artists will not bring fantastic solutions to the didactics. They can only work with teachers in collaboration and bring their art expertise to develop motivating strategies for students; improve teachers' self-confidence in working with the arts, fostering work projects' methodologies, and enabling more dialogical educational tools through art practices (TERESA, NOTES, 2016). Therefore, the positions are not fixed, but continuously re-negotiated and emerging.

In some projects **contemporary art is directly referred to:**

It is important to note that I began each workshop with a slide show of contemporary art. We looked at work, which related to the theme of 'Home' and while some images related directly to the theme, others seemed to be unconnected. I wanted them to see a of variety images, ideas and techniques and not just images related what they would be working on that particular session. I did not want them to latch onto a particular style or be seen to direct ideas- I wanted them to form their own unique language and approach

AILEEN KELLY, ARTIST, UNITED KINGDOM

In Cyprus the artist of the project 'Sailing: my personal journey' brought sculptures to the classrooms to view and discuss them with the children (Presentation FOTINI LARKOU, Jaén, November 2016). Other ways in which **contemporary art influenced art education** are discussed in the next part.

ARTISTS STIMULATING CHILDREN TO THINK ABOUT LIFE AND THE WORLD

In the CREATE projects some artists started discussions with the children, asking questions about life and the world. The Swedish artists based their method on the work of Biesta, who related to Freire's and Rancière's ideas on education. Discussing questions or problems about life or about the world is important in education because, in this way, it can be avoided that the teacher prepares lessons, deciding for the children what they would learn; in which small steps. Freire developed a 'problem-posing' method of education in which the children are active and equal to the teacher. Rancière adds that the child has already learned to speak in a natural way, without a teacher explaining it step by step. Arriving at school, the child already can speak and think (Biesta & Bingham, 2010). The Swedish artists discussed a lot about the universe and time with the pupils. In this way the children can 'reconcile

themselves with reality in order to feel at home in the world' (ARENDETT, 1994 *cited by* BIESTA, 2017).

This coincides with art in various forms: continuous attempts to discover what it means to be in dialogue with the world (BIESTA, 2017). In art we reflect upon life, and art can be seen as a way to deal with the tensions caused by differences between life or the world and our memory (VAN HEUSDEN, 2011, 2015). The educational pedagogical question 'how to enter and stay in dialogue with the world is also the question that the arts are dealing with. The 'educational moment' is in the 'act' of art, in 'doing art'. This is the endless exploration of meeting the other and what it could mean to be in the world. Making forms that make existence-in-dialogue possible (BIESTA, 2017). As Maxine Greene remarked, in a technological society, it is necessary to remind people what it means to be alive among others, to achieve freedom in dialogue with others (GREENE 1988, VELLA 2016).

The head of primary teacher education at Goldsmiths, Alison Griffiths, considers the artists' practice of the three-piece whole – hand, heart and head – important. She also draws connections between the pedagogies of Freire and Biesta and the way contemporary artists work. The Critical Pedagogy of Freire means education based on dialogue and critical thinking to transform society.

Biesta continues to develop this idea by empowering teachers in the same way as contemporary artists work: not a structured learning, but education that addresses pupils, that reaches pupils as subjects (ALISON GRIFFITHS, COORDINATOR, UK).

ARTIST PRACTICES

The emphasis on the process instead of the project, the artistic process of exploring, was very important in most of the CREATE projects. Some of the artists introduced the “open-endedness” of contemporary art practices as a guiding principle of the learning activities:

For me it is about working with no defined outcome and trusting the process to reach a conclusion. It is important that teachers learn from art – that is that lessons can be open ended, students can find things out for themselves, find new avenues which helps their individual voice to come to the fore

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AILEEN KELLY, ARTIST, UNITED KINGDOM

“The process of thinking, for example accepting mistakes, embracing mistake, embracing randomness, embracing some results that don’t have a good or a bad stamp”, is mentioned by Mariana Mendes Delgado, a Portuguese artist as

an important aspect of her project.

In art that is not a good or bad or beautiful or ugly work. And they’re always expecting this bios response from you. But you cannot tell them is it good or bad. Of course, in a technical way you can say if it is good or bad, but that’s not the point of making these activities with them. The point for them is to explore to find some strategies to express and at the same time to go deeper in their own creative and imaginative thoughts. So, to connect body, mind, and this exterior world that is there, that we all live in and make sense of. That’s my main goal

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MARIA MENDES DELGADO,
ARTIST, PORTUGAL

This goal was also pursued by artist AILEEN KELLY, leading the process in the UK. As already mentioned, this training was aimed at making the participants become aware of the importance of the making, the process, not the end product. Aileen also explains how she accompanied this process.

I kept a record of what the students were writing and their ideas in sketchbooks. I felt I had to ‘come across learning’ with them. I really did not want to lead them and tried to draw

back in the final stages so they could find their own voice and ways to represent their ideas. I wanted to avoid the temptation to supply them with answers and this meant I had to be quite disciplined and not drive the content or take the lead. You have to show that you understand the challenge but that you do not have the answers. You have to be gentle with them, but also excited about the possibilities to help encourage and support them

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AILEEN KELLY, ARTIST, UNITED KINGDOM

ARTISTS AS RESEARCHERS

In Sweden the artists took one step back and let research lead the process. The Swedish word '*utforskatt*' shows that artists and children are in the process of doing research, meaning

exploration, to have some things that you really want to go into and explore in different ways and as an artist you can use very different tools and materials and activities and so on to explore something and I think children should be able to do the same in school

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INA ALM
COORDINATOR, SWEDEN

The artists clarify:

the way we work as artists is: we do not know where we end. The destination of what we do is not defined beforehand. The word *utforskatt* is often translated as 'explore' in English, though that is not an exact translation of the word. Other suggestions for translation is 'dig into' or 'investigate'. This word *utforskatt* allows you to do something but you don't know beforehand what is going to happen. It means having research questions, inquiring into something, but it takes some time. We allowed ourselves to take time of not knowing, but it is difficult within the school. We tried to bring them into a process. We are not afraid of that way of working. We are very familiar with working like that. It is not that we do not know anything.

It showed that it was important to take time with this process

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CECILIA WENDT
ARTIST, SWEDEN

The CREARTE project added a new understanding of this process because the children explored the school and its history.

The artists didn't have any idea what they wanted to do when they came to the school; it came up from what the children had

been working with before and their discussions with the groups

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INA ALM
COORDINATOR, SWEDEN

The way the artists worked with the children was very similar to the way children usually play. At the same time, the children were addressed as subjects; they thought about concepts of time in relation to their own lives and the world.

We had the same inquiries in both classes, because they were working on the subject of evolution. That is part of the curriculum in Sweden (...). So then we talked about evolution, how do we understand time. 'Time' became an issue, so we agreed to work with time. The future can also allow you to talk, the sci-fi genre can also allow you to talk about the contemporary

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CECILIA WENDT
ARTIST, SWEDEN

decided to work with:

very low materials and daily materials that you could find in trash: plastic, paper, bags, everything that is on hand, at least to show the kids and the teacher that you can do arts, artistic works without spending too much money. First that is a priority, give them the tools the most practical and the available tools to work with. I'm starting to work from materials from nature, also was important and also to know the nature of materials. So, for example and brush instead of find a brush or brushes two used I decided to build with than the brushes. A broom was, it is it the Broom, and the Chinese sticks, some paper, some paper glue, paper tape, for example, to build brushes. Instead of buying paper, we built paper, recycled paper

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MARIA MENDES DELGADO,
ARTIST, PORTUGAL

ARTISTS AS INVENTORS

The use of plain materials, apparent in Portuguese and Spanish projects and in the teachers training in the UK, is strongly influenced by contemporary art practices of the last decades. On the subject of the materials that she used, a Portuguese artist, who was connected to a school in a poor neighbourhood,

Aileen Kelly tells:

I had given them 4 metre long strips of wood, string and glue guns. I am in favour of making things with limited resources, making things with basic materials. I wanted them to look at this very bland material and figure out a way in which

they could make it meaningful,
say something more than the
material itself

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AILEEN KELLY, ARTIST, UNITED KINGDOM

ARTISTS ENGAGING WITH COMMUNITIES

Another feature of contemporary art, brought by artists to the schools in the five countries, was the connection with communities. Art in the last three decades has often set up situations in which viewers and participants are not just addressed as a collective but are also given means to create a community (BISHOP, 2004). So, for the artist it is obvious to dig into the history and tradition of a community, and to try to connect with people from the neighbourhood. The artist,

coming from another area,
was more aware of these other
areas, was able to get to know
from older people and from the
students who visited these areas
and try to include them in the
project

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ALEXIA PHILIPPOU
ARTIST, CYPRUS

The Portuguese projects 'Apre)ender - Dialogue map of artistic practices and local cultures' and 'Staged Cities' are clear examples of the practice of contemporary art engaging with

communities.

The art projects led by artists and teachers were participatory, aiming, in a certain sense, to engage with the community for transformative experiences in local contexts, such as, for example, school living space, anthropological contexts (memories, life histories, identities, local culture), environmental awareness and citizenship awareness. Meaning was created through the interplay between the artist, the teacher, in some cases, and students who bring their personal world-view and experiences into play, creating an art product or event. The artwork became an experience in itself (GADAMER, 2013), a learning experience convoking many kinds of knowledge through the process of co-creativity (LEAVY, 2015).

The selection of the artists maybe had influence on the community engagement aspect, as said by Alison Griffiths. Aileen Kelly was selected by Goldsmiths because she is a socially engaged artist. For her, it was clear that the projects should be participatory:

I kept it open, so that personal
stories could come through

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AILEEN KELLY, ARTIST, UNITED KINGDOM

Teachers from John Donne Primary School, who were trained by Aileen, worked together with Alana, their colleague with an artistic background,

in community engaged projects with the pupils.

Pupils were designing buildings for an empty plot of land near to the school, they were encouraged to think about their community and to think about what their community needs, we looked at social housing issues/ homelessness/ youth crime and other social issues in Peckham and the pupils were encouraged to reflect on these in their work. (...) They made models of secondary schools, homeless shelters, youth centres, etc... they fully engaged in the needs of their own local area. The pupils were totally engaged and inspired throughout the project and full of enthusiasm, driven by a sense of purpose!

ALANA REVELL-ROHR, TEACHER / ARTIST,
UNITED KINGDOM

In Portugal one of the main criteria for the call launched by InSEA and University of Porto coordinators to select artists was their capacity for participatory and community engagement in their work. Artist Mariana expressed:

When I work, I try to treat on social topics. I believe that art is created to shake consciences and, for that reason, in my opinion

the people, who are lucky to be employed at the field of the arts, have the obligation to approach the aspects, situations and problems of our society

MARIA MENDES DELGADO,
ARTIST, PORTUGAL

Similar criteria were used in Cyprus, where artists were selected by teachers, and Spain, where artists were selected by the University of Jaén. In the case of the Swedish partner, the artists were already part of the Buff Films organization and were used to working with schools using participatory methods. In Sweden and Cyprus, the curriculum is structured on thematic areas, and, as the coordinator from Cyprus GENETHLIS GENETHLIOU said, the social issues are an important aspect that teachers have to include in their work planning.

A few projects actively involved communities of parents and immigrants. Furthermore, other projects dealt with issues that had a social aspect e.g. migration, refugees, transgender prejudices

GENETHLIS GENETHLIOU
COORDINATOR, CYPRUS

In Portugal and Spain, the curriculum is broad enough to integrate interdisciplinary work projects. Teachers from the five schools visited by the evaluation team in Portugal and in the three schools of Jaén were willing to do

so and took the opportunity to integrate the projects in their regular program.

Some projects dealt with local identities strongly infused by community issues, especially in Cyprus, where the divide and conflict is present in the daily life of teachers and parents:

In the way our project raised awareness of a territory military occupied and the memories of the people who were violent displaced. Yes, in this sense it involved social engagement and cultural remembrance

ELENA HADJIPIERI
TEACHER, CYPRUS

As the subject had to do with the occupied area it brought up memories by one hand from the stuff about their beloved areas and on the other hand of the students, the way they report to it showing understanding of the political situation

ALEXIA PHILIPPOU
ARTIST, CYPRUS

One important aspect of the projects was not only the fact that they dealt with community issues, but the degree of the students' involvement in decision making, respecting children's voices and ways of participation, that, through the arts, could be more effective. As Ina Alm wrote, because

these methods really make the children more engaged and it gives room for their ideas, it is not only we're coming to the school as artists and telling them what to do and have nice methods, it is also very inclusive. (...)

One important thing from the first project, the purpose was to develop ways for children to be more active participants in decision making and we could see from the structures, the normal structures from the school and decision making and how children were formally involved in what they could be part of in school, it was very much grown up structures. You go to meetings, you talk to each other, you have the democratic process where you put your hand up, and it is good, everything is good, but the children didn't really feel that they were part, they went along in a way, but they didn't really feel that they influenced the decisions and when we started that project, Cecilia and Karin, the task for them was to find ways for children to feel that they really were like being decision makers, so from that point of view, we found out that if the way of working, the methods and the material used and the process

in a way, when this process was more like how children used to act when they are playing they got more involved in a way, and those methods were the methods that Karin and Cecilia also used as artists. So, we found that there were like links

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INA ALM
COORDINATOR, SWEDEN

For artist Mariana, from Portugal, the social context of the school influenced the way she developed the project:

It's a problematic context. It's a very difficult environment. It's drugs and alcohol. So, true out the drawings, collage, and paintings that I saw. I saw some references to wine, alcohol very often... We need to understand what is behind it... So, it's a daily thing in that neighborhood, police reality, drugs abuse, alcohol abuse, domestic abuse and so on

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MARIA MENDES DELGADO,
ARTIST, PORTUGAL

In Malmö, the contexts were quite overwhelming:

We didn't force them to talk about the local it was the pupils that brought this along. The local cultures and identity. They talked a lot about the local, about

the school, what happened there. Like fires, dangerous things, when they feel insecure. We made 'Frottages' (you put a paper on a surface and then you rub with a pencil) of these specific places where something had burned or had been destroyed or something had happened. Accidents at the schoolyard. They talked a lot about outside world. I was shocked actually. So much violence. They talked about wars. And many of the students are refugees. Very often when we talked it was like: "In Syria we do this and that; this happened to me in Syria", and so on. A lot of these things; not just the locally in Malmö

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CECILIA WENDT
ARTIST, SWEDEN

Just as for Mariana, the context was also a need for community engagement for Lorena, working as an artist at a school in Jaén.

In this project, there was a socially engaged aspect involved, because I worked with a school where the 90% are gypsy students and they are from the most conflictive neighborhood of my city ...This project connects the community, families, students, and teachers from an art perspective. Without any

doubt, this project allows us to discover new abilities not only in our students but also in their families

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LORENA CUEVA RAMÍREZ
ARTIST-RESEARCHER, SPAIN

In the Projects from Jaén, Spain, there was a need to address community engagement issues, as a political action aiming to transform the society by involving all users, enhancing school and local community collaboration. This was quite evident in many artists and teachers' statements from Jaén. As Lorena stressed out, they worked to

establish constructive relationships between artists - teachers - pupils - professionals - parents - other members of the society... Parents were invited and took part in the project, along with their children and the artists...

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LORENA CUEVA RAMÍREZ
ARTIST-RESEARCHER, SPAIN

A great exhibition of students and teachers' artworks 'What about you' was held in a well reputed museum of Jaén. The opening was during the CREARTE international meeting in Jaén, so students and parents were invited to share the event with the international guests. In Cyprus the evaluation team also observed the participation of the community in the display of projects;

a great exhibition was held in a well-known gallery of Limassol where the artists' and the students' artworks were shown side by side before the international guests and citizens of Limassol. In projects in Cyprus and Spain, murals were created around the city with the students. Student-teachers displayed their works in Goldsmiths, and students from the primary school in Sweden created a time capsule with their artworks to be kept in the local library. Such practices raise the validity of students' artworks and the value of art in education, as well as increase the students' self-esteem and community empowerment through art in schools. Artistic ways of thinking, reflecting, and making, as relational processes allow participatory actions, which are the core of community arts engagement, as Aileen Kelly put it:

Art allows you to have a voice, your own voice. Another student asked the public to engage in her ideas by writing responses in a book. Her work was about her childhood and the pain of her parents divorce. She exhibited a letter that she had written to her father when she was young. Art gave them a more refined context to deal with such delicate questions. Art allows you to have a voice, your own voice. Everybody produced something completely different and art

encouraged them to tell their personal stories. It would be great if primary students could have this experience

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AILEEN KELLY, ARTIST, UNITED KINGDOM

was uncertain of her work. But because of the presentation, and the reactions it provoked, a shift took place in her identity

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ALISON GRIFFITHS
COORDINATOR, UNITED KINGDOM

However, the projects were not fixed by a rigid structure for lesson plans, rather, they enabled flexibility and adaptation. This non-directive approach from the main coordinators was in accordance with arts based pedagogies and creativity theories where the context is a main factor to develop learning processes. In the beginning some main topics were addressed, but the participatory aspect of art making allowed broadness and respect for the participants' interests. For example, at Goldsmiths:

The initial plan was to address the themes of home, displacement and belonging, in a wider context and in connection with the conference on working with refugees. But 'home' became more related to the smaller context of the identity of the participants. The theme of 'home / belonging', caused reflections about identity of the participants. As the exhibition of the artworks of the students showed, it was a very prolific theme; it provoked very intimate feelings, as they conveyed in their work. Before the exhibition a teacher cried, because she

The projects developed and enabled views about local cultures and identities, but also about other cultures from a community art gaze. As TEREZA LAMBRIANOU said

CREATE dealt with topics or ideas related to the socio-cultural and educational backgrounds of the students both from local and other cultures

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TEREZA LAMBRIANOU
COORDINATOR, CYPRUS

Two main approaches can be considered in CREATE: one, oriented more to the artist-teacher, where the students were provoked by the facilitator artist/teachers to think about community emergent issues, and another driven more by children's requirements to artist-teachers.

The children made the local maps. Because they were so busy talking about where they live and what they wanted to put in the time capsule, they wanted to tell stories about where they live, (...) the local community"

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CECILIA WENDT
ARTIST, SWEDEN

ARTIST AS VISITOR

The new educational practices born out of collaboration and dialogue, negotiate and invent new positions for teachers and learners that transcend existing dualism between the subject who knows and the one who is taught, deconstructing the centres of knowledge. Artist, teachers and students find themselves entangled in the complex multidirectional relationships (ŠUVAKOVIĆ, 2008).

Artists join the activity of producing novel ways of seeing education and pedagogy. Ellsworth (2005) calls for the creation of the anomalous space of learning which she explains as “highly charged event potentials that promise surprise and constantly challenge us with new and unexpected questions” (p.11).

The artist role was very important, it was a role of a visitor. Like students visit museums to see the work of artists, this was the other way around, the artist came to the school to work with students

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NICOLETA AVGOUSTI
COORDINATOR, CYPRUS

A visitor offers a way to rethink the practice of pedagogy. One of the project coordinators emphasizes how the presence of the artist in the school

...is always a kind of a strange body that provokes something different in the schools in terms of questioning the time, the way the classes are organized, the methodologies, the ways of looking... Among the successes of the project were definitely these kinds of challenges and destabilizations that were provoked within the school

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CATARINA S. MARTINS
COORDINATOR, PORTUGAL

In Spain this role of the artist was also noticed:

So, I think that it is really important to make a kind of intervention and critical intervention. Artists can open the possibility of thinking the other ways of developing these fields in the schools

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LORENA, ARTIST-RESEARCHER, SPAIN

As Richardson (2017) argues, the belief that learning takes place when a subject is thought is deeply rooted in our understanding of knowledge and reinforced through the physical and cultural structures of the school. The body in schooling is defined not by its quality or movement, but by its positioning. Massumi (2002) suggests that there is a grid of cultural coding (male-female, student-teacher and so on) to which a body corresponds; “It

came to be defined by its pinning to the grid” (MASSUMI, 2002, p. 2). The body performs within its definitional framework that distributes bodies in space, responding to the architecture of the classroom which shapes and constructs possible movements. It can change the positions, but “movement is entirely subordinated to the positions it connects. These are predefined” (MASSUMI, 2002, p. 4). Each subject finds the rightful place to be and usual movements are, as Mariana calls them, micro-movements that have a distinct purpose related to learning outcomes. The question is how artistic activities can reshape space for new sensations and movements to inhabit the classroom. “How can the grid change itself?” (MASSUMI, 2002, p. 4).

So, this project was interesting because when I told them you can draw, paint, collage, whatever, on the floor if you feel that you have more space. They were totally: “Can we”, and I’m like: “Yes, you can if you feel more comfortable go on the floor and draw on the floor”. Or you don’t have to put the tables in this position; you can change tables, and so on. So they were very happy to feel their bodies freed inside this class and to use the whole body, because they are only used to use and very microscopic, like micro-

movements”

- MARIANA DELGADO | ARTIST, PORTUGAL

An invitation to students to shape the learning places offers an insight into new possibilities of teaching and learning that challenges existing educational order and allows undefined positions of teachers and students.

TEACHER’S LEARNING

The notion of an artist as a visitor that initiates the rethinking of the main pedagogical concepts and educational structures is supported by teachers’ insights after the projects were realized:

It was important to understand that finding another way of educating is possible and to know new ways of working in education. We transformed classrooms into an aesthetic environment

- TEACHER, SPAIN

The artist’s visit, which involved planning of the lesson based on dialogue with teachers and students, was a space of exchange:

For me it was important the design of a project with a professional artist and opportunity to exchange ideas, methodologies and techniques”

- TEACHER, SPAIN

The teachers reported that before the project they were afraid to work with arts, but after the experience within the CREATE they felt more confident to organize new projects following contemporary art practices.

Now they believe in it, they saw it working. Hopefully it will become a routine

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NICOLETA AVGOUSTI
COORDINATOR, CYPRUS

A Spanish artist-researcher reports that the way that her artistic work influenced the project was in the cooperative vision.

As artist I like to work in a cooperative way, I like to listen the opinion of other people, to know what kind of topics are interesting for the community and society, because I believe that everyone can enrich a project, and artwork or whatever idea with his point of view

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LORENA, ARTIST-RESEARCHER, SPAIN

The teachers appreciated the project because

It gives us (teachers and students) the opportunity to interact with professional artists sharing new perspectives that enrich our work at school. It also allows students to discover new point of views out of their context. It brings

us fresh air into the artistic subject at school. Working with the artist, new art methods, meet artists and exchange ideas. Finding another way of educating is possible. To find new ways of working in education, transforming classrooms into aesthetic environments

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TEACHER, JAEN, SPAIN

The unique role of visitor enables the artist the freedom to disregard the learning outcomes defined by the curriculum, which is somewhat an outsider's privileged position that allows him or her to explore alternative learning possibilities and liberates classes from the preparation for assessment. Working together with teachers and pupils provides insights into "both what art can be, but also what learning can be beyond the parameters of reproduction, packaged knowledge, traditional skills and the pragmatic and predictable application of knowledge" (ATKINSON, 2012, p. 7).

It made me re-evaluate why our education system exists. Do we send children to remember facts? No, we send children to school to develop skills which help them to become productive members of society. Through creating their projects, children have developed many of these skills which will help them throughout their

lives. In future, I will always consider what life skills a child is developing when I am setting up activities

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LUCY DOWNER
TEACHER, UNITED KINGDOM

In the United Kingdom the teacher training gave the teachers time to reflect on their practice:

Enrolment in the project increased the wellbeing of teachers caused by the time given to reflect, to focus on themselves. The training helped to reflect. The contemporary art practice gave them an outlet from the stress they felt

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ALISON GRIFFITHS
COORDINATOR, UNITED KINGDOM

The project coordinator's impression is supported by the teacher insights that participation in the training enabled them to become more self-aware and reconsider their own practice:

The project allowed me to focus on improving my teaching of art and allow those children who feel they are bad at school to be good at something.

This was helped by me having had the experience of feeling like I couldn't do something in making my own art project as I always did well at school and

previously struggled to relate to children who saw themselves as failures

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LUCY DOWNER
TEACHER, UNITED KINGDOM

A common theme of contemporary art is identity and many artists tackled this issue, exploring various identities (cultural, local, gender, ethnic, etc.). This aspect of the activities influenced teachers to discover more about the particular context of their pupils. Artists invited children to share their experiences, personal stories and together create art based on what they shared.

This collaboration influenced teachers to adopt strategies that we were using during the project. For example we were speaking very much with the pupils to know a bit more about them

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LORENA CUEVA RAMÍREZ
ARTIST-RESEARCHER, SPAIN

It was crucial to listen.

For the most of the time I listened to their stories. You know sometimes is not about the judging. It's not about saying: "Oh it's not good for you, you are 8 years old why you are drinking wine". That's the teachers, what the teachers did. Yeah, like you should not drink, you should not

whatever. But, if I didn't allow them to talk about it, the teacher wouldn't know. So, sometimes you don't want to listen, because you don't want to know. And sometimes the case is just to listen whatever the conversation is about

MARIANA DELGADO
ARTIST, PORTUGAL

Most teachers reported that it was important learning for them to gain knowledge and skills about new techniques and materials:

Therefore as an art teacher I had the opportunity to acquire knowledge about the techniques and how to apply it with the children. It has been a very rewarding opportunity to work with the artists in the school project

ELENA HADJIPIERI
TEACHER, CYPRUS

Richardson (2017) makes an argument that “conventional art educational processes variously involve attention to materials, content, skills, appreciation, and interpretation. As such, a pedagogical approach to learning with and through these elements looks little different from similar approaches in other disciplines” (p. 11). However, within the project, learning new techniques was in the context

of contemporary art practices. The importance of learning new techniques was not only acquiring new skills; rather, it was learning about new possibilities and approaches to dealing with materials. The work of artists inspired the teachers to think about various ways in which they can use everyday materials such as newspapers, postcards, garbage and turn them into artistic objects.

This experience gave the teachers novel perspectives on how to research possible resources and how to choose materials that respond to schools' and children's specific environments. The teachers' responses to the questionnaire, sent after the projects took place in their schools, demonstrated that learning new skills and techniques is not merely an outdated and conventional approach to art education but, when contextualized within contemporary art, can create new pedagogical possibilities.

Interdisciplinarity was another valuable characteristic of the projects. Some of the artists designed a project to establish

a bridge between scientific experience and aesthetic enjoyment and practice

INÊS AZEVEDO
ARTIST, PORTUGAL

such as the project ‘*Water goes*’ as

water emerged as a theme that crossed the school subject's related to environment, health

and society programs of the 1st and 4th years of basic school

INÊS AZEVEDO
ARTIST, PORTUGAL

CONNECTING TO THE STUDENTS: ARTIST AS A NEIGHBOUR

The presence of the artist in the schools succeeded to challenge the modernist vision of art and artist. One of the teachers reported that children realized that “art is not only a portrait coloured with pencils”, thus overcoming the *ideology of creation* by which solely important, in terms of its existence in the world, is the work of art (ŠUVAKOVIĆ, 2008).

Traditional art education has embraced “modernist ideas such as the artist as creative genius and the child as having the potential for creative self-actualization” (PEARSE, p. 250). It promotes the idea of the artist who brings the light to the world by creating an original piece of art. The school, being a modernist invention and having mostly representational approach to curriculum and teaching, usually nurtures modernist approaches to art among children. An artist is typically seen as a productive inventor and autonomous individual, and artworks are considered objects placed in museums and cultural institutions.

Having a contemporary artist in a school and the possibility to be in a dialogue with him/her created a chance to rethink the identity of an artist, which influenced children to become more engaged in artistic processes.

The artist - student engagement was inspiring and influential for the children. First of all, they understood that an artist is not an extraordinary person but could be an ordinary person living in the same neighbourhood, could be a father or a mother of their classmates. Working with an artist, the children realized the way of artists’ thinking, acquired new skills and learnt about specific artists’ works and techniques

GENETHLIS GENETHLIOU
COORDINATOR, CYPRUS

Working with the artists in the school supported the process of demystification of the modernist cult of artist genius, which consequently increased children’s self-confidence about their own artistic skills and fostered the identity of the artist among them.

The students were very pleased and excited to cooperate with a real artist and had a chance to involve in new areas of art that the teacher by himself couldn’t. They loved it and had fun. They

felt like ‘real’ artists

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TEACHER
ANONYMOUS QUESTIONNAIRE

They were fascinated with the whole idea of collaborating with “real” artists and professionals. They formed stronger bonds with visual arts in general and also became more confident about their own artistic skills and expressions

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TEACHER
ANONYMOUS QUESTIONNAIRE

After the project children were inspired to continue with engagement in the artistic processes: “I want to become an artist”, “Let me work some more, I may never have a chance to do that again”, “Art is the best lesson”, “I love art”.

They formed stronger bonds with visual arts in general and also became more confident about their own artistic skills and expressions. Children are motivated, found it very interesting and loved working with a real artist. It has also increased self-esteem for students with lower academic results

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TEACHER
ANONYMOUS QUESTIONNAIRE

The teachers emphasized that children were more engaged and motivated to participate in the activities:

The pupils were totally engaged and inspired throughout the project and full of enthusiasm, driven by a sense of purpose!

-
ALANA REVELL ROHR
ARTIST-TEACHER

I think children’s’ experience was valuable. I observed one of the projects, in each class for 3 months and I could testify how children learned with the projects, their motivation for learning increased a lot during the period of the project

-
NICOLETA AVGOUSTI
COORDINATOR, CYPRUS

We were very impressed by the children at the presentation and the workshop during the CREATE multiplier event and school visit. I thought something happened with them. They talked comfortable. When you know something, you understand it, when you have something that no one can take it away from you, you get self-confidence and that is what I felt among the pupils. You know: ‘I’ve been doing this before’. They get experience by doing things. I learned a lot too!

-
CECILIA WENDT
ARTIST, SWEDEN

Besides being motivated, the projects had an impact in the school achievement

of the children and the development of what teachers call “thinking skills”. Mariana worked with the school in the deprived community and the participation in the project influenced the results that they demonstrated.

When the evaluation people went there the teacher called me talking about the conversation so we kept on conversations after the project, because she at least felt the need to tell me about the evaluation. She told me that the kids knew everything. Everything was on the tip of the tongue, as we call it in Portuguese. They knew everything. They remembered, still. It was... sometimes after. She wanted me to tell that the evaluation team was there. And it went very good and kids behaved very well. And yeah, more than very well. They remembered and they felt connected. And they liked it. They wanted to continue

-
 MARIANA DELGADO
 ARTIST, PORTUGAL

Furthermore, the teachers highlighted that the pupils became more independent and patient in achieving their goals. As the project involved collaborative work they developed a range of social skills, from communication, to resilience, to teamwork.

Through the projects we have undertaken this year, children have had three opportunities to create a piece of art (with a partner) where they have developed life skills including resilience, teamwork and perseverance. They also became more independent and decreasingly relied on teacher support as they depended more on their peers and themselves to evaluate and improve their projects

-
 LUCY DOWNER
 TEACHER

POROSITY

The projects developed in the schools fostered cognitive and metacognitive skills. All of them were carried out as work projects with a main topic as starting point to search for information and knowledge, reflecting about and transforming the knowledge through art production. The topics were very diverse but always broad enough to allow porosity; to rearrange and create new linkages. Local culture, life histories, environmental issues and citizenship issues were present in almost all the projects. Different materials, techniques and media were explored according to the project needs (drawing, moving images, video, painting, sculpture, installation, performance, textiles, printing, etc.).

The data to inform the chapter has been collected by Teresa Eça, Maja Maksimovic, Hester Elzerman and Marike Hoekstra (InSEA evaluation team) with the collaboration of the CREATE participants. The evaluation team of the project had many difficulties in collecting data directly from the participants, maybe because of the time-consuming tasks of the project, or maybe because the coordinators also have difficulties in motivating teachers and artists to reply to the evaluation team requirements. Some limitations of this report must be noted, such as the absence of children's voices, and a predominance of artists views. In future projects we recommend more attention to obtaining more students' opinions in the form of video or written records. Overall, the project produced a positive impact in the schools and in the teachers' learning culture. The visiting artists brought new ways of relating with the classroom settings and engaging with the materials. Their presence influenced the teachers to develop a more contemporary view on the visual arts in primary schools, as well as engagement in group based learning and interdisciplinary projects. However, to understand the meaning-making of the children more in-depth, it would be necessary to include their drawings, photos and descriptions of their working process. Their voices and the results of their work should be documented and analysed.

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INTERVIEWS

INA ALM
Coordinator, Sweden, interview
23-03-2017

NICOLETA AVGOUSTI
Coordinator, Cyprus
13-05-2017

MARIANA DELGADO
Artist, Portugal, interview
06-07-2017

LUCY DOWNER
Teacher, UK, email interview
10-07-2017

GENETHLIS GENETHLIOU
Coordinator, Cyprus
13-05-2017

ALISON GRIFFITHS
Coordinator, UK, interview
23-03-2017

ELENA HADJIPIERI

Teacher, Cyprus, audio file

13-05-2017

AILEEN KELLY

Artist, United Kingdom, interview

31-05-2017

TEREZA LAMBRIANOU

Coordinator, Cyprus, email interview

30-06-2017

CATARINA MARTINS

Coordinator, Portugal, interview

04-05-2017

ALEXIA PHILIPPOU

Artist, Cyprus, audio file

13-05-2017

LORENA CUEVA RAMÍREZ

Artist-researcher, Spain, interview

30-06-2017

ALANA REVELL-ROHR

Teacher/artist, UK email interview

19-07-2017

CECILIA WENDT

Artist, Sweden, interview

05-06-2017

**GIVE A MAN (SIC) A FISH
AND YOU FEED HIM FOR A DAY
TEACH HIM HOW TO FISH
AND YOU FEED HIM FOR A LIFETIME**

ALISON GRIFFITHS | JOHN JOHNSTON | AILEEN KELLY

If you're not prepared to be wrong, you'll never come up with anything original...and by the time they get to be adults, most kids have lost that capacity. They have become frightened of being wrong...And the result is, we are educating people out of their creative capacities. Picasso once said this, he said that all children are born artists. The problem is to remain an artist as we grow up. I believe this passionately, that we don't grow into creativity, we grow out of it. Or rather we get educated out of it.

-
ROBINSON, 2006

[1]

PROVIDING A CONTEXT

Ongoing pressures on the global economy has meant that education in the United Kingdom has become a political entity and this change has brought with it centralised control, performativity and enhanced public scrutiny (DAY, ELLIOT, & KINGSTON, 2005; ESTRELA, 2001; FLORES, 2012; MCCULLOCH, G. HELSBY, G & KNIGHT, P. 2000). Within the United Kingdom, the focus placed upon raising standards in the perceived “core” curriculum areas (English, Maths and Science); the statutory assessment of these and the subsequent accountability of schools and individual teachers for the outcomes of their pupils have all had a significant impact. This can be seen in the breadth of opportunity provided to children; the organisation and structure of learning and ultimately in the place of the visual arts across the primary school.

[1.1]

THE ARTS IN THE UNITED KINGDOM PRIMARY SCHOOLS

All maintained schools within the United Kingdom are required to ensure that their curriculum adheres to the requirements of the National Curriculum (2012). The aims of Art and Design as a foundation subject within this are stated as being that pupils, by the time they leave primary school at the age of eleven, will be able to:

- × Produce creative work, exploring their ideas and recording their experiences;
- × Become proficient in drawing, painting, sculpture and other art, craft and design techniques;
- × Evaluate and analyse creative works using the language of art, craft and design;
- × Know about great artists, craft makers and designers, and understand the historical and cultural development of their art forms.

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/239018/PRIMARY_national_curriculum_-_Art_and_design.pdf

Despite this legal requirement, in a recent evaluation of the place of Art in UK schools (NSEAD 2016), over one third of primary school teachers reported that, as a result of the pressures mentioned above, that the number of specific Art and Design sessions they taught had decreased over the last five years. Downing *et al* (2007) in their review of the Creative Partnerships concurred with this, and found that this reduction in curriculum time was happening even though teachers recognise the value of the arts as a medium to develop creative and thinking, communication and expressive skills and understand that their value lies beyond the immediate aesthetic.

[1.2]

EXPERIENCE OF ARTS EDUCATION

Although recognising the value of the arts, a number of studies have examined teachers' perceptions of their confidence to teach them (BYRNE 2005; MACDONALD *et al.* 2004). These studies have generally found that many primary school teachers viewed themselves as lacking in the necessary knowledge, skills and confidence to teach the Art and Design curriculum. One of the reasons for this can be attributed to their own educational experience of the arts. As Watts (2005) discusses:

ASIDE FROM BRIEF MODULES ON INITIAL TEACHER EDUCATION COURSES, ONLY A MINORITY OF PRIMARY SCHOOL TEACHERS HAVE RECEIVED AN ART EDUCATION THAT EXTENDED BEYOND THE AGE OF 16.
(p. 245)

This deficit is not currently addressed within professional development opportunities presented to teachers. NSAED (2016) found 43% of generalist primary teachers are reported to have never attended art and design Continuous Professional Development (CPD) sessions and this finding echoes with the experience of providers of CPD in the sector where it is widely acknowledged that the take up of training focussing upon Arts based CPD has reduced over the last few years.

This reduction is due to a range of pressures which include the funding available to schools and the pressures of accountability which means that priority is given to training for English and Maths but studies of teacher's attitudes to professional development also reveal an ambivalence to it in its current form. Cordingley *et al* (2003) found that when asked about CPD, teachers cite factors such as:

- × Not feeling ownership or agency in the training process;
- × The perceived devaluing of personal experience and being made to feel "not good enough";

- × The limited connection in the training to the specific context they are working in

as being significant in the way CPD is received and provide additional reasons for low uptake of CPD opportunities.

[1.3]

WHAT CONSTITUTES EFFECTIVE CONTINUOUS PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT?

Day *et al* (2005) find that the term Continuous Professional Development in Education has become a “container concept”. They feel that the concept has strong face validity and is seen by many as being the salve to many education ills. However, the breadth of definition and the implicit meanings carried by all debating it means that there is an absence of shared meaning and that as a result there is a real danger of making the term useless (p. 217). An additional danger in the lack of clear definition lies in what Bevan identified in his report to the UK Government select committee as CPD attracting:

 SNAKE OIL SALESMEN WHO DO FABULOUS
 CHARISMATIC PRESENTATIONS THAT
 ESSENTIALLY HAVE NO LONG-LASTING
 IMPACT OR CONTENT
 (PARA 7, DFE 2017)

Little (1994) found that two major distinctions can be seen across all of

these models of CPD provision which can be assessed by reflecting upon whether the training is equipping the participants with skills to implement reforms decided by others or to inform, contribute and provide a critique. This is summarised by Barry (2017) as being key in the distinction between Professional Development and Professional Learning and is further explored by Tynjälä and Gijbels (2012) who argue that what makes Professional Learning distinctive is the learner’s ability to assimilate four different forms of knowledge and expertise through an ‘integrative pedagogy’. These forms of knowledge and expertise are described as:

- × **FACTUAL AND THEORETICAL KNOWLEDGE** (*codified in books, reports and other media sources*);
- × **EXPERIENTIAL KNOWLEDGE** (*acquired through on-going experimentation and practice*);
- × **SELF-REGULATED KNOWLEDGE** (*focusing on metacognition and ‘knowing oneself’*); and
- × **SOCIO-CULTURAL KNOWLEDGE** (*located in communities of practice and interactions*).

In the Create project in London we were keen to explore the concept of Professional Learning as defined above and it this critical and engaged approach we paced at the heart of the design of our project.

[2]

CREATE IN LONDON

[2.1]

RATIONALE

The Create project in London was designed to explore:

- x the impact that a series of innovative Professional Learning sessions would have on the arts practice of teachers and
- x the impact of this Professional Learning on the structures that support teaching and learning in the primary school context.

Our project would take two stages:

STAGE 1

Would focus on a series of Professional Learning workshops which would take place across a ten week period. The focus for these would be the development of: confidence; knowledge; skills and understanding of teachers drawing upon the practice of visual artists to inform practice. The sessions would allow an opportunity to discuss deeper questions about teaching and learning and facilitate reflection on personal experiences.

STAGE 2

The participants would, through changes to planning and approaches to learning considered during stage one of the project, provide an alternative space for their pupils to learn. This will enrich the existing curriculum using the practices of the visual artist as a stimulus for change.

This chapter focusses upon the outcomes from stage one of the project. The evaluation and outcomes from of stage two can be found of the Create Website <https://create.up.pt/>

Central to the workshops sessions would be a practicing contemporary artist who would be significant in guiding the project. Reflecting upon the findings of Cordingley (2003), we identified that we needed to choose an artist who displayed a confidence to articulate the own practice as well as having a clear understanding of the context the teachers will be working within. This artist would also need to show a sensitivity to the confidence levels of individual participants. The choice and selection of the artist was a key part in the development of the programme and their input was instrumental in all stages of the process.

[2.2]

PROJECT DESIGN

At the initial stages, tutors from the University worked closely with the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) from a primary school, situated in the South East of London. The school was chosen as a suitable location for the project as it has an existing close connection to the University and demonstrates a strong commitment to Professional Learning for all its staff.

In initial consultations it also became clear that the principles of Create aligned with the questions being explored by the school, namely: how to provide a creative, enriching curriculum for the children that blends knowledge, skills and understanding with allowing the pupils to have voice and authentic ownership over their learning. The SLT of the school identified two teachers who would be participants in the training and agreed that stage two of the project would be focused in the school.

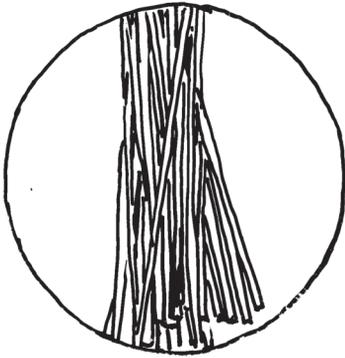
[2.3]

OVERVIEW OF THE WORKSHOPS

I wanted to build the participants repertoire of skills and develop their understanding of contemporary art and the various issues that artists work

with in current times. Once they had developed some techniques the participants were in a position to use them later in the project if they wanted to but not necessary. I also decided that it was important for them to understand the process of making art from my perspective. While the project did have a theme it was very open ended and I encouraged each person to focus on the process of making, letting each stage influence the next.

- AILEEN KELLY, ARTIST



SESSION 1

The focus for this session was introducing the idea of uncertainty. Throughout the session participants were encouraged to explore the potential in the materials they were given without having an ultimate end goal. After an initial discussion with participants regarding the nature of art and a sharing of prior experiences, this session asked participants to work in a group and create an object that made use of the materials they had available. At the end of the session they were encouraged to tell the story of the object as well as consider how it evolved.



SESSION 2

The focus for this session was exploration and required the participants to explore the potential of materials and an introduction to the technique and process for making and casting from moulds was introduced.

The rest of the session was left open for participants to work with the artist to explore materials and make use of the resources available within the studio to make their own casts and explore the potential of the media.



SESSION 3

This session was led by a lecturer from Goldsmiths and placed a focus upon the power of the visual image to carry messages to a wider audience. Drawing upon a wide range of artists and drawing upon the lecturer's own work, the session provided an introduction to the idea of the exhibition and required participants to reflect upon their own identity using a guided exploration technique.

Using this reflection as a starting point, participants were asked to create a collage that was based upon their own responses to the guided exploration.



SESSION 4

The fourth session had a practical focus and used the sculptures created during session one. In this session the artist asked participants to work in groups to deconstruct the original creations and reconstruct into a new sculpture using additional materials where needed and drawing upon techniques used in previous sessions.

They would then be required to "tell the story" of the art piece. These were then shared and the process discussed at the end of the session.



SESSION 5

This session drew upon the expertise of an artist whose specialism includes film and sound. The session explored the possibilities of using technology as a tool for conveying meaning. Students were asked to work in groups to create a piece of work that made use of video to convey ideas of their own belonging.



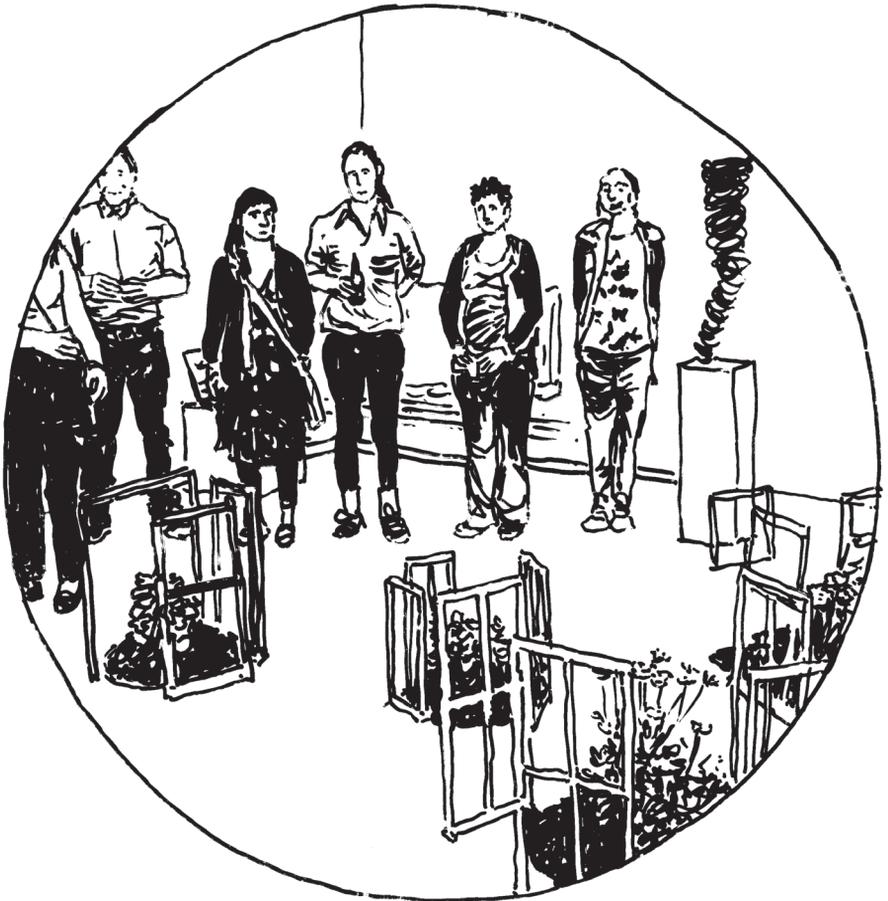
SESSION 6 and 7

Participants were introduced to the work of an artist currently studying on the Artist Teacher Masters programme at Goldsmiths whose work draws upon his experience working with refugees in Egypt.

Following this, participants were asked to begin the process of creating their own pieces to be displayed at the exhibition that reflected their own interpretation of home and identity. Time and space was allocated to allow participants to engage with the process.

SESSION 8

The final session was the exhibition of the participant's works CREATE participants from across Europe were invited to a private view and to speak to the artists about their work. This was followed by visits from the pupils from local schools.



Participants would be encouraged during the 8 weeks to visit galleries and maintain a sketch book to track their journey. Studio space was also made available outside the project time to allow participants to engage with the process at a time that fitted their personal workload.

EVALUATION

Data collected to inform our analysis included a pre-course audit that required participants to reflect upon their own experiences and confidence with regard to visual art. Consideration would also be taken of prior educational experience and the participants expectations of the Create programme. This information, collected early in the process, would help us plan the programme offered during the sessions. During the training participants would be expected to reflect upon their experience in a sketch book and their thoughts would be videoed as a record of their learning. Artefacts collected to inform our evaluation would take the form of photographs and the art pieces themselves.

At the end of the workshops participants would be expected to exhibit a piece of their work alongside a short reflection on the meaning behind the work. The brief for the exhibition was left open and the rationale behind the exhibition was explained by Aileen Kelly, the Artist that was chosen to guide the project thus:

After the various workshops they eventually had to face the prospect of making their own artwork. I set a deadline for a public exhibition that coincided with the Create conference at Goldsmiths in London. This is the way that artists usually work: forcing them to complete artworks, edit out the unnecessary and bring together a cohesive body of work. A deadline focuses the mind but you must draw on what you have practiced during the hours of trial and error in your studio day after day to give the foundation to bring something to a conclusion. You may have all this information that may not seem to be relevant at the time but it builds your knowledge and enables you to make considered and reflective decisions.

AILEEN KELLY, ARTIST

[2.4]

WORKSHOP PARTICIPANTS

The group consisted of 15 participants with a range of experiences of education and art. Two members of the group were in-service teachers; two were lecturers from Goldsmiths University and nine were pre-service teachers who were completing the final school experience of their Initial Teacher Education

programme. The Head Teacher of the school also requested to be part of the project.

The initial audit of experience indicated the following:

KEY STATEMENTS OF EXPERIENCE		
I HAVE A QUALIFICATION AT GCSE LEVEL IN ART AND DESIGN (OR RELATED SUBJECT)	I HAVE AN A LEVEL IN ART AND DESIGN (OR RELATED)	I HAVE A DEGREE IN ART OR A SUBJECT RELATED
50%	20%	12%
I ATTEND ART EVENTS/ GALLERIES ETC. REGULARLY (MORE THAN ONCE EACH MONTH)	I ATTEND GALLERIES/ ART EVENTS AT LEAST TWICE PER YEAR	I RARELY ATTEND GALLERIES/ ART EVENTS
3%	50%	47%
YES		

The data collected showed that the participants with prior experience of art were confident in their understanding of contemporary practice. Although it is interesting to note that of the three with a significant experience of art in their educational background only one had practical experience of making art (photography) the others coming for a more theoretical standpoint. One commented:

The reasons I wanted to be chosen for this project is to actually be taught how to do it, the making bit I mean. I'm happy to write assignments analysing what artists have created and I know a lot about art and the whys and where of it but I want to see if I can do it myself and how to help the kids see themselves as artists. (LM)

It was also noted that the group consisted of a small group of participants who had no prior experience of art education beyond the age of thirteen. As participants were self-selected it was interesting to reflect upon their motivation for volunteering to be part of the project and their expectations for the learning during the project.

One commented:

I dropped art as soon as I could in high school when I chose my subjects. I was so rubbish at it. I always wanted to do well but everything I made looked really, really rubbish, I guess I just don't have the eye for it. I'm here because want to learn some tips that I can use with the children. The school I am working in is really into displays and I want to be able to really wow the senior leaders. (JD)

The idea of participating for the benefit of schools and senior leaders was one which occurred across many of the initial evaluations as does the idea that the training would support a “tips for teachers” approach to training. We were keen to challenge these assumptions early in the project and ensure by the end of the initial session all participants were aware of the professional learning intentions of the project overall.

[3]

ANALYSIS

For the purpose of our analysis we have returned to the four areas of knowledge in effective Professional Learning as identified by Tynjälä and Gijbels (2012) as this we felt provide the necessary breadth to facilitate a focused analysis. We have recast the original criteria to best fit the project aims. Our analysis will therefore consider the following headings.



✂ THE "HEAD"

Which will take into account the extent to which the workshops developed subject knowledge and will also consider how the sessions supported the reflection of individuals on wider issues relating to pedagogy.

↗ THE "HAND"

The extent to which the sessions will develop the confidence and competence in working with a range of media. In this category we will review the skills and techniques that were developed across the sessions.

力 THE "I"

This category will analyse the extent to which the project facilitated self-reflection and promoted the self-regulation of the participants. We will consider the extent to which participants brought themselves to the project and analyse the factors that might hinder this.

↘ THE "US"

In which we will share the extent to which the workshops enabled participants to engaged in socially Situated and Socially Constructed Learning

[3.1]

THE “HEAD”

The underpinning principle relating to this category was summed up by Aileen Kelly thus:

It is important to note that I began each workshop with a slide show of contemporary art. We looked at work, which, related to the theme of ‘Home’ and while some images related directly to the theme, others seemed to be unconnected. I wanted them to see a variety of images, ideas and techniques and not just images related to what they would be working on that particular session. I did not want them to latch onto a particular style or be seen to direct ideas - I wanted them to form their own unique language and approach.

As can be seen in the initial audit data above, the participants brought with them a varied understanding of what is meant by art practice. It was felt as we designed the workshops that we needed to provide opportunity to explore this concept across all aspects of Create workshops. Drawing upon: the expertise with the Create team; our chosen artists and through making use of artists studying on the MA Artist teacher programme we were able to provide a theoretical underpinning for the participants that drew upon a wide range of perspectives. The impact of this approach can be seen in the response by one of the participants who commented:

I hadn’t really got a lot of knowledge about what modern art was at the start. I’d been to the Tate with the kids and made the right noises but I was never really sure what we were looking at if I am being honest. I kind of get it now, it’s about the stories and the messages in it not whether it is pretty. (LT)

As part of this understanding it was important to challenge the misconception held by some that an innate ability is needed to be an artist. We wanted to show through sharing the process of the chosen artists a state of flux and ambiguity is essential to operating in this sphere. Opportunities were built into the sessions to explore key questions and participants were encouraged to interrogate the process of the artist through asking questions. Our artists were asked to share their processes and making the uncertainty and visible was at the heart of all of the sessions. As Aileen Kelly (artist) noted about her own process:

For me it is about working with no defined outcome and trusting the process to reach a conclusion. It is important that teachers learn from art – that is that lessons can be open ended, students can find things out for themselves, find new avenues which helps their individual voice to come to the fore.

With the support of the artists, the aesthetics of the pieces created were evaluated and in all of the sessions the expressive elements of the art was important with individuals encouraged to tell the stories behind the pieces they had created to consolidate their learning.

The place of the art to develop academic understanding beyond the field of art was also considered in the design of the workshops. The theme of “Belonging, Home and Displacement” was chosen to run across the sessions and through: engaging with relevant news footage; exploration of the work of a range of artists on the chosen theme and the creation of their own pieces led to participants developing a deeper and more engaged understanding of the current socio-political discourse that is dominating public debate across Europe. As one participant commented when asked about the impact the session had on their understanding.

making my piece made me think a lot. It sounds mad but by hanging the sticks on strings to make it I felt connected....the bit John did at the start got me thinking anyway then being left on my own to create made me rethink to link it to my own experiences. At the end I think I understood a bit more so yeah, it did help” (LM)

It is recognised with adults this level of understanding is easier to achieve. Adults bring with them a wide range of experiences and the leaders of the project were free to take the learning in any direction they felt appropriate. With children there is a set curriculum that would need to be adhered to and the time constraints teachers’ face. These would be prohibiting factors in the exploration of the pupils’ own ideas. The additional challenge presented by this was identified by a student teacher who stated:

It was great to do the training, I got a lot out of it personally, I knew a lot more coming out of the training but when I got into class I had to do art sessions about the Tudors because that was on the scheme of work. I couldn’t do much about it. The kids had to paint black and white houses that all looked the same in the end. I don’t have time to do this sort of exploring with them.

The review at the end of the sessions indicated that it would be necessary to rethink existing schemes of work pro-forma to build in opportunities for pupils to make connections and explore their own understanding through working practically with materials. This approach was adopted by the school for stage two of the project.

[3.2]

THE “HAND”

All of the sessions required the students to work practically with materials that would be available to them in the classroom. The benefit from this was identified by one participant:

It was good not to have to go back to school to ask for load of new materials that needed to be bought. I can try some of the ideas out with my class as we all have sticks and straws. The glue guns were interesting though and it took a while until I was brave enough to let the children use them on their own.”
(EJ)

However, the simplicity of these were also seen to have an additional benefit as Aileen Kelly notes:

I am in favour of making things with limited resources, making things with basic materials. I wanted them to look at this very bland material and figure out a way in which they could make it meaningful, say something more than the material itself. I kept it open, so that personal stories could come through.

The challenge of bringing together the head and the hands was also evident in the responses of the participants. As mentioned previously, many in their initial audit defined art as something done by an artist and making the conceptual leap from the work of the perceived “artists” to their own work was a challenge that was ongoing across all of the workshops. This dilemma was summed up by one of the participants who stated:

I never thought I could make something that looks like that, I’m really proud of it. I don’t know if I would call it art because I don’t think I’m an artist but it says something to me and I like it. Not sure what it is really. It’s a thing I guess. (AG)

Aileen noted that:

...the school teachers were the most worried and concerned about the outcome. One was very upset because she was afraid to show her work, she was very unhappy with the outcome. I suggested she just put everything she made on a shelf to show the struggle that she had been through and the difficulty for her to bring the project to a conclusion. This would reflect the process and could be her artwork, which was honest and raw. But she persevered and eventually she actually asked her primary school pupils to help her with it and so they did – which was an excellent approach to take.



[3.3]

THE “I”

Across all of the sessions participants had the opportunity to consider their own place in the art and locate their own meaning in the pieces they were creating. An example of this was seen by Aileen who noted:

One PGCE student made a series of imprints based on his own baby blanket. This was an interesting work as he had clearly developed his own style and way of communicating his complex and sensitive ideas. Gradually the casts lost their definition and became faint, symbolizing the passing of time.

Another participant created a deeply personal piece that documented her feelings about her parents’ divorce. In speaking to her she stated that this was the first time she had begun to reflect upon this experience and the impact it had upon her life and who she is. The art in this instance gave her a more refined understanding of those formative experiences.

All of the pieces created across all phases of the project were deeply personal. Participants brought in objects that symbolised and reflected their own experience and the opportunity to use the process of construction as a focal point for discussion of wider issues of identity was evident in the conversations around the room. This could also be seen in the summary of the pieces created and the stories filmed at the end of each sessions.

The importance of art as a personal experience to support wellbeing also provided one of the most unforeseen benefits of the project. This was noted especially with the student teachers who were included as part of the cohort participants. The students were completing their final assessed school experience and preparing to transition into their first year of teaching. This point in their training is fraught with anxiety and the fear of the unknown. The opportunity to come into the studio at Goldsmiths provided to demonstrate a significant benefit to these students overall wellbeing. One commented:

I don’t think I would have completed this term without Create. All was getting too much to handle. The marking, the planning and the exhaustion

from teaching was just too much. When I signed up for Create I thought it would just be a way of missing a bit of school time, a bit less planning but it has become so much more than that. Just spending a morning tying sticks together or making clay imprints I guess just thinking about me for a while made such a difference. I was getting lost in the whole teacher thing Create helped me come back. (sk)

At a time when within the United Kingdom we are experiencing a crisis of teacher recruitment and retention (NFER 2015) the place of Professional Learning experiences such as the ones developed through the Create project cannot be underestimated.

[3.4]

THE “US”

A socio-cultural approach to learning underpins the Initial Teacher Education programmes at Goldsmiths and is stressed in the practice of the schools within our Teacher Education Partnership. We were keen that our Create project would adhere to this and embedded across all sessions were opportunities to work collaboratively and share expertise and knowledge.



Aileen commented:

I would say that the entire project was socially engaged in so far as the idea of the group as a learning community was very important to me. I really enjoyed working with them as a group and could see that they were all coming to art after many years of away from the subject. From lecturers to head teacher and the students to the classroom teachers – all were new to this way of working and really needed each other to get them through. Some worked on small collaborations making collective artworks. One student took this further and engaged with a group of primary children from her teaching practice school. She collaborated with very young children to make a tent like structure. Working as a team they agreed on the shape and its decoration. The objective was to make a place that felt secure. She brought the children to Goldsmiths to make the piece on site.

Working together provided support for the less confident participants. One noted:

I am so pleased that we did the first activity with someone else. I would not have known where to start and it was good to talk about it as we did this and we did that rather than putting myself out there. Especially when I didn't know anyone really. Made me think a lot about how I give my kids things to do on their own and how it might make them feel out there. I am doing more pair and group work now having felt it myself. It's what you go on about as scaffolding I suppose. (MG)

However the other aspect of this is recognising that the project explored the place of socially situated art practice. The pieces created for the final exhibition although in many instances deeply personal, required the observer reflect on their own understanding of the theme of home and belonging. One student teacher created a sound piece that used recordings from his home in Hull in the North of England. The sounds he collected were those that meant home for him and in the creation he drew upon the voices of family and friends as well as recordings from the environment which challenged the listener to find commonalities with their own experience and perceptions of home.

[4]

MOVING BEYOND STAGE ONE: MAKING A DIFFERENCE IN THE CLASSROOM

[4.1]

CREATE: NEW QUALIFIED TEACHERS

At the end of the project we spent time reflecting with participants upon the nature of art in their practice and across the following year have maintained contact with student teachers, now Newly Qualified Teachers (NQTs), who participated to evaluate the longer term impact of the project on their practice. The student teachers who participated on the programme went on to take up employment in nine different schools situated within the London area.

Evaluations at the end of the first term of teaching indicate a mixed picture of practice that shows that the impact of the project is dependent upon the attitude of the schools that the students have been employed to work in. In our evaluation all of the students from the project have been teaching Art within their classroom and 90% said that they felt that the Create project had helped them to feel more confident with this. One student, who struggled with the idea of being an Artist throughout the project commented

I'm still concerned with what the art looks like. I have to be, my school does it reviews of the displays I put up and if things are not just so we get in trouble but I think I have a better idea of the wider picture so if what my children create doesn't look that good I can argue with anyone that it's the story it has inside it that matters. I realise now that art is everything to do with them and not me. (LM)

[4.2]

CREATE: IN SCHOOL

Phase Two of the project was situated within the School that was instrumental in developing the Create programme with tutors from Goldsmiths. This school was

already undergoing significant review of the existing curriculum and is recognised as being in the forefront of teaching and learning in the borough. The school has an official inspection grading of “outstanding” and the overall assessment results are very strong.

In response to the issues raised by the create project the school decided to pilot a different approach to teaching and learning which built upon the key themes that arose from Create. As a result, in 2016-2017, two classes adopted a project based learning approach to teaching. The principles from this can be considered in relation to the categories identified above and can be summed up thus:

The teacher leading this initiative in the school became part of the Create project at the beginning of Phase Two and has a background in contemporary art practice. In 2016-2017 she has been working closely with the two teachers who participated in the project to create schemes of learning. This approach was found to have a positive impact on learning and will be developed across the school in forthcoming years. For further details of the projects and samples of planning please refer to the Create website.

KEY PRINCIPLES OF “PROJECT BASED LEARNING”

[4.3]

CREATE: GOLDSMITHS

The tutors who were involved in the project at Goldsmiths have continued to make use of the project to inform their own day to day work with students. This is evidenced in the timetabling of a creative arts week that provided the opportunity for students to explore their own identity as creative practitioners and culminated in an exhibition celebrating their own developing teacher identity. The power of arts based practice to promote wellbeing and mental health has been utilised in the timetabling of sessions that have a creative arts focus.

As we move into the future of the project we plan to reflect upon the best practice of the Create approach to implement a series of short courses that provide opportunities for teachers to develop their own practice and will promote the place of the Arts across the schools in our Partnership and beyond.

✂ THE "HEAD"

- x The teacher does not know all of the answers
- x Academic expectations need to remain high
- x It's not about praise it is about questioning and moving forward on the learning journey
- x There is a time for direct instruction but it should be remembered that what the teacher teaches is not what the pupils learn.

ア THE "HAND"

- x The teacher is a facilitator of learning and is not "all knowing"
- x The children need time to explore, reflect review
- x We all learn from our mistakes
- x Pupils need experience of a range of techniques and experiences to support their self-expression

力 THE "I"

- x All pupils need the ownership over learning to become self-motivated
- x Children and teachers need the space to learn from mistakes and develop a "growth mindset"
- x Children and teachers deserve the opportunity to do something they feel proud of and be given the opportunity to share that success with others

サ THE "US"

- x Children and teachers deserve rich learning environment that connects directly to their needs and builds upon their own personal experience and identity
- x We are educating for an uncertain future and all learning leaves a legacy

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he filled my head with dreams

**THE CONTRIBUTION OF A
TEACHER-ARTIST CREATIVE PARTNERSHIP
TO THE CONSTRUCTION OF
PRIMARY STUDENT'S ARTISTIC IDENTITY**

-
NICOLETA AVGOUSTI | FOTINI LARKOU

ABSTRACT

This paper explores the process of interpreting students' personal stories through teaching and learning contemporary art with the collaboration of a visual artist.

It investigates the role of contemporary art as a strategy to help 11 year-old students express their diverse individual experiences. It also discusses the impact of this process on the students themselves, in allowing them to develop their own artistic identity.

Finally, it looks into novel strategies that could contribute to the design and implementation of art units for primary education.

Case study was chosen as the research method since it allowed for unique processes that the teacher – artist – students' partnership developed to be studied in detail and in depth over an extended period of time, and identified practices that were of importance for analysis and interpretation.

Data were collected from artist's, teacher's and observer's diaries in an effort to analyse the meaningful actions and interactions that took place.

Evidence showed that students were deeply involved in contemporary art practices through viewing and creating

in partnership with the artist, and that they would like to have more alike experiences in the future. A vital part of the project remained the students' direct contact with the artist's authentic artworks in the setting of the art classroom.

INTRODUCTION

Collaborating with contemporary visual artists in the context of primary school education is an idea and a process that is connected with the demystification of contemporary art; its wide accessibility, its acceptance as the art form of today's world, its enjoyment by children of young age who may possibly disseminate this notion to a wider audience as they grow up. As contemporary visual arts curricula lean towards promoting teaching and learning regarding the art of living artists and their creative processes, the need arises for teachers to explore meaning-making opportunities with their students regarding contemporary art.

The new model of visual artists departs from the notorious authoritarian model of the past, where artists seemed to be the owners and dominants of art knowledge (ART:21, 2003).

Contemporary artists are engaged in a dynamic research practice that involves stating questions and problems, engaging with explorations of issues and allowing for innovative knowledge to immerge (SULLIVAN 2010, 2014). Artists of today's cultural scene open up their studios, laptops and sketchbooks to viewers and to collaborations. They interact with people of all ages so as to learn and enhance their work, they

create and solve visual problems, they are explorers who investigate and simultaneously follow intuitions. This kind of artistic research aligns in success, we believe, with the work that takes place in primary school art classes, where experiential learning and explorative approaches are in the everyday schedule. Connecting the everyday world of contemporary artists with the settings of primary school art classrooms appears to be a dynamic notion that involves collected efforts of the triptych teacher-artist-students and effective teaching strategies in approaching contemporary art.

CURRICULUM CONNECTIONS

The Cyprus Visual Arts Curriculum (Ministry of Education and Culture 2016) focuses on student-centred pedagogies where students' experiences and their everyday lives have a vital role, as '[t]eachers are encouraged to be more sensitive to and aware of their students' daily experiences and their interests' (DAY and HURWITZ 2012, p.266). The two approaches of constructivism and critical pedagogy in visual arts education are suggested by the Curriculum as pedagogies that convey as their main principles the following: the importance of students' direct experiences; active participation and connection with authentic-real situations and experiences; the multimodal visual expression and creation; the in-depth exploration of

materials and ideas; the acceptance of subjectivity and multiple interpretations; and the advancement of critical thinking and research (Ministry of Education and Culture 2016).

Furthermore, the Curriculum encourages teaching and learning about local and international living artists, as well as cooperation with them in the context of school and other settings such as galleries, museums and artists' studios. It proposes utilizing contemporary visual arts as a strategy that enables students to actively be engaged with current issues, dialogue and debate about their life experiences and to comprehend that visual arts are directly linked to the real world. As Curriculum child-centred pedagogies emphasise experiential learning, explorative approaches, and exploitation of interests, students are stimulated to construct connections with the art world regarding the in-depth exploration of their own and other's ideas, the acceptance of subjectivity and multiple interpretations, and the advancement of critical thinking and research.

CREATE ERASMUS+ EUROPEAN PROGRAMME

The idea of bringing together the triptych teacher-artist-students in the art classroom setting was explored during a three-month project that took

place in an urban primary school in the city of Nicosia, Cyprus. The project was implemented in the context of the CREATE ERASMUS+ European Programme that was realised in the years 2015-2017 in five European countries and involved seven educational organisations (CREATE, The Cyprus Paradigm 2017; CREATE 2017).

CREATE, Creative Primary School Partnerships with Visual Artists, is a program that focused on the cooperation of visual artists with primary schools and the design and implementation of art projects, with the active and empirical involvement of students and adults. The programme offered students of the age of 6 to 12 engagement in experiential and cooperative learning by knowing artists' creative processes and working with them in-depth. Additionally the program provided teachers with methods, tools and resources so as to design, with the input of visual artists, collaborative and authentic projects that meet the needs of their school units and the particularities of their students. Other goals of the program included the cooperation of the seven partner institutions for the development of intellectual outputs and their dissemination to the European community of educators and artists who are professionally involved with visual arts education.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Programmes of school partnerships with creative professionals have a successful history in various countries. They were regarded important in developing students' critical thinking skills, creativity, communication and self-esteem, as well as increasing their responsibility of transforming the school and natural environment to a better place. Creative partnership programmes offer students exciting learning regarding new experiences, techniques, materials, and the acquaintance with local creators that inspire and conduce in the development of their artistic identity and of their enthusiasm regarding the arts (SHARP, PYE, BLACKMORE, *et al.*, 2006). One of the leading programmes that involved collaborations of schools and creative professionals was implemented in the United Kingdom. 'Creative Partnerships' was a learning programme running from 2002 until September 2011. The programme brought artists, architects and scientists into schools to work with teachers to inspire young people and help them learn (Creative Partnerships, 2006; Creative Partnerships: Initiative and Impact, 2006).

In Cyprus a pilot small scale creative partnerships art project was implemented by the Cyprus Society for Education through Arts – CySEA organisation, the local chapter of the

International Society for Education through Arts - InSEA. The organisation offered in-service teachers' training to its members that participated in the pilot study so as to support them before and during the design and implementation of school art projects with the collaboration of artists. The organisation also published an educator's guide that presented the stages of the study as well as guidelines regarding the planning of such collaborations with visual artists (Cyprus Society for Education through Arts – CySEA, 2014).

THE CASE STUDY: SHORT PERSONAL STORIES

The school where the CREATE project took place is a well-equipped city school with modern architecture and one of the newest schools in the country. Diversity was a notion that was part of the school's achievement plan at the time this project took place, and several actions were developed to accomplish the aim. During previous visual arts lessons students became familiar with many materials and art techniques such as weaving, and the making of small scale figures out of recycling materials, thus making connections with the CREATE project which also incorporated such techniques. For the analysis of the CREATE school project a case study was considered appropriate in order to

assemble the educational practice, reach out for understandings and connections, and document the lessons as well as the actions that took place. A case study has been defined as an empirical investigation that examines a single situation in its original context, allowing for detailed in-depth study, producing credible descriptions of participants' actions (GRAY and MALINS 2004) and proving to be efficient when there is no control over the contextual events being investigated (YIN 2005).

The research was conducted through personal contacts with teacher, students and artist in the classroom settings, where a study was pursued to understand the ways in which they account for their actions (MILES and HUBERMAN 1994). More contacts took place outside the classroom and through verbal and electronic communication. The research concentrated on producing information and constructing knowledge regarding the research questions, and eventually identifying implications and generating suggestions through specific data collection techniques that incorporated the observers' diary, artist's and teacher's diary, and photographic images of the art lessons, processes and students final art work.

The questions explored throughout the educational project dealt with the following:

[1]

HOW DID STUDENTS INTERPRET THEIR PERSONAL STORIES AND EXPERIENCES VERBALLY AND VISUALLY?

[2]

HOW DO THE STUDENTS' ARTWORKS EXPRESS THEIR THOUGHTS AND FEELINGS ABOUT THEIR EXPERIENCES?

[3]

WHAT IS THE ROLE OF CONTEMPORARY ART AS A STRATEGY TO HELP STUDENTS EXPRESS THEIR PERSONAL STORIES AND EXPERIENCES?

[4]

DID THE ARTIST'S ENGAGEMENT IN THE PROJECT INSPIRE AND BRING NEW IDEAS AND STRATEGIES IN THE PROCESS OF TEACHING/LEARNING?

The three-month art project gave students the opportunity to combine personal experiences and art making, responding to the idea of recalling unique short personal life stories. Students expressed their own individual moments through microsculpting in soft green soap, paper collage, weaving and lyrics writing. Each student created his/her own microcosmos using these materials and techniques, in order to "secure" special personal moments and meanings. The small-scale student art pieces were later inscribed by each creator in the inner circumference of hard paper cylinders of approximately ten centimetres diameter. Text was also inserted that was connected with the ideas of their personal stories. All

cylinders were collected and constructed with the input of the artist into a big unified piece to form a “wall” in the entrance hall of the school, giving the chance to spectators to view and study students’ special short stories.

For the realisation of the project the school’s art teacher and the invited artist collaborated extensively before and throughout the project duration. The teacher had the leadership role in the design and implementation of the project, but worked in partnership and closely with the artist, and they both engaged with students during the art lessons. The artist was chosen by the teacher in regards to her creative work, as the issues she deals with and the problems she poses and solves were considered appropriate to meet the goals set for the particular eleven year old students.



FIGURE 1: ANCIENT COMMAND, MARIA IOANNOU, 2014 (FIBER GLASS, SILK COCOONS, SILK THREADS, FABRICS). COURTESY OF THE ARTIST.

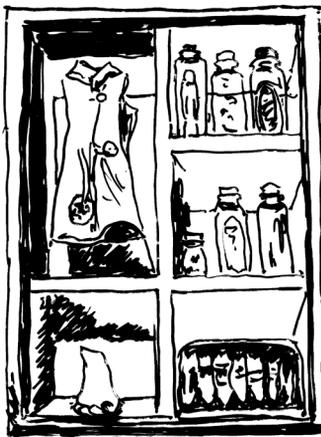


FIGURE 2: CYCLE OF LIFE IV, MARIA IOANNOU, 2015 (ALABASTER, SILK COCOONS, FABRICS, SILK THREADS, GLASS BOTTLES, METAL BOX). COURTESY OF THE ARTIST.



FIGURE 3: CYCLE OF LIFE V, MARIA IOANNOU, 2016 (ALABASTER, SILK COCOONS, SILK THREADS, PORCELAIN). COURTESY OF THE ARTIST.

Maria Ioannou's work focuses on the circle of life (birth-evolution) using the example of silkworm (worm-cocoon-nymph). The artist uses cocoons, small sculptures made of plaster/alabaster, silk thread weaving inserted into paintings and small glass containers. She also combines cocoon sculptures with jewelry. IOANNOU uses written text (phrases, lyrics and poems) which is interwoven in paintings and woven art pieces.

SHORT PERSONAL STORIES IN ACTION

In response to the first research question that dealt with students' verbally and visually interpretation of personal stories and experiences, the data led to the analysis that follows. During the first lesson of the art unit, students brought their personal photos and they were eager to present them to their classmates. They were enthusiastic to tell the stories behind them and ready to express feelings such as joy, nostalgia, gratitude, anger. They listened carefully to each other describing their experiences, laughed and shared the feelings expressed. They were ready to accept comments from the others.

According to the teacher, during lesson two, students realized what the subject matter of the project was and that it would be connected to the

artist's work about the circle of life. However, they found it difficult to respond to the direction to "choose their personal moments to fit in the small cylinders" that were presented to them. Therefore the teacher had to give more clarifications on how to do that. They also had difficulty to make their drawings smaller, so as to fit in a cylinder, as they were too big and with a lot of details. They needed more help by the artist who explained them that they should simplify their elements. Regarding the words with which they would "dress" their tents, the students easily found some that they used in the previous lesson. A student pointed out that the cylindrical shape helps them to position their various elements in different places, thus giving a more interesting result. Only a few students managed to finalize the interior cylinder decoration, something that most of the students would continue at the next lesson.

For the period of lesson three students had the opportunity to work in two groups; the first group by using green soap to make small sculptures out of it, and the second group to continue working using their tubes and collaging paper elements inside of them. Nevertheless, as the teacher noted, students' curiosity was triggered by the soap sculpting which was something they had never seen before. Therefore both groups wanted to watch the

procedure and this delayed their collage work, a fact that would probably be avoided providing students the same materials. Also, despite having the artist's guidance, students faced some difficulties working with the soap. This had as a result the creation of fewer sculptures than the initial planning. On the other hand, the group working with the collage practice realized that they had to work intensively to finalize their cylinders. Although both groups were disappointed that they would not have enough time to work and although they faced difficulties in the procedure, these difficulties promoted their critical thinking and challenged their skills as they had to think quickly about alternatives and experiment with new materials and ideas.

By lesson seven, as the teacher, observer and artist mentioned, students worked incredibly quickly as they were looking forward to the final artwork. They also cooperated very well. Both teacher and artist paid attention to students' ideas on how to finalize their works, as well as on finding proper space to exhibit them. Students expressed different opinions such as to place the cylinders on a wall; to exhibit them in the art classroom; to make a figure using all of the different cylinders. They also took into consideration the fact that they were made of vulnerable materials to sun and rain, so an indoors school area was selected for the art installation to

take place. As the artist mentioned, the final artwork at the end of the project reflected students' dedication and engagement to the goal of creative thinking and expression.

The final art installation was presented, during the last lesson, by the 11 year old student – creators to smaller students of age 8. The younger students were invited to explore the art installation through play and observation, as discussion unfolded about the meanings of the work. A sound intervention with recordings of the student-creators' voices offered more insights and deeper engaged the audience with the work. The student-creators as well as the artist made presentations regarding the creative procedures that were followed, and the younger students were involved to new activities that led to their own expression of their short personal stories.

As the second research question dealt with the role of contemporary art as a strategy to help students express personal stories and experiences, the teacher verified that the display of artists' original works was very important to help students realise that contemporary artists can create works in big, but also in small dimensions with a variety of materials (stone, paper, wire, fabric etc.). At the end of lesson two, students were given the floor to say how they imagined the cylinders to be utilized by the end of the project. Some mentioned

the creation of group sculptures, others the creation of two dimensional works. It is the teacher's notification that they began to think about the perspective of their works and showed that they were open to new ideas, while demonstrating their experiences from the field of contemporary art. During lesson three, the observer noted that students talked to each other about their experiences as they created their miniature soap sculptures to show figures, musical instruments and other personal objects with a lot of patience and carefully planned hand movements. At the last lesson teacher and artist noted that the students accomplished their goal cooperating with each other. As the artist wrote, "each student indicated how unique s/he is and how different her/his views and character is". The students that worked hard managed to finalize all the unfinished work they had as a team. Finally, they recorded their ideas about the final set-up of the project. Some students asked to work together and were allowed. Ideas were presented to the classroom and everyone enjoyed it.

The third research question dealt with the artist's engagement in the project and the inquiry of bringing new ideas and strategies in the process of teaching/learning. Regarding this, the teacher noted that students seemed to be quite puzzled when they were given small empty boxes at their beginning of their

artistic work, and were asked to use it for capturing their personal moments. Some students had not understood very well how useful the boxes could be at their own creation. It is important to note that a student told the artist that he would like to capture a personal moment in as a little box as he could, so that he could always have it and carry it with him. Another student decided to choose a larger box to show how great his love is for the person in his photograph.

The artist's engagement during the first lesson of the project brought new views and inspired students in their creative work. More precisely the artist noted in her reflective diary:

Students were enthusiastic to touch and got into their hands the original works of art that were made specifically for this purpose (to be able to touch). They admired the fact that everything was in a small scale. I did not expect so much interest for the materials used, the time needed to be made and how. We managed to stimulate their attention to the incredibly small scale. They could not believe that something so small can be defined as a work of art. A new unknown world, the world of micro sculpture, was revealed to them.

The same notifications were made both by teacher and observer who mentioned that the students, in their private discussions with peers, said that they felt extremely lucky that the artist gave them her original artworks to be touched by them. The students had the opportunity to see some more of artist's artworks from different periods of her artistic practice, and they commented how stunning they were but still, difficult to be made.

As the artist mentioned, during lesson one, students were eager to see her artworks and they wondered what the role of the artist would be in the project. The different artworks and materials the artist brought to the classroom motivated students' curiosity and critical thinking. They kept asking questions about the artworks and how they were possible to be made. This triggered the discussion about the materials used, cocoons and silkworms, and it provided a good starting point to talk about the notion of the circle of life.

At the beginning of lesson two students entered the classroom with a lot of excitement and were eager to proceed with the project. Providing them with only the cylinder students questioned what precious moments could fit in such a small place and what they could do about it. This led to a discussion about the composition and organization of their work in the cylinder from the

beginning. The instructions were clear so as to save time. Students began to find solutions to manufacturing problems that had to do either about the material and its placement in the rare object, or about the small scale. They also discussed how to show their feelings through their art.

During lesson four, artist provided clear instructions and directions to students regarding the micro sculpture with the soap, so that they knew beforehand the procedure and the outcome. The artist noted that this procedure kept them alert because they realized that they had a lot of work to execute and even needed discipline and responsibility. The group that worked with the artist indicated a lot of interest and was quite productive. Students managed to create two sculptures each. A student asked the question why they collected the remnants of soap at the finalisation of the sculpting (students were told that everything that is left is stored in a pot) and the artist explained that these remnants can create a new blend to make a larger sculpture. They expressed the wish that they would like the artist to return to the school to create something bigger with them.

Lesson by lesson students got closer to the artist, they became familiar to the techniques and procedures, and they were eager to work with her. The artist's engagement to the process of teaching/

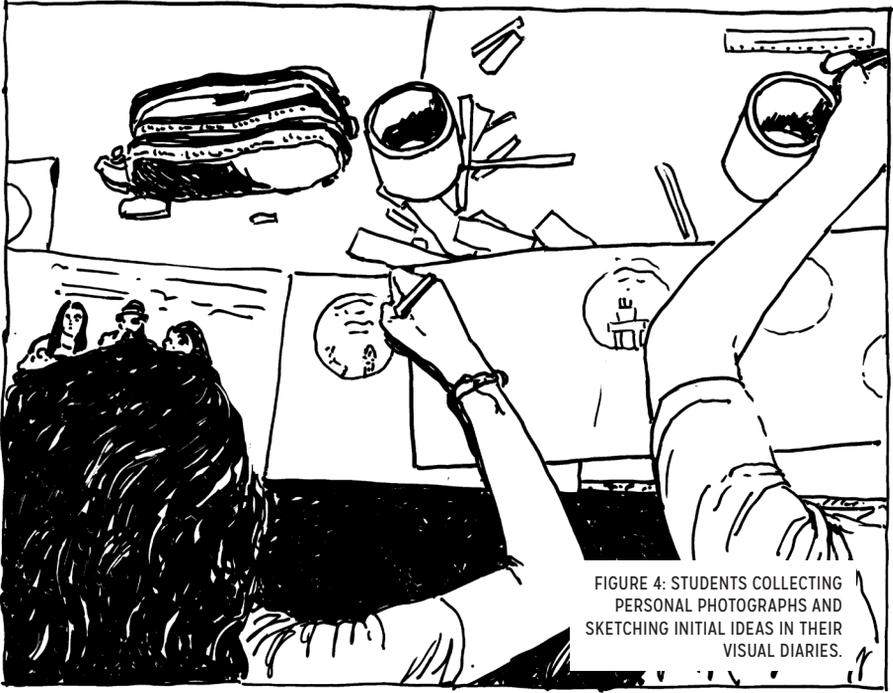


FIGURE 4: STUDENTS COLLECTING PERSONAL PHOTOGRAPHS AND SKETCHING INITIAL IDEAS IN THEIR VISUAL DIARIES.

learning seemed to be crucial for the students. The artist noted they kept excited about the lessons and this helped them to be methodical and efficient. She also mentioned that during lesson seven a student gave her a painting to thank her for her presence and her help in this work. Afterwards all the students began to express their feelings about how valuable was her help, and that they would miss her and she should not forget them but come back to visit them. As the teacher noted, the last lesson students entered the class knowing that it would be the last lesson with the visual artist. They asked various questions about whether they could show their love and gratitude to the artist, such as

“Can I embrace her?” “Can I ask for her phone number?” “Will she come back to visit us?” As the artist said, they asked her to stay in the school for the rest of the school year. At the end of the lesson the teacher gave students time to express their feelings and thoughts about how they felt by working with the artist. Some of them indeed gave her hugs, they did ask for her phone number, they improvised a theatrical play for her and they read aloud a poem to her. Finally, the artist noted “I have to admit that it was one of the most exciting moments I had with students, and then I realized that the project theme we chose with the teacher, short personal stories, was perfect for them”.

FIGURE 5: STUDENT STUDYING THE ARTIST'S MINIATURE ARTWORK USING A MAGNIFYING GLASS.



FIGURE 6: THE ARTIST OFFERS SUPPORT TO STUDENTS WHILE SCULPTING THEIR MINIATURE SOAP FIGURES.

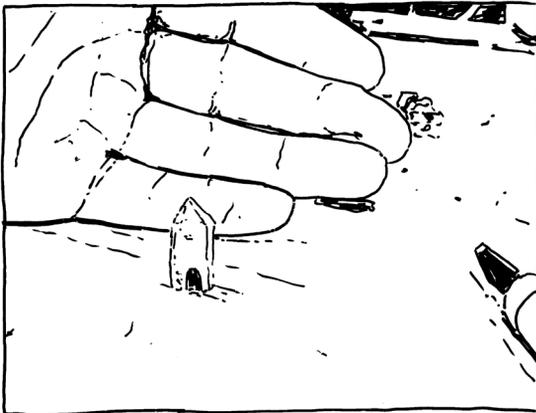


FIGURE 7: A MINIATURE SOAP SCULPTURAL PIECE IN PROGRESS.



FIGURE 8: STUDENTS WORKING ON THEIR SOAP SCULPTURAL PIECES. THE CONSTRUCTION OF THEIR CYLINDERS IS ALMOST COMPLETE.



FIGURE 9: THE TEACHER HELPS OUT STUDENTS WITH THE WEAVING PROCEDURE IN THE CENTRE OF THE CYLINDERS.



FIGURE 10: WEAVING IN PROGRESS.



FIGURE 11: COLLAGE PIECES - IMAGES AND TEXT - ARE INSERTED IN THE INTERNAL SURFACE OF THE CYLINDER.

FIGURE 12: THE ARTIST HANGS THE COMPLETED COLLECTIVE ART PIECE FROM THE CEILING OF THE SCHOOL ROOM.



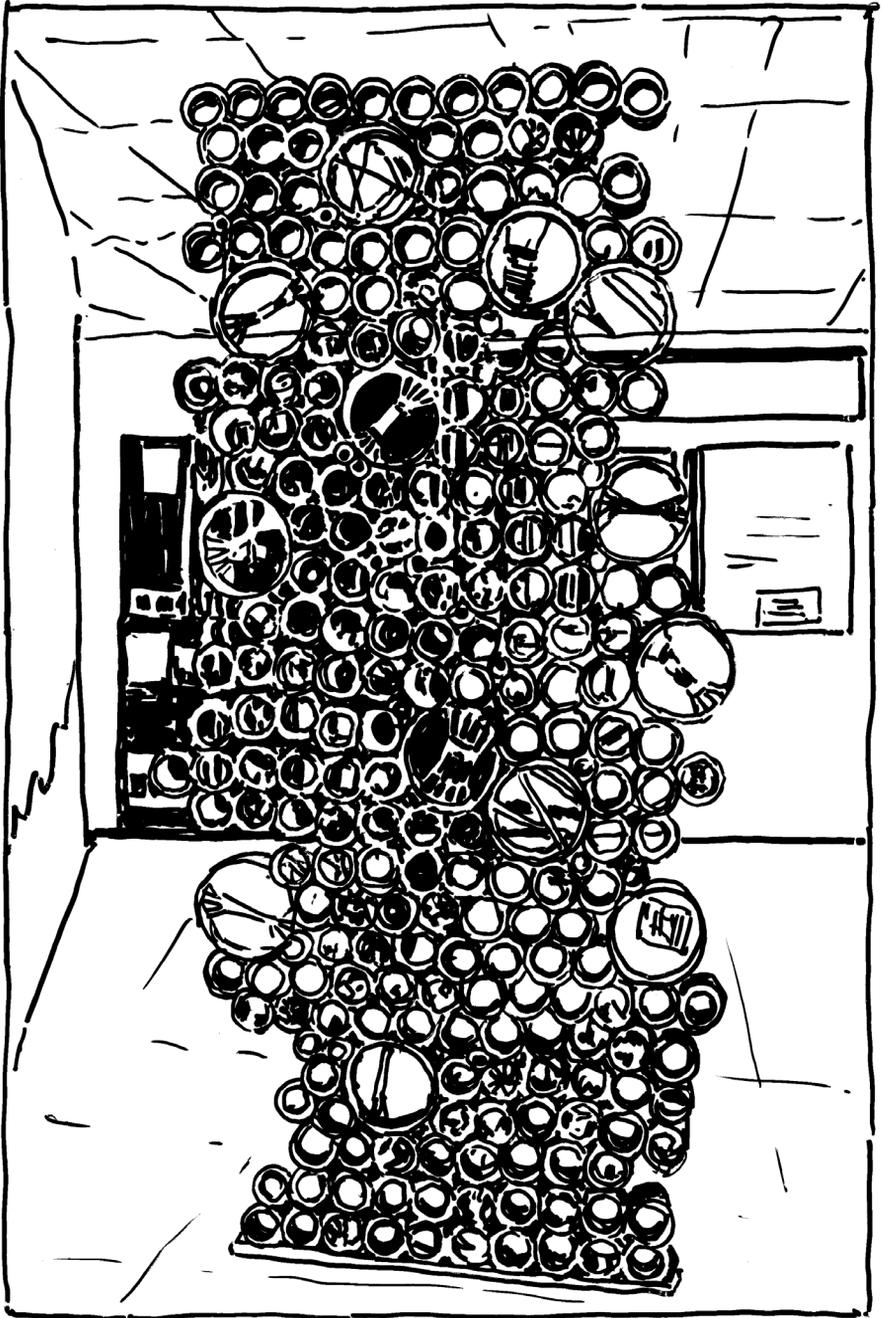


FIGURE 13: THE FINAL INSTALLATION WORK.

OUTCOMES AND SUGGESTIONS

Various teaching strategies were exploited throughout the three-month art unit such as play, dialogue, investigation and collection of materials and ideas, experimentation, exploration, visual research, debate, interaction with authentic situations/ artworks/artefacts/people, multimodal production, reflection, dissemination of ideas, presentations, exhibition.

Contemporary art remained the general strategy in focus during the course of the project, in combination with the aforementioned strategies.

Employing contemporary art as a strategy comprises the direct discourse of important issues for young students; such artworks can be critical, draw attention to unique processes of creation, and deal with a vast plethora of cultural and social issues as well as of issues that are in the scope of artist's identity. Downing and Watson (2004) emphasize that using contemporary art in the classroom provides chances for students to explore 'social, moral and political issues', and identify art as 'a visual communication tool' (cited in Adams *et al* 2008, p. 5). Above all, contemporary art can raise questions and stimulate conversations, as it is simultaneously concerned with concepts, meaning, production and aesthetics. It can present opportunities for students in placing themselves at the centre of their own learning, by drawing on personal experience, and referencing issues that



FIGURE 14: STUDENT IS OBSERVING THE COLLECTION OF SHORT PERSONAL STORIES WITH A MAGNIFYING GLASS.

emerge from their everyday realities (ADAMS *et al* 2008).

Direct contact with original works of contemporary art, and not just reproductions, can be regarded as a 'site of possibility for making art, thinking about art, and teaching art' (SULLIVAN 2002, p.29), as students view and examine contemporary artists' creative problem-solving processes that reflect their own environments and contexts (GUDE 2004). Hands-on experiences with authentic works of art of the invited artist, in combination with the artist's presentation and interaction with students, proved to be the focal means throughout this art project of deeply engaging with contemporary art as students were invited to touch and embrace the actual works; observe them; play with them; engage in dialogue about them in groups; look at them repeatedly to reform opinions; make speculations and reach conclusions. As the need arised for exploring how 'contemporary art plays with notions of authenticity and identity' (BURGESS 2003, p.120) in the school context, this study hopefully demonstrates a genuine educational situation where students, teacher and artist went through a deep engagement with identity issues and a 'diverse and fluid' interpretation of the artworks, 'not limited to formal, historical, aesthetic or theoretical methodology' (BURGESS 2003, p.120).

Additionally, as the engagement with contemporary art encourages students to construct their own meanings rather than accept meanings built by others, leading them to find their own individual authentic voices (AVGOUSTI *et al*, 2014), the current study reinforces this notion with the direct and deep involvement of the artist in the teaching/learning process.

The analysis of the research data that were collected from artist's, teacher's and observer's diaries indicated that there was evidence of changing mind-sets on the way students perceive and appreciate contemporary art through viewing and, perhaps most importantly, through being engaged in creating. Looking at and touching the artist's artworks in the everyday classroom setting was an employed strategy that proved to be inspiring, exciting and most probably transformative for students. Making their own art pieces with the artist's contribution was also an idea that reinforced learner's self-direction, the exploratory character of their art making and the diverse interpretation of personal stories that had an impact to the construction of students' artistic identity.

The relationship of the triptych teacher-artist-students positioned at the centre of their collaboration the idea of working as contemporary visual artists. They followed an artists' paths

through creation by beginning with the birth of ideas, continuing with the development and concluding with the realization, all these in response to personal experiences. Students acted as researchers as well, who worked through artmaking as they constructed meanings and connections with their inner selves, forming their artistic identity as their art evolved. As contemporary art projects allow for more 'adventurous and flexible' roles of students in their methods of working (Adams *et al.*, 2008, p. 39), students (likewise the teacher and the artist), during this project, experimented and tested, discovered, built and expressed their short personal stories in ways that will optimistically contribute to novel ideas for the design and implementation of more artistic partnerships.

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THE ARTIST IN THE SCHOOL

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INÊS AZEVEDO | JOANA MATEUS

ABSTRACT

Creative School Partnerships with Visual Artists –CREARTE is the project from which two artistic and pedagogical experimental proposals were developed and implemented in school: “Staged City / A Cidade em Cena” and “Water Goes! / Água Vai!”. These two proposals, hereinafter projects, were developed by two artists, in collaboration with primary school teachers and students.

The present essay exposes a way of acting before the creation and the development of artistic projects made with the school community and within the school. More than presenting a report about the activities, which may be consulted in the project’s website, this essay defines premises and commitments, our own, which we consider to be specific to projects of an artistic nature when in collaboration with schools.

We're in school and we're artists. We consider we are committed: to a place where we decided to act upon and in which we were greeted; to specific artistic practices and proposals; to a particular discourse which has to be addressed; and to a certain experience in feeling and recognising. About our presence in the school, we chose to take an interventional stance with the intent that our actions be producers of changes in the children and their school community – changes within the relation between creating and the practice of instrumentalising knowledge. We provide possibilities, not certainties; we don't point out mistakes, just problems, we offer complexity and not specificity, we practice what we know from a shared and emotional perception; we foster a poetic glance over the ordinary.

School is a living place where teaching and learning are supplied. Knowing it well, for all the years in which we participated, we acknowledge that it's not always the best place for the development of every child and adolescent. We do, however, recognise its transformative capacity. The principles of freedom inherent to teaching and learning, which are in the Basic Law of our educational system, guide many teachers and other education agents that make the school a project which is rich and conscious of the current challenges it must face. It was from a context of

openness and availability to partake in different ways of seeing that, in the school, we found space for our wished practice.

Nevertheless, we know that despite the school's openness to greet projects of an artistic nature, the tendency of its guidelines is to move toward restrictive actions and gestures – whether it be in the ways of learning and their relationship with knowledge, or the inclusion of the body and the normalisation of behaviour – that stop it from being a place where every child grows wholly, in responsibility, autonomy and happiness. Thus, we've established the commitment of collaborating in the relationship with knowledge and with learning, and of promoting the expansion of the limits of the children's identity and their active interference in the construction of their school process, which the school monopolises and converges to its core.

Our presence, as artists in the school relied on teachers who were willing to share a piece of their educational role, accepting the setting of a special relationship between artist, teacher and students. For us, this relationship is, in fact, very special and crucial: it develops in an interim manner, in complexity, in negotiation, and in a waddle between us being artists who are mediating and in mediation.

We use the distinction between mediation and mediator, thought by Jean-François Six, to characterise the constant and simultaneous ambivalence of our actions in the school. In sum, we are artist educators. This understanding of mediation, that guides us, describes a relation that we're part of, which, to begin with, waives the need of a third individual or element to enable it. It defines our will to make collectively, to bring value, to carry out a discovery of each subject's potentiality and of the other's empowerment (SIX, 2001). For that reason, since we enjoy working in groups, we've offered ourselves to do so. Thus, we seek to be in a mediation without a mediator, where none of the parts involved will control the situation, neither will they attempt to solve or fix a conflict, but both collaborate on their encounter and in the resolutions of their tensions. As a result of such, we describe our presence to the children and to the teachers as people who want to think together, and wish to have an encounter, without there having to be a right or wrong outcome nor necessarily an agreement or a disagreement. There are two parts, educational community and artist, that talk as friends; a dialogue in which each friend presents to the other a problem that together they can think of and put into practice.

Once we determined to act upon the processes, practice and instrumentalisation of knowledge

creation, we established ourselves as the link between society and the child, and decided to regard the curricula as representational synthesis of the world and a fertile work basis.

Defining that the intervention should have the same referents that guided those with whom we were developing it was a premise. If we were interested in provoking changes, these would be clearer if the "ingredients" were the same. So, in these projects¹ we sought out to relate ourselves to the schooling experience and to the shaping of personal processes regarding knowledge. The educational policies cause the definition of curricula components and educational goals of standardised regulations to drift, contributing to a one-way formulation of the ways of being and acting before learning. The instituted logic of learning as a formal understanding of knowledge, originated by communicated standardisations in hierarchical power relations, contributes to "social problems (...) experienced as individual rather than collective" and the schools, their teachers and their parents/guardians tend to look for "biographic solutions to systemic contradictions" in their children and families (BISHOP, 2012, p.14). The "corner" that teachers, parents/guardians and students are forced into, in face of the success or failure of learning, fosters processes of personal and professional scapegoating against a logic

of competition between children and between schools, socially referred to as statistical elements.

The social relations experienced in school, the children's life experience and family heritage, and even the integration of learning into one's individual context, tend to be the least considered elements in the process of learning in school. Thus, it mattered to us to find space to work on: the transformation and the adaptation of the programs' predefined theoretical contents into learning enabling practices/exercises; the segmentation of knowledge in fragmented subjects and that element's articulation with the practices of learning; the continuous blaming of the curricula as the cause for school failure, which has experienced constant transformations and adaptations. School's body would be our body of work. Acting from the same reality and contemplating the teachers and students' daily areas of action: programmes, curricula, classrooms and their equipment. Defining, in school, a field of interest in which we'd like to work on, we also understood a set of elements that, from the beginning, interfered in the peruse of artists in the school environment.

Our past experience allows us to ascertain that the presence of artists in school involves a double perspective which exacerbates and limits the relation

between both parts. One perspective is shaped by the school and by the relation it establishes with its practice. The presence of an artist seems to fuel an interpretation, by the other school professionals, in which the work that the artist can develop bears an aura of a reality parallel to the school's. The artist appears as one who can simply transport to school its relationship with the artistic object, providing an extraordinary moment, unreachable by teachers, regarding themselves as confined to the literal experience of textbooks and everyday school life. Alternatively, the artist is the teacher of extracurricular activities, which are depreciated by the continuous political educational reforms, that regard expression as a peripheral component to learning and to the engaging with knowledge.

The other perspective derives from the effect that the public policies and the subsidies to the arts, namely the ones from the 1960's created in Europe during the 1990's, promote in the associated understanding of art's role in society. Our will to establish an intrinsic connection between art and education is entailed in the artistic developments that have occurred since the 1960's, recognised in Umberto Eco's understanding of open work, going through the work of Joseph Beuys, Lygia Clark e Hélio Oiticica, amongst others. We recognise that heritage in participative artistic projects, such as

Adrien Piper's "Funk Lessons", where the artist puts herself in the role of a mediator between a certain audience (middle class white people) and a particular culture (funk), finding in that relation a space of mediation for herself, as she describes:

most of my white friends feel less alienated from this aesthetic idiom after having participated in it directly, and discussed their feelings about it in a receptive context (...) the real point for me has to do with the ways in which it enables me to overcome my own sense of alienation, both from white and black culture. (PIPER, 1996, P.134).

The public becomes "artistic material" (CARNEVALE, 1968, P.117) in projects which constitute works of art depending on the participation of a crowd with whom the oeuvre connects. We are interested in these projects' open and discursive character that encourages a particular understanding of that situation as political experience of learning. Just as stated by Group Material in 1990, "we are not interested in making definitive evaluations or declarative statements, but in creating situations that offer our chosen subject as complex and open-ended issue." (GROUP MATERIAL, 1990, P.136).

The role that artists and some collectives started undertaking,

and that spread throughout Europe in the 1990's, encouraged them to create participative artistic projects, socially entailed and inclusive. This perspective, which incorporates and supports socially interventional artistic projects with public funding, has contributed to an alteration of the once subversive concepts of participation, creativity and community, fuelling the creation of "submissive citizens who respect authority and accept the risk and responsibility of looking after themselves" (BISHOP, 2012, P.13). Bishop argues that this keeping of artistic projects as a social service causes a slide from the artistic field to the sociological discourse, in which the fields of assessment and critique tend to be sociological and transformed into verifiable results, where aesthetic is considered an ungrateful component of artistic practice. The author says that "artistic practice has an element of critical negation and an ability to sustain contradiction that cannot be reconciled with the quantifiable imperatives of positivist economies. Artists and works of art can operate in a space of antagonism and negation, vis-à-vis society, a tension that the ideological discourse of creativity reduces to an unified context and instrumentalizes for more efficacious profiteering". (2012, P.16).

This double perspective, created not only by dealing with the artistic and school

praxes, but also with the history of participative and community integrating artistic projects, suppresses encounters, curtails work processes, making them less pervious, and reduces the mutual capacity of influence and fruition.

We've considered that our ground and our matter should be the same as the teachers and students' and that we had to contribute to stopping the curricula and the textbooks' aseptic aesthetic. It was time to "soil" the curricula with the reality of who uses things. What we wanted was clear, and we wanted to work on the vulgar, but, as Lygia Clark wrote, to take common things is not a matter of chance, but a matter of tasting the "fruit of the moment" (CLARK, 1968, P.110). We believe, like the artist, that rudimentary elements allow the awareness of a poetic experience because their structure is open and free of a particular aesthetic. Thus, our level of commitment to the school thickened, even approaching the contents, displaying the dialogical capacity of the artistic thought and practice with the school curricula. The way this work would evolve wouldn't have a social stronghold. We weren't developing this project to solve the issues of engaging with learning or the curricula, but defining proposals that bore a political conscience and, by consequence, a particular aesthetic. By the latter we mean the conscience that the school, by featuring such praxes and such instrumentalisation of knowledge

– from unilateral and self-consequent institutional definitions, clean, sanitised, schematised from the simple to the complex, palpable from textbooks and worksheets, thinking in the success of learning, not of the learner's but of itself – tends to forget children and the complexity of internal processes with which knowledge roots itself in the person. This led us to use what was at our hands' reach: the common and the peripheral to the classroom. The handling of rudimentary materials, of what is usual, circumstantial, game, play and break, was transported to what is specific, normative, self-consequent and to the classroom. The limits were blurred, and the classroom's body was taken and put into action-practice-performance.

In this commitment to artist-educators in school, we activated art's capacity to involve different ways of engaging with knowledge and to provide other languages and forms of discourse. We understood, like Jonathan Carry, that "la visión es sólo una de las partes de un cuerpo capaz de evadir el encierro institucional y de inventar nuevas formas, afectos e intensidades" (1999, p.13). In other words, sight is not an impervious sense, and image always belongs to a situation in which the subject doesn't simply establish a uniquely visual connection; image concerns a multi sensorial and heterogeneous body's general perception.

For that reason, we emphasised every sense's functions in the complex and heterogeneous manner we apprehend reality and, in this, we involved various ways of learning – the artist's ways and processes are multiple and infinite. We educate for a visual literacy, to know and to reflect upon contemporary society's images – visual literacy, sums up Isabel Capeloa Gil (2011), is, simultaneously, a competence that implies multiple intelligences and a strategy of cultural action and of intervention in the citizenry. It is fundamental that children recognise image's interpellation character and their own take under different circumstances.

At this point, we turn into mediators: we aren't just in a relation of mediation, wholly, because we lead action to a particular end and in a particular manner. This collaboration that is established does not come from a "political vacuum. It is not a "free space" where you say what you want. Dialogues take place inside some programme and content" (FREIRE, 1987, p.102). The working relationship we wanted to establish with the teachers, the students and the institution was guided. This prior understanding would define the remaining work process, given that it implies a positioning before the issues associated to artistic practice, like the relation with artistic object and authorship, work process and aesthetic options, the audience's presence and participation, the work's completion and

exhibition.

Effectively, our artistic action in school is greatly specific: we developed a collaborative project and we made a collective work. Instead of an artist, there is a proposal for a 'shared situation/problem'; instead of an artistic work, there is a 'project' that is built; instead of an audience, or observers, there is a co-production in which the other is regarded as a "participant" (BISHOP, 2012, p.2). We expose certain questions that challenge us to look for the completion of answers through experiences and objects. Nevertheless, we do not provide solutions, but tools so that the child can use in her or his own action that contributes to her or his own rise as a political being – because we reflect upon the circumstances of making, the decisions made and the alternatives. In this regard, when we work with children we are in a relationship of mutual sharing, in a mediation, participating in the creation of an aesthetic experience, of the distribution of the sensible (RANCIÈRE, 2010).

*The possibility to vehicle
ecology*

poiesis

politics

is open.

School, thing of the ordinary, is filled with a renewed aesthetic sense.

¹ “Staged City / A Cidade em Cena” e “Water Goes! / Água Vai!”.

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to satisfy my need to imagine a meaning

**(IM) POSSIBILITIES AND CHALLENGES
OF THE ARTS IN PRIMARY EDUCATION**

Can the Art Educator be a Virus?

CATARINA S. MARTINS | ILDA DE SOUSA | VALENTINA PEREIRA

¹ In Portugal, primary school level is usually designated as the first cycle of basic education. In this chapter, we use both terms meaning that we are referring to the first four years of school education, for children between 6 and 10 years old.

INTRODUCTION

This chapter intends to frame the European project CREATE within the current Portuguese educational panorama in arts education, in primary school¹. The project CREATE involved five European countries and aimed at developing strategic partnerships between artists and primary education schools. Although the project's major goals have been common to the various developments in each country, the truth is that the history of arts education in those countries required different ways and understandings in relation to art's place and pertinence in contemporary education. On the one hand, what was defined as strategic, the partnerships between artists and schools, was varyingly understood and explored in the countries involved in CREATE, and even in the micro-projects developed in those countries. On the other hand, the views and the standpoints of researchers also diverged. In a way, we would like to clarify that we understand the belonging to a collective, designed by the project, not in the sense of needing a consensus in positions, but, on the contrary, to take advantage of the frictions and divergences as spaces from which we could think deeper about each issue involved in CREATE.

In this chapter, what we seek to outline is, firstly, a framework that renders visibility – even though the arts are

recurrently harnessed nationally and internationally in the political field – to the feeling that, in this territory, everything is yet to be done, be it for the lack of resources, specialists, time, or simple consideration for this area, in school or in society in general. Trying to understand the possibilities of action in the field of the basic school's first cycle, in arts education, was the reason why we decided to go ahead with this challenging project. The difficulties and the results obtained make clear that the arguments which sustain the presence of arts in education should abandon the rhetoric of the effects and of the instrumentalisation of the arts in order to become centred in the understanding of the complexities and the possibilities of action.

In the first part of the text, we seek to reflect upon the recurring argumentation about arts in school. We are talking about: the constantly referred hierarchisation of the artistic areas in relation to the other the curricular areas; the arts' apparent uselessness in the face of the neo-liberal society, where you learn to answer with positivity to productivity, acceleration and efficiency; structural issues regarding the artistic training of primary school's teachers and the instrumentalisation of arts in education.

The text unfolds aiming to provide the reader with an image of the arts'

situation in the first cycle of basic education, in the Portuguese context, before a language of learning and assessment that has become a synonym for transparency and rigour. Albeit briefly, we pursue the dismantlement of the apparatus that is the assessment of artistic learning, which, this year, has been set up around the first cycle of basic school. In doing so, we intend to denaturalise the ways in which we observe and act in the educational field, highlighting the powers that percolate the manners of saying, making and acting. This is where we position ourselves critically to the ways that the arts have been inscribed within the curricula. Transposing them to the school, the arts are crossed by an alchemy which transforms them into teachable and assessable subjects that, when carefully examined, make clear that, in fact, what we today call contemporary art does not exist in schools.

The third part of our text intends to place CREATTE in relation to the laid-out principles. There was the intention, in our desires, to mess the school's order, to conflict with its grammars, to question the identities there fabricated and to open, in this space of instability, the possibility of a yet to come, indeterminable. As we stated, it was a desire which, since its inception, was imagined as part of a critical gesture capable of understanding its own

impossibility. However, in the work carried out, we were able to understand that the figure of the artist should be, itself, the one to undergo a displacement.

What we propose in the fourth part of the text is not to think about the artist's image as 'the exceptional one', but rather to think about the art educator as a viral figure. We are interested in the impurity, in the disorder and in the virus' epidemic character as a metaphor that challenges the regular functioning of organic and mechanical apparatuses.

THE SCRIPT OF PERIPHERALISATION, USELESSNESS, THE LACK OF TRAINING AND THE INSTRUMENTALISATION OF THE ARTS IN EDUCATION

Arts Education is part of the most of the curricula worldwide (BAMFORD, 2009; EURYDICE, 2009) and despite being a curricular component of the first cycle of basic education, it is still regarded second to the other knowledges. In the Portuguese territory, and in its inherent legislation, in 1986, the appearance of the *Lei de Bases do Sistema Educativo* – LBSE [Bases of the Educational System's Law] – registers the mention to arts education. The concern with this educational area began to emerge consistently in the national educational

panorama, which is patent in the first issue of a technical statement on arts education from *Conselho Nacional de Educação* – CNE [National Board of Education] – in 1989, when mandatory arts education throughout all basic schooling was already being defended. In the Portuguese case, despite this recommendation, and others that came after, the arts are still considered peripheral in the face of other areas such as Portuguese Language, Mathematics and *Estudo do Meio* [Science studies], being pushed aside to the period of *Atividades de Enriquecimento Extra Curricular*² [Extra Curricular Enrichment Activities].

The marginalisation of the arts in education is verifiable not only by the number of hours dedicated to the artistic component throughout the first grade of basic education, but also in the teachers' training. This problem is not specific to the Portuguese case, nor it is a new accusation. Besides, first cycle teachers are trained as 'generalist teachers' and their artistic training is often insufficient, which doesn't allow the development of solid artistic competences that may enable a qualified development of the arts (HALLAM, GUPTA, & LEE, 2008; HEGARTY *et al.*, 1989). This situation questions the teacher's profile and the possible collaborative work regime with specialists in areas of knowledge approached in the different school

subjects. The curricular support by educators with training in art is, through the model of school assistance, a legal possibility, but one that only occurs spontaneously.

However, driving arts education (namely the visual arts and music) towards extra-curricular activities is recurrent. During and after the implementation of the artistic residencies in schools within CREATETE, we talked with some teachers. In general, the teachers said what the literature on the subject has been identifying as the main problems of developing artistic areas in primary schools. One of the participant teachers of the project states that "there are a lot of areas we have to work on more than others. (...) And it leaves little room for the rest. To the arts... yes, to the arts, for example. To the arts, to the values... to a series of areas. (...) One too many concepts for the kids to dominate, and teachers struggle so that it stays in their little heads, and it takes time... in fact, it's too many concepts. Make repeat, repeat, repeat..."

The lack of time (considering the time needed for other curricular areas), and the weak preparation to seriously tackle arts education, constitute the two most repeated arguments to justify the little, or the absence of, investment in artistic activities. When they are considered, it is mostly because of the apparent interest these activities seem to have for the

students. To the teachers, they are areas that ‘motivate’ and leave the students ‘excited’ and ‘happy’. Not seldom, these areas are temporarily introduced at the end of the afternoons, fostering a space of ‘liberation’ before other school tasks, or a therapeutic space, in which the commitment to subjects that, supposedly, aren’t accessed, allows the students to ‘relax’. In addition to that, the revelation of the utility of artistic activities – that they may enhance the remaining school tasks –, is frequently sought out. In general, teachers consider that working in projects that involve the arts is more interesting and facilitating, and, because of that, in their view, the artistic projects implemented in the context of CREATETE didn’t stop being useful to other areas of knowledge.

What interests us, here, is to think about the systems of rationality that make these arguments to justify the arts in education reasonable. Easily, art emerges as a facilitator for the learning of other contents (related to mathematics or science, to name a few), which confirms, in these cases, an instrumentalisation of the arts that doesn’t face these areas and the complexities, contradictions and ambiguities of their specificities. Following this reasoning, there is the idea of the arts being for those who were born gifted with exceptional abilities, with a calling for such. This takes on different shapes in school, for example, the generalised ‘good’ and

‘bad’ drawing, which creates certain relations between the students and their drawings, acting on the way in which they classify themselves as a ‘good’ or a ‘bad’ drawer. Some teachers who have participated in CREATETE are aware of how often excluding comments are offered in the classroom. Remarks like “Hey, this house is wrongly painted. Oh, don’t paint it like that. The roof isn’t black, just paint it red.”, are common and inscribe particular grids of rationality that define a specific optic relation between the child and the drawing, between the drawing and what we call reality, between the practice and the experience of the drawing, and particular representational codes such as the perspective. The history of vocation, aptitude and genius, as a technology of governing the school, would deserve a more detailed analysis that would lead us to understand the imaginaries and the expectations that are deployed in the schooling apparatus, and that generate excluding gestures when it comes to mobilising the arts in the education of children’s and youngsters.

A recent national study conducted by us, that consisted in interviews with children, teachers, grouping directors, and parents, allowed us to conclude what was previously assumed by the National Board of Education and by CREATETE: from the perspective of its social importance, the arts are hardly ever considered to be at the same level

as the other subjects (MARTINS & ALVES, 2015). We would even say that the field agents have a historic feeling of inferiority. There is a script that seems to be in a loop, generation after generation, always accusing the political structure of the little importance given to the arts, but without never, or almost never, proposing an understanding that places the arts outside a rhetoric of effects or of its instrumentalisation. In 2013, the same National Board of Education would, again, reinforce its stance:

The importance of artistic education for all who are involved in training and in the educational system gathers a broad consensus. Political decision-makers who carry a liability in this matter, from researchers and professionals linked to education up to the most diverse parts of society, recognise this area as a fundamental one, be it for the individual development or for the development of society. (...) Portugal is far from achieving the fulfilment of arts education, considered desirable, that has been met in other countries (CNE, 2013, p. 4270).

The short-term artistic residencies implemented in the CREATE project allowed us a more precise diagnosis of the condition of the arts within the first cycle of basic education, which precisely

reflects the scenario laid out by Eisner in 1999 on arts education in the American schools, when he stated: “We have limited time for a low-status subject, being taught by teachers unprepared to teach it” (EISNER, 1999, p.19). In fact, what is done in schools is alarming and fits in what, also, Efland (1976) in the 1970’s designated ‘school art style’. On the one hand, as we have mentioned before, there is a lot to be done in the training of first cycle teachers, if a single teacher regime is to be kept; on the other hand, arts in school are just like any other subject. They are constituted by the lens and grids of psychology. The children, thus, undergo processes of learning based on mimesis, repetition and reading scores, instead of experiencing instruments or listening; a disciplinary regime of the body in the place of experimenting and knowing it; reproduction of tasks, the resolution of problems, moral and citizenry skills, how to work in groups, how to develop social skills, rather than indulging in a development of ways of questioning and thinking that the artistic, much more than art, can spur.

The presence of arts in education embodies, for example, narratives of salvation on the promise of a more humane and progressive society. In general, arts are used as “remediation and redemption instruments of personal and social change for young people” (HEATH, 2008, p. x). On the one hand,

in the 18th century, all of those who were considered potentially dangerous to the normal development of the social tissue were submitted to the arts as technologies of salvation. On the other hand, in the elites, the arts weren't contemplated as an activity of future, but as part of a civilised and cultural life, as a technology of social distinction (MARTINS, 2014).

For this reason, to think about the hierarchisation of school subjects, the little time reserved to the arts in education, the shy investment in teacher training, or the constantly reproduced arguments about arts' benefits at the service of other knowledges, or in children's disciplining, leads, from a political and social viewpoint, to a deeper critique of the educational apparatus, of the school, and of the roles and the mission given to teachers. It is precisely in the justifications that frame the presence of the arts in school that we have been failing. We ask of the arts exactly what we would ask of any other school subject, regardless of the area. If today we are more capable of understanding that there is a great gap between what the curricular contents are, and of the areas of knowledge supposedly inscribed in them, we still aren't ready to question how much those curricula speak, not of the knowledges at issue, but more of the representations of the world and of the individuals inscribed in them, and on which they

operate, which limits the possibilities of thinking and being differently.

WHAT'S HAPPENING IN THE PORTUGUESE CHILDREN'S ARTS EDUCATION IN THE FIRST CYCLE OF BASIC EDUCATION?

Before we move on to discuss the principles inscribed in the CREAARTE project in Portugal, we would like to pause here and offer the reader a more detailed image about the situation of the arts in the first cycle of basic education in the Portuguese context. This year, in Portugal, seven-year-old children were assessed in the artistic areas (visual arts, music, gymnastics). Let us focus on the visual arts. The test followed the school's timing and its grammars: students of a certain age were assessed through tests. In fact, this seems to not trigger whichever feeling of oddness. Like Gert Biesta states:

Just as language makes some ways of saying and doing possible, it makes other ways of saying and doing difficult or even impossible. This is one important reason why language matters to education, because the language or languages we have available to speak about education determine to a large extent what can be said

and done, and thus what cannot be said and done” (BIESTA, 2005, p. 54)

There is a language of learning that today has become common sense and, as such, naturalises and does not question learning. The languages we use to talk about learning, assessment or the students’ needs, aren’t neutral. The discursive practices systematically form the objects about which they merely talk. The language of the test, as a language of objectivity, as a synonym for transparency and rigour, is a technology of government from which each one of us is positioned to achieve, or to govern oneself to achieve, a place created as desirable. It is under this rationality that seven-year-old children are also being assessed in the artistic areas, in Portugal.

Just as the well-known PISA, the tests applied to the Portuguese children inscribed the rationality of objectivity and neutrality. To the Ministry of Education, these assessments provide a detailed image of the nation regarding the teaching and the learning of the arts. What is somehow an illusion of disinterest, but at the same time the proof of objectivity and efficiency, tends to govern the pedagogical practices. On the one hand, the tests in the artistic areas appear as a policy that seems to understand that arts in education haven’t been considered in a place of equality to other school subjects. On the

other hand, they prove an incapacity of finding other ways of legitimation and construction of that same place, other than by the apparatus of assessment. This discussion about assessing or not assessing artistic knowledges is everything but new. On one side, stand the ones who state that it is not possible to assess that which belongs to the nature of self-expression. Across the divide, stand those who consider that, if the proper criteria are defined, then artistic learnings are no doubt assessable. On either stand, there seems to be no place for questioning how both have become ‘reasonable’. The historical disregard of the ways of thinking arts education stop us from seeing beyond the limits defined by specific grids of rationality. There is no neutral stance and the languages of assessment, in favour or against, define relations and particular manners of being. The practices of assessment build and make visible the pedagogised identities of teachers and students. As Dennis Atkinson argues:

In my experience assessing children’s or student’s artwork has always been a problematic aspect of teaching art in schools. [...] My purpose is to consider how assessment as a discursive practice can be considered as an apparatus of visibility and surveillance. I want to discuss how assessment in art practice

actually constructs or makes visible both student's and teacher's pedagogised identities (ATKINSON, 2007, p. 107)

The objectivity and transparency go hand-in-hand with the rhetoric of applicability and justice. This means that a referential of criteria other than mass test assessment, isn't imaginable through governing eyes. Statistic principles are at stake here, and whomever knows the history of modern states and statistics knows that these emerge precisely as the state's moral science, capable of providing for each their place before everybody else, and, as well, codified images about the place s/he takes, the possible spaces of correction, and the unreachable places. Statistics are one of the main weapons of the biopolitical government, i.e., the government of life.

So, and going back to the testing of artistic activities, the Ministry provided sample tests previously, which would allow the teachers to train their students in those contents. These tests created a horizon of expectations that justified and legitimised the application and the repetition of exercises in the classroom. In fact, in this comparative game, in which the children, the teachers and the schools are the players, whether they like it or not, the assessed knowledge gives way to images about who behaves properly and who doesn't have the desired behaviour, generating grids

about how those classified as being in a danger area, i.e., a pathological area, should behave.

One analysis of the arts' assessment test shows us this is not about the arts, but about the problem-solver and the well-physically-developed child. It inscribes psychology's concepts in the child's development, which determine that, at a certain age, a child should know how to perform certain tasks. This psychology of development is inscribed in the practices of management and normalisation existent in the assessment criteria (MARTINS, DATA, *in press*). The children's performance is thus codified from expectable results. What is assessed wasn't questioned nor discussed. What was asked from each child was to fold a cat's head, previously drawn on paper, and to decorate it, creatively. Even if the adverb "creatively" is used in the test, the students are being assessed by the number of eyes, nose and mouth that they can represent in the cat's face. The child's performance in this test will be codified within expected results.

It seems that there is no questioning about the arts when we talk about them in education. In fact, the contents of visual arts' simple sample tests are enough to understand how much the arts in primary schools are a misconception. Even if Art as a school's subject subsists because of its name's aura (and the notion of the genius),

we will never be talking about the arts as artistic practice, nor of the artist's practice when we discuss arts education. When transposed into school subjects, the knowledge that is supposed to represent a specific academic discipline is transformed. What is kept, is the name. However, this name is merely a label. Nonetheless, under this label lie manners of reasoning about the child's development, learning processes and problem-solving abilities, organised by layers that aim to change and transform her or him into a certain kind of person. Thomas Popkewitz called this the alchemy of school subjects. "School subjects", he argues, "have little to do with the network and relations that form and give order to the norms of participation, truth, and recognition in the various academic fields associated with school subjects" (POPKEWITZ, 2007, p. 78). Alchemies have a governing effect.

The alchemy of school subjects has to do with normalising and governing the student's conduct (POPKEWITZ, 2004). When historically examined, what was translated into the curricula had little to do with understanding art, science, mathematics or music as fields capable of producing knowledge. The central, organizing principles embodied cultural theses about ways of living. In the past, and still today, the cultural theses were about the dispositions, sensitivities and awareness that linked individuality to collective belonging and morality.

Vermeersch and Elias (2015) speak about the reduction of art (its scholarised version, be it in the curricula or in the tests) into a frivolous activity with a merely decorative function. As we have seen, there is a gap between the artistic field and its school spawn, created via psycho-pedagogical languages. These authors argue, however, that, historically, there's also a distance between teachers and the art world (artists, critique and theory of art).

The former group often has had limited arts educational training, but has a lot of enthusiasm and goodwill. The latter group has always approached the arts more as a study object than as a learnable practice. The fact that these two worlds have grown apart has meant that the art that is made in schools today is also far removed from what is happening in the contemporary art world (VERMEERSCH & ELIAS, 2015, p. 124).

In a time when art presents itself in the complexity of a multitude of perspectives and functions, and in the powers that it transports and perpetuates, to sustain arts education as a field for questioning, reflection and criticality, it is essential to detach it from craftsmanship and to assume it as a territory of suspension before the world's order.

TO MESS THE SCHOOL APPARATUS: THE (IM) POSSIBILITY OF A UTOPIA

Now, it will be more reasonable for the reader to understand the impulses that led to the developing of a project like *CREATE*. Regarding the arts in school, for at least since the 1950's, there has been a split between the all-round subjects, especially related to the world of labour and to the way one pictures the future, and the subjects which seem to serve no purpose at all: the arts. However, if we don't understand the moral and policing technologies contained in the practices of government which have marked art's insertion in schools, we will be ignoring the history of the arts' mobilisation in the school. For that reason, it is never enough to repeat that the arts are always placed in the periphery of curricula, timetables, and governmental concerns, as their mobilisation and instrumentalisation has been a historical persistence. Almost never changing. Nevertheless, here we are before its instrumentalisation through a rhetoric about its effects and its redeeming character, particularly when contemplated for the children and the young, either at risk or pathologically classified. These two paths share a long history. Also, this is not about considering the arts as an instrument of support to other curricular areas (GATZAMBIDE-FERNÁNDEZ, 2013),

like in the many times when researchers and professionals are forced to state so, to legitimise the arts in a neo-liberal political context (WINNER, GOLDSTEIN, & VINCENT-LANCRIN, 2013), instead of considering them in their own specificities and potentialities.

CREATE, in the Portuguese context, has focused on the possibilities of cooperation between different authors, dismantling this tendentious vision of the arts as entertainment, craftsmanship, decoration for school spaces, utensil for festivities, or, at best, instrument of the defragmentation of school areas, used as learning facilitators of other subjects, offering teacher training, cooperation by visual artists, resources and educational materials that may enrich the curricular area of artistic expressions. With these goals in mind, we intended to:

- x develop artistic projects in schools, allowing for a collaborative work between artists (interested in the educational and pedagogical dimensions), teachers and students in primary schools;
- x develop an approximation, an experimentation and ways of relating to the contemporary artistic practices, through the processes explored in each school's project;

- × open the school to the presence of the artistic, not through the 'expressive paths' commonly approached as 'crafts', 'play activities', or 'therapeutic moments', but rather by the complexities and tensions that art can have, this way fostering ruptures in the school's order, exercises and didactics by disturbing the distribution of knowledge and practices (as well as the ways of saying, seeing and doing);
- × create fissures in the existing frameworks of arts' practises and knowledges in schools;
- × deconstruct the idea of art and the artist as a field of the exceptional, through a close contact and collaborative work;
- × construct learning spaces embedded in flexible work processes that do not answer to psychological goals, but that are open to the questioning of what means to 'teach' and to 'learn', beyond the traditional practises that define the good and the bad, the desirable and the undesirable, the successful and the unsuccessful;
- × experiment a post-critical approach, instead of the

philosophies of representation of the student, the teacher and the knowledge (the becoming, rather than the stable and fixed identities);

- × to work towards the unknown instead of reproducing what is already known.

The main challenges are thus related to the type of questioning that these practices may enable within the school apparatus. What is being denaturalised is the way in which school conceives knowledge and prescribes certain ways of being, acting and thinking for each one of us, teachers and students. To potentiate the arts in education is to deconstruct the pedagogical recipe that has been prescribing what is intended to be seen as art in school. For example, one of the artists involved in the project, Mariana Delgado, argues that:

The contemporary educational policies anchored to the neoliberal ideology of 'employability' and 'competitiveness', and that in parallel shoves away arts education from the place of learning, inform a limited and limiting reality. The possibility of coexistence, of conflicting and challenging, is obstructed by withdrawing the world's multiple variations from its experience.

A multidisciplinary educational project, where different areas of knowledge have equal importance and are of mutual implication in the children's curricular enrichment, is refused. (...) The curricula omits, almost entirely, other dimensions necessarily important to the making in/of art. Not seldomly, the symbolical and metaphorical properties, and the contexts' cultural particularities are excluded; the child's "expressive" competences suffices, falling into a fake common sense, consisting in students of this age group not being able to understand nor to connect the mentioned concepts.

This is not an easy task. School is alive in each one of us, and not only is it difficult to question the languages that make education reasonable as compulsive practice in western societies, but also the discursive practices invented more than a century ago to talk about the child, the teacher, the school, learning, teaching, assessing. Two artists who developed residencies in the project as well, Inês Azevedo and Joana Mateus, recognise that school is a place we know well: "School is a living place where teaching and learning are supplied. We know it well, for all the years in which we participated, and we know that it's not always the best place for the development of every children and

adolescent. We do, however, recognise its transformative capacity."

In fact, the model for schooling not only seems natural, but the best system possible. Teachers, for example, don't recognise these practises within the normalised frameworks that govern their practice. Therefore, we were discussing the questioning of the western philosophies of representation, each of us identifying with it according to certain parameters defined as the norm. The key point in this is the opening of a situation in which pedagogy is not controlled by specified outcomes. In this setting, tests like the ones taken by seven-year-old children are impossible, or at least, completely absurd.

ARTISTS IN SCHOOLS: THE ART EDUCATOR AS A VIRUS

In the catering regime of education (GIELEN & BRUYNE, 2012), in which everything is in the right size and measure, delivered on time and custom made to fit into modules and competencies. Knowledge is divided and served in the right, small portions, aiming to match the imagined needs for the production of disciplined, useful and docile citizens. We could see this rationality for ourselves in the classrooms, in the speech of teachers and in the students, and in the analysis of curricula, in which the main concern

has been the division of sets of contents, running through psycho-pedagogical languages, into small fragments assimilated by children's 'types' and ages. Not seldom, these concerns are always reported as if they were addressing school and education's missions, and complying with them, to shape subjects who will be flexible and ready for the future. This is not new, though, as the neoliberal regimes have been using the language of criticism, which makes each one of us her, or his, own entrepreneur, and have sharpened and optimised, efficiently, the technologies and the grammar of school machinery. In a way, our proposal intended the creation of a space of resistance towards this neoliberal posture.

If we consider that the arts in education, from a contemporary viewpoint, must be disconnected from the place consigned to them by modernity, regarding the children and the young's psychological development, and the perspectives rooted in the centrality of a creative 'making', and that their place is one of active involvement in social and political projects, we thus find, in those grounds, the arguments that sustain their defence in public education. On the one hand, Neelands argues that arts education in the contemporary world has as its purpose the fostering of critical positioning that make children conscious of a posture that the artistic production and its public echo bear:

"they make children powerful in a social and political sense, as well as being individually rewarding interpretative and expressive acts" (NEELANDS, 2015, p. 410). On the other hand, Vermmescher and Elias warn that "the risk of an arts curriculum in which performing, making or 'doing' art dominate is that students will concentrate so much on acquiring technical skills that they limit themselves to only asking the 'how?' question and no longer learn to take a step back and answer the 'why?' question" (2015, p. 127). Again, Mariana Delgado — an artist involved in CREAARTE —, explains the way in which the list of craftsmanship, in the classrooms that she's been to, determined not only by the teachers' practices but also by the curricula speeches, imposes itself as the truth:

The subject of *Educação e Expressão Plástica* fits in a predominant structure of western rationality. In it, technical expressional activities are valued, using unquestionable and hermetic concepts, such as *linguagem plástica* [visual language] — instead of "artistic language" —, which bolster the external qualities and the materials of the objects produced by the students.

Recommending the participation of artists in educational projects, as done

so by the international research, is insightful, namely for what you can draw from Ken Robinson's statement: "The presence of artists, if well prepared for, can enrich teaching and the climate of the school as a whole". To some extent, CEARTE has been committed to these orientations. Notwithstanding, we'd like to think about the figure of the art-educator instead of that of artist. On the one hand, we understand the relevance of an artistic training and of a knowledge built upon artistic practices. On the other hand, we are also interested in the deconstruction of the concept of the 'artist' as an exceptional being, mainly connected to a romantic legacy of the artist as a genius. We understood that, in the schools, the artists who participated in the CEARTE project were frequently seen from that point of view. One of the artists, Margarida Dias, comments that, in certain occasions, the teachers saw themselves more as "project managers" than as collaborators, not daring to enter the domain which they considered to be the artist's: "It was like I owned wisdom and teachers couldn't get in my field. That's what I felt". That same experience is pointed out in Inês Azevedo and Joana Mateus' chapter, in this book, when they present the double perspective in the entry of artists into school contexts. Between the exceptional subject or the representative of an area that is unrecognised in its utility amongst the other subjects, "The artist appears as

one who can simply transport to school its relation with the artistic object, providing an extraordinary moment, unreachable by teachers regarding themselves confined to the literal experience of textbooks and everyday school life. Alternatively, the artist is the teacher of extracurricular activities, activities which are depreciated by the continuous political educational reforms, that regard expression as a component peripheral to learning and to the engaging with knowledge."

The second proposal is based on an understanding of this figure of the 'art educator' as a virus.

What's relevant here is the virus' disturbing nature as an infectious agent, capable of disrupting the normal state of an organism or an apparatus, like a kind of poison. More and more, some viruses are being experimented with, as a way of fighting some diseases. As a metaphor for an element which disrupts the status quo, the virus is always an event to the standard functioning of an organism or a machine. A virus provokes infections which are the invasions in the body caused by strange agents. We contemplate a disobedient art educator entering a school as some entity going into an organism, starting to challenge its capacities. As a disobedient agent it enervates power and order, but it is also a movement against itself in which the art educator questions not only the

normalized representations of pedagogy and schooling but also those that come from the art world. What interests us in this idea is to make room for an educational event through the ‘artistic’, that is not predicted. As Atkinson puts it, it is a disruption of “existing hegemonies that regulate teaching and learning practices” in the arts (2013, p. 144).

This metaphor is also very assertive as it questions the neat, orderly and controlled side of devices. Its political force is to wag power by finding deviations to the paths which determine what each one should be.

Like Groys says, “Shock to the system, weakness, resistance, adaptation, renewal. This self-infection by art education must go on if we do not want to let the bacilli of art die” (GROYS, 2010, p. 32). This, probably, happened little during the implementation of CREARTE, and, as such, not much will happen. However, the gesture of provocation is there and if it fails, this failure is not to be understood as a defeat, but as a political act that faces the naturalised truths and the established powers.

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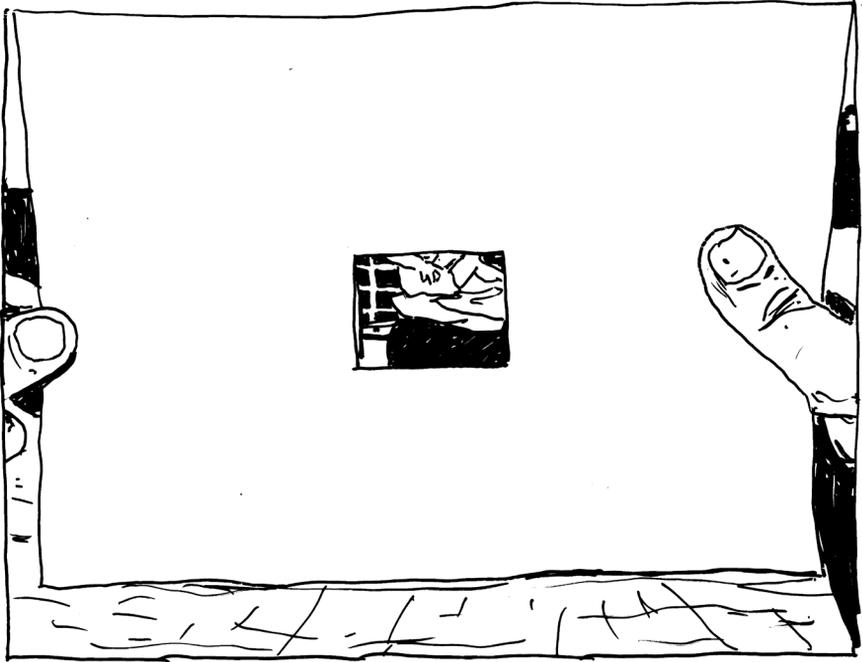
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BEING IN THE UNKNOWN

**Making enquiries into an educational situation
through the notion *Utforska***

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KARIN HASSELBERG | CECILIA WENDT

This text was originally produced for a lecture given on March 24, 2017, in Malmö, Sweden. The lecture was given to teachers and students from Kirsebergsskolan in Malmö with the purpose of describing our collaboration in the context of CREATE. At a later point we were asked to extend our text further by contextualizing our pedagogical philosophy as artists.



THE PEDAGOGICAL CONDITIONS

Educational theorist GERT BIESTA suggests *qualification*, *socialization* and *subjectification* as three conditions for education to take place (BIESTA, 2013). Referring to qualification as ‘the acquisition of knowledge, skills, values, and dispositions’; socialization as ‘the ways in which, through education, we become part of existing traditions and ways of doing and being’; and subjectification as the ‘subjectivity or “subject-ness” of those participating in the educational processes. For Biesta education has to do with emancipation

and freedom and with the responsibility that comes with such freedom’ (*Ibid.* s.4). Further he suggests that if any of the three would be removed or ignored, it would not be education (*Ibid.*).

But how do participants in a classroom, or outside a classroom, deal with a world when many phenomena that has an effect on our lives and other organisms’, are not visible to the human eye? Because they might be too big and loud? Or too small, too quick or too slow? Phenomena that deal in quantities that we cannot comprehend other than in diagrams or mathematical

equations? (ELSAESSER & ALBERRO, 2014). Phenomena that has an effect on our everyday lives and therefore also the educational situation. As much as that what is visible or thought to be visible, both collectively and individually.

Those are the conditions for the current situation where artists and teachers collaborate in the Swedish elementary school system. An encounter and collaboration that deals with art and education, visibility and visualization, the audible and audibility. While at the same time describing a doing and a making, in a specific situation.

For the participants in the educational situation, such as students, teachers and artists, this then suggests a situation which is not under control. It is even unclear what this “not under control” is in detail. Inevitably it leaves the teacher, forced by the conditions mentioned above, to take part in a situation, and teach, that what the teacher can not know. A situation which for example Jacques Rancière suggests is possible when he debates the purpose of public education, while arguing from intellectual equality in *The Ignorant Schoolmaster* which does not do away with the teacher, nor teaching, in the emancipatory education that Biesta argues for (RANCIERE, 2011; BIESTA 2017).

This description of a situation in

education, might stress what Biesta points out when he describes how ‘Communication is a weak, open, and risky process, a process that is only made possible by taking the radical openness and unpredictability of all communication seriously’ (BIESTA, 2013, s. 41, BIESTA, 2006).

UTFORSKA

In order to deal with the above mentioned conditions, in our collaboration together with teachers and students at Kirsebergsskolan in Malmö, Sweden, we have worked with the notion *utforska*. *Utforska* could be described as our attempt to describe our situation, where art and education is entangled by students, teachers and artists.

We first encountered the term *utforska* in relation to an artists’ practice in an article by ANN-MARI EDSTRÖM (2006). When EDSTRÖM describes the artist as *utforskare*, she writes that this way of considering the practice of an artist, is centred around the idea that art is a science in it’s own right and has developed along with art education. According to EDSTRÖM, at the centre of the practice of the *utforskande* artist lies the *utforskande* of what art could be. This *utforskande* constantly brings new knowledge to the table. Therefore it is a way of working which demands the artist to be working in the unknown and to dare take risks. As a consequence,

the work is built around, finds its' form, through *utforskandet*.

In search for English translations of the word *utforska*, there are quite some alternatives. One is *to explore*, another *to delve*, yet another *to dig*. While relating to the notion *utforska*, we claim that it is possible to make inquires into the educational situation, as described above.

with teachers and students from Kirsebergsskolan. The purpose of the lecture was an attempt to describe the various positions in the specific collaboration at Kirsebergsskolan in the context of CREATEE.

Below is the introduction and the "artists' part" of that lecture in printed format;



THE LECTURE

On March 24 2017 in Malmö we performed a lecture together

Karin: Hello, my name is KARIN..

Cecilia: ..and I am CECILIA..

K: ..and we are artists. In autumn 2016 we have been working together with

teachers and students in the third grade at Kirsebergsskolan here in Malmö. We worked in conjunction with their curriculum for social studies and together we have utforskat the future.

P: Hello, I am Pernilla..

J: ..and my name is Jenny. We are the teachers of class 3A and 3B at Kirsebergsskolan.

B₁: Hello, I am Dorina and I am a student of class 3A at Kirsebergsskolan.

B₂: Hi, I am Monira and I am a student of class 3A at Kirsebergsskolan.

B₃: Hi, I am Raghad and I am a student of class 3B at Kirsebergsskolan.

B₄: Hi, I am Aurelia and I am a student of class 3B at Kirsebergsskolan.

C: We will talk for about half an hour in total. First we will introduce the project from an artist perspective. Then Pernilla and Jenny and the students will discuss the project from the teachers' and students' perspectives.

C: Besides being artists we both nurture an interest in pedagogy. The past years we have both been studying pedagogical philosophy and preliminary research at Lund's University. We are currently following a group of researchers conducting posthumanistic research in

pedagogics.

Before we began the project at Kirsebergsskolan we thought about how we learn as artists. Through conversations between the two of us, we settled for that we, the two of us, learn through "*att utforska*".

The word *utforska* is often translated as "explore" in English, though that is not an exact translation of the word. Other suggestions for translation is "dig into" or "investigate".

K: But how does one define "*utforska*"?

In our artistic practices, we never know how a work will end or turn out, what it will look like, or what it will consist of, until the work is actually done. It is only after the process has taken place, that we can see what we have done, what it has become.

Instead of working with a specific medium, such as painting or photography, our artistic practices are based in certain inquiries. It is the act of *utforskande* of these inquiries, that our work is entangled with, thus part of the medium. The *utforskande* of the inquiries moves our process. One step after another. We never know what the next step will be. Nor do we know where we will end up.

K: When we *utforskar* we must dare to

be in the unknown. To *utforska* and to be in the unknown implies risks. The risk here, as we understand it, would be that the outcome of our jointly set up limitations within education and through art, becomes something other than the expected.

K: We would say that knowing the destination from the beginning, surpasses the *utforskande* working process. Knowing the destination beforehand leaves no space for *utforskande*. Knowing the destination beforehand, means to surpass the participators of the working process. It leaves no space for *utforskare* /explorers.

C: - We wanted to stay in our respectively artistic practices, when working together with class 3A and 3B at Kirsebergsskolan. Meaning that we would not know how the work would end or turn out, or look like, or what it would consist of, until the work was actually done. As a consequence we were not able to tell the teachers or the students what would happen, what we were going to do. But we could tell them how we would work and why.

A way of working that would be carried out so that each work session, would lead to another. Or in other words, each of our “doing” would reveal our next “doing”.

K: - A very first meeting took place

before the summer in 2016. That is when we met Pernilla, teacher at Kirsebergsskolan, for the first time. Without any pre expectations Julia Jarl and BUFF arranged a meeting with us to discuss a possible collaboration and project.

At this meeting we described how we understand *utforskande* in relation to our own learning through art. Pernilla told us that her students this semester had been working with the universe and outer space, and that their main focus after the summer would be the evolution. In conjunction with the curriculum, various theories of evolution and the notion of time would be described and dealt with through different perspectives.

C: We also talked about that it was now exactly 50 years ago that NASA’s time capsules were sent into space, and that the capsules right now would be expected to leave our solar system, as far as we have knowledge about it.

So we came to the idea that we in one way or the other could work with the notion of the time capsule. The time capsule as something to gather around to *utforska* the future.

For what is a time capsule? How does it look like? What does it contain? Where could it be?

K: In the autumn semester that followed, artists, teachers and students met all together at seven occasions over a time period of seven weeks.

At our first meeting we talked about what art could be, how *utforskande* could be carried out, what notion of time could be and about time capsules. Each working session at Kirsebergsskolan was followed by reflections. Sometimes us artists together with the teachers, sometimes only us artists. Through these reflections a plan for our next session would unfold.

At our final meeting, all of us together handed over two time capsules to the library in Kirseberg. One capsule from class 3A and one capsule from class 3B.

As a consequence of the *utforskande* way of working, the time capsules varies in both form and content. Nevertheless, both time capsules carries the message that they should be opened by the “third-graders” at Kirsebergsskolan in 50 years from now. Present third graders are planning to attend.

C: In the aftermath: One question that have come up in our discussions with Pernilla and Jenny now when the project has been carried out, is; How *utforskande* is it possible to work, within the education framework of our schools today? *Utforskandet* is given quite some space in the Swedish curriculum. But

how much space is there really, when the destination of an education is already predestined? When the end goals are known in advance in the curriculum?

K: To be in the unknown and to dare to take risks, we believe, is a necessity, when we want to learn what we do not already know and, in extension, be part of the world we live in.

BRIEF REFLECTIONS

In our work we have discussed the possibility of making inquiries into the educational situation, relating to the notion *utforska*. The notion *utforskande* has been given quite some space in the Swedish preschool curriculum by following the children’s *utforskande*, documenting it and incorporating it to the curriculum (HASSELBERG, 2015).

But how much space is there for *utforskande* when it is understood as a weak and risky way of being in an educational situation when the end goals are known in advance? We noticed in our processes and discussions along the work that we easily could end up in reductive thinking of control versus freedom, thus, asking ourselves how *utforskande* is it possible to work, within an educational situation in schools today. But following our discussion above, being in the unknown and to dare taking risks, we believe, is a necessity, when we want to learn

what we do not already know and, in extension, be part of the world we live in.

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EXPLORING THE UN(KNOWN)

**The Practical Implementation and Analysis
of the CREATE Project in Sweden**

-
KATARINA BÄCK

ABSTRACT

In Malmö, Sweden, two visual artists and two third grade classes at Kirsebergsskolan (Kirseberg elementary school) participated with teachers in the Creative School Partnerships Project (Create). The project they designed and delivered consisted of six sessions with each class at Kirsebergsskolan.

The two artists worked collaboratively with the teachers from the school to plan and deliver the project. During the period of time allotted for the project the children were learning about different kinds of creation stories as part of their school curriculum. They would review stories from different cultures and religions. It was decided that the Create project should connect closely to this and build upon the pupils' understanding of perspectives of the past to begin to consider their future. Together with the artists the children explored this idea, focusing on the questions: What will the future be like? What will our city look like in the future?

The project resulted in two time capsules that will be opened in 50 years by the future third graders at Kirsebergsskolan together with the children that are participating in the project. The children decided upon the content of the time capsules together with the artists during the project and the results were very

different. Both classes made one item each. 3B produced a book which was placed in a glass box, made by the local glazier in Kirseberg. 3A produced a map that was placed in a container made of *papier maché*. Both items were then stored in the local library.

PREFACE / INTRODUCTION

[1.]

PURPOSE

How can we promote visual arts and creative spaces in primary schools? How can we encourage the willingness of young people to think, learn, cooperate and create in new ways? Between September 2015 and September 2017, Kirsebergsskolan (Kirseberg Elementary school) in Malmö participated, with five other countries in Europe, in the Creative School Partnerships with Visual Artists (Create) project, to explore these important questions.

[2.]

THE CREATE VISION?

The Create project has at its centre the promotion of child-centred pedagogies that focus upon explorative approaches, experiential learning and the interests of the children. Did the project in Malmö manage to fulfil the Create vision?

The project had two parameters:

- × **Time:** Six planned sessions were allocated for the artists to work with the pupils
- × **The Result:** one or a series of

time capsules would be created to be opened in 50 years, together with the future third graders at Kirsebergsskolan. Although the concept of the time capsules was planned from the start of the project, the content and the physical form of the time capsule were left open for the process to determine.

The project in Malmö was planned by the artists in cooperation with the teachers. To keep the project relevant and interesting for the children, but also to give the learning at school a deeper level, the theme was chosen to build upon the existing curriculum. However, it was felt that the project would also need to allow the opportunity for the children to move away from the curriculum framework to explore, guided by their own interests.

Through the whole project the artists aimed to use methods that they use themselves with a focus on exploration. The results of each session guided the next steps. From the start, the project was considered as open-ended, with the children being given the space to explore and be part of the development. After each session the artists compiled what the children had been discussing. This then determined what would be the next step of the process. At the beginning of each new session the artists held a recap of what had been said and done

during the previous sessions so that the children could easily follow the whole process. The artists also explained the connection between what had been said last time and why that led to the next step. For example, “last time we talked a lot about objects in and around the schoolyard that had burned, so we thought this time we would explore the schoolyard with the help of paper and pencils, which are easily flammable materials”. This approach gave the children an opportunity to feel that they were actively influencing the project. Even when Eva, a former student at Kirsebergsskolan, came to visit, the session was planned together with the children. The children thought about the questions that the artists had prepared for them: “What is important for me to know?”, “What do I want to know?”. The whole visit was guided by the children’s interests and their curiosity, within the frames (e.g. time) given by the teachers and the artists.

Through discussions in the classroom, and by asking questions, the artists were encouraging the children to take part in a dialogue and make themselves heard. The children were inspired to speak for themselves, listen to others, take responsibility for the completion of a process and to try different creative techniques.

[3.]

WORKING WITH THE CURRICULUM

During the process it became evident that the Create project touched several aims in the curriculum for the third grade (Läroplan för grundskolan, förskoleklassen och fritidshemmet, 2011) showing that art can be used as part of the everyday work in elementary school, and promoting experiential learning and explorative approaches.

[3.1]

VISUAL ARTS

The most evident subject that the project touched upon was Visual Arts. The curriculum for Visual Arts is divided in two parts: the analysis of art and the making of art. In the curriculum for visual arts the students are expected to learn to analyse pictures, looking at historic and contemporary pictures, e.g. pictures from one’s city or one’s neighbourhood.

This requisite was very well addressed in the project. Following the visit of Eva, a former student at Kirsebergsskolan, the artists showed black and white pictures taken in the 1950’s when Eva was attending school. The children compared the schoolyard and the clothing of the

children to how it looks today and recognized the building where their canteen is situated. During the project they also made their own pictures of the schoolyard, which they then looked at and discussed in class. Taking the whole process one step further, the children also made pictures of what Kirseberg could look like in the future. They got the opportunity to compare historic and contemporary pictures with the possible future.

In the first years of elementary school the children are required to try different techniques like drawing, painting, sculpting and constructing. They should also familiarize themselves with how to create a picture telling a story, e.g. pictures in fairy tales.

During the process of creating the time capsules the children got to try a variety of different techniques, depending on which class they were in. Class 3B painted, drew, worked with clay constructing buildings, playgrounds and people, and took pictures. Class 3A drew with pens, pencils and ink, used frottage and *papier maché*. All children could freely write and draw throughout the project in the explorer booklets they were given at the beginning of the project.

[3.2]

SOCIAL STUDIES

Social Studies is a subject that traditionally isn't seen as directly concerned with visual arts. Despite not being an art subject, there are still a lot of aspects in the curriculum for this subject that were directly addressed by the Create project.

[3.2¹]

LIVING TOGETHER

The students are required to familiarize themselves with life in the past and life today through e.g. literature, songs and movies. Memories shared by an older person are separately mentioned in the curriculum as a good way to gain knowledge of life in the past.

The children participating in the project got the opportunity to meet Eva who had attended Kirsebergsskolan in the 1950's and ask her questions about how it was to be a child in that era. After the visit, the children compared Eva's stories and memories with their own daily life and discussed the differences and the similarities, and what was most surprising about life in the 1950's.

[3.2 ²]**EXPLORING REALITY**

In the first grades of elementary school the children are expected to learn different methods to collect information, through observations, interviews and measurements. The Create project gave the children a chance to practice several of the mentioned techniques.

During Eva's visit the children got the opportunity to ask her questions they had prepared before her visit, very similar to an interview. The children asked questions about things they were curious about and Eva answered them.

Another important aspect in the curriculum for the first graders is spatial awareness. The children are required to work with mental and physical maps, for example maps of their neighbourhood and their route to school. This part is very clearly integrated in the Create project, since both classes made a map. 3A drew a map of Kirseberg, their neighbourhood, and 3B made a 3D map in clay of which they then took pictures. In the beginning of the project the artist showed different types of maps to the classes and together they discussed "What is a map?", "Is a map always the truth or could it be more like a story?"

In social studies the students must also familiarize themselves with time lines

and different concepts of time: the past, the present and the future. This incorporates well the whole idea of the project. The task given to the children in both classes was to draw or sculpt something that had existed (something Eva had told about), something that exists right now, or something that they miss in Kirseberg today and that they wish would exist in the future. The maps were called "dåtid-, samtid-, framtidskartor", or "maps of the past, present and the future".

The project spans from the past through the memories and stories told by a former student at Kirsebergsskolan, through the reality of the children today, to the future and what it will bring and what the children hope and wish for.

[3.3]

TECHNOLOGY

Even the subject of technology (teknik in Swedish) was touched by the Create project. In technology the students are, among other things, studying materials, their characteristics and how they can be joined.

The characteristics of materials were much talked about during the whole project. For example, in class 3A the children drew individual maps that were taped together to form a map of their neighbourhood. The drawings, the paper

and the tape must survive 50 years until the time capsule is opened. So, the class talked about how this could be possible, why the artists had bought acid-free tape and which papers and pens should be used and so on.

Class 3B focused a lot on their clay work. Several children constructed small houses, human beings and even a football arena with a lot of loose parts, needing to be joined together. Two of the children wanted to build a replica of the school building with three stories. There was a lot of measuring and planning going on. The questions during the process were many: “What happens when the clay dries?”, “It broke while it was drying, can we fix it somehow?”, “Is it possible to paint clay?”.

[3.4]

CONCLUSION

All in all, the Create project managed to incorporate several subjects of the curriculum for the first grades of elementary school in the work of constructing the time capsules. This shows that it is possible to use art in elementary school as an explorative method in the regular subjects, providing alternative and creative spaces in the school programmes.

[4.]

OVERVIEW OF THE CREATE PROJECTS IN SWEDEN

The following session overview outlines the activities that were carried out with two different groups of children. The classes are distinguished by the titles 3A and 3B.

SESSIONS WITH CLASS 3A

Session 1

This session was similar in both class 3A and 3B and began with an introduction of the artists and the project. The children learned that they would be making a time capsule, which will be opened in 50 years by the future third graders at Kirsebergsskolan. There was palpable amazement among the children at the thought of this time span, and their responses in this session included:

That is such a long time! I will be 60 years by then.

I can't wait that long. Can't we open it in three years time instead?

The artists showed pictures of what a time capsule can look like, and the children discussed what a time capsule is. The children were asked the questions

“What is art?” and “What is exploring?”. The children pondered on whether you can find new things in familiar surroundings and if two people looking at the same thing actually see the same thing?

The children were also given booklets with blank pages, to use as their “explorer books” and to fill them with writing and drawings. The children were encouraged to take the booklets home with them and to use them at all times.

Session 2

As the class had talked a lot about cars and trash bins that had burned in the neighbourhood, and wanted to show the artists their schoolyard, the second session was based on exploring something familiar, the schoolyard, with flammable material.

The second session started in the classroom with a recap of the discussions during the first session. Then everyone went outside in the yard and started exploring with the help of white paper and pencils. The paper was placed on an interesting surface and then the children rubbed the paper with pencil and different patterns emerged.

Session 3

Session three was divided in three parts: one session with both classes together, and two sessions with both classes separate. Eva, a former student, now 74

years old, came to visit.

First, the children prepared questions for Eva, together with the artists, reflecting on what they wanted to know about how it was to attend Kirsebergsskolan in the 50's. Thinking about what was important for them to know about Eva's life might be of help when deciding on what the children want to tell the future third graders about themselves.

During the second part of the day, both groups of children sat together listening to their guest and asking all kinds of questions. For example, “Did the teachers hit you?”, “Were you allowed to eat candy during the school day?”

After lunch, class 3A got together to make a summary of what they had heard during Eva's visit. All in all, the children in 3A loved Eva's visit. They thought that asking someone with historical knowledge is a good way of learning new things.

Session 4

It is not down in a map. True places never are.
Moby Dick

During her visit, Eva told the children that the library was located in a different place compared to today. Together with the artist, the children looked at maps and reflected on why maps look like

they do. Why some maps are round like a globe and why some maps are flat like paper. Is the map the exact truth? Or is it more like a story?

During this session the children were encouraged to make a map of Kirseberg, their neighbourhood in Malmö; the whole classroom represented Kirseberg. The children were given sheets of paper and sharpies and were told that they could choose to draw something that Eva had told about, something that exists in Kirseberg today or something they wished would exist. The papers would then be taped together to form a map.

Session 5

3A started working with the physical form of their time capsule. Using balloons and covering them with papier maché the children made round shapes. When the balloons had dried, they were cut in half and then assembled to one big container, which was the actual time capsule.

Session 6

The children worked on finalizing their maps and taping them together to form one big map of Kirseberg. The map was displayed in the classroom for all parents to see.

Session 7

The artists and the teachers felt that they didn't have time to finish everything

during the six planned sessions so, instead of rushing the children, they planned a seventh and last short session, where the children could finish everything off and seal the time capsule.

SESSIONS WITH CLASS 3B

Session 1

Session one was similar in both class 3A and 3B (see above)

Session 2

During the first session the class had talked a lot about VR glasses, about being in one place, but seeing something else. They had also answered the question "What is art" by explaining that art can be feelings and feelings can be colours. Red can be, for example, anger. So, the session was started with a recap of what was said last time and then the children got white sheets of paper with a small rectangular hole in the middle. These white papers could then be used to explore the surroundings, and in an easy manner define what the children wanted to look at.

Equipped with thick brown parcel paper, brushes, colours and the white papers with holes, the children went outside to the schoolyard, to explore and paint.

Session 3

Session three was divided in three parts: one session with both classes together, and two sessions with both classes

separate. Eva, a former student now 74 years old, came to visit.

During the second part of the day, both groups of children sat together listening to their guest and asking all kinds of questions. For example, “Did the teachers hit you?”, “Were you allowed to eat candy during the school day?”

After lunch, class 3B got together to make a summary of what they had heard during the day. Everyone was encouraged to tell the group what they thought was most important. Many were astonished that Saturday was also a day of classes and that you could actually buy candy for 10 öre.

Session 4

It is not down in a map. True places never are.

Moby Dick

Class 3B got 100 kg of clay to make maps of their neighbourhood. The initial instruction asked them to make something that Eva told about, something that exists in Kirseberg today or something the children wished existed in Kirseberg. The children were overwhelmed by the amount of clay they could use and got right to work. Some children used their whole body in the process of forming the clay, some made beautiful detailed pieces, and some made architectonic masterpieces, using a ruler

and knife.

Session 5

It was time to start talking about the physical form of time capsule. A suggestion from the artists was a book, consisting of photos of the paintings and the clay map the children had made, together with pages from the booklets they received at the beginning of the project. This book would then be placed in a glass container, made by the local glazier.

The children took pictures of their paintings and finished off the pages in their booklets they wished to use in the time capsule.

Session 6

The children finished everything they wanted to include in the time capsule and made the actual 3D map of clay in the classroom and took pictures of it.

Session 7

The artists and the teachers felt that they didn't have time to finish everything during the six planned sessions so, instead of rushing the children, they planned a seventh and last short session, where the children could compile the book together with the artists and finish everything off.

[5.]

REFLECTIONS AND CONCLUSION

The Create project in Malmö showed that there are many benefits of having visual artists working in schools. The artists play a different role from an art teacher, since the artists have a solid background in visual arts and working knowledge of the trade, which not all art teachers have. The artist also have freedom to go outside the curriculum and follow the children's interests. The artists Karin Hasselberg and Cecilia Wendt used the same work methods as they use themselves when working as artists, mainly focusing on the exploring.

“We do not work with specific materials as artists, so we do not bring our material to the schools, like stone or making movies. We contribute with our mindset and our way of thinking. That is what we bring with us to the schools we work with”, says Karin.

Both artists felt that it is important for them to be able to visit schools. “Artists through all times have been known to problematize and question” says Karin. “That is why it is important for us to have the opportunity to visit schools and have the time and space to discuss and question. We have to be able to show the children failure. Our method of work

gives us the opportunity to take this seriously and spend a lot of time on the exploring.”

[5.1]

THE METHOD

Throughout the project the artists guided the children in their process of exploring. “We controlled a great deal of the process, but we tried to guide the children by following them”, says Karin. “When the children for example talked about things that had burned on and around the schoolyard, we guided them out to the yard to work with frottage, by following them and their thoughts.”

Cecilia continues “It is all about how you ask the questions”. The two artists think of themselves as “the ignorant teachers”, which, as a method, gives them the opportunity to listen to and explore what the children are saying.

Karin and Cecilia are very much inspired by Gert Biesta's theory of The Beautiful Risk of Education. One can use the word education but not learning, which is something one can only hope for in the context of education. Both Karin and Cecilia stress the importance of giving the children the possibility of failure, not everything has to result in success. Failure is also learning.

The artists also felt it to be very

important to include everyone in the process. “Throughout the project we insisted on everyone being part of the work.” says Cecilia, “Not everyone is actively taking part in the classroom, but in the Create project everyone was included. Even those who sometimes tried to sabotage the work we were doing. In that way a ‘we’ was constructed. A ‘we’ that was allowed to fail together.”

[5.2]

THE TEACHERS PERSPECTIVE

The Create-project gave the two teachers Jenny Antonsson and Pernilla Göthe the possibility to shift perspective and become “medforskare”, or co-explorers, to the children. “The day to day life is so hectic, we do not really have time to think about what knowledge is and what it might be. In the Create project we got the opportunity to focus on these questions and shift perspective”, Jenny says.

It wasn’t always easy. Letting two artists in the classroom and letting them work with the children in new ways was a challenge for the teachers. “It is easy to feel uncertain as a teacher, ‘Who am I now, what is my role?’ when you let the artists take over”, explains Pernilla and continues “It has been a process for us as teachers”.

The elementary school traditionally focuses a lot on the written and spoken languages, not focusing so much on other ways to express oneself, like the visual language and so on. During the Create project it was very clear that the children were active in different phases of the project, some in the discussions, some while working with clay and so on. “This has made us grow stronger in our belief that it is important for us to work with different languages, so that all children have the opportunity to express themselves in their own way. All children have the right to express themselves in their own language”, says Pernilla.

“One of the biggest gains from our perspective has been to see the children grow and get more self-confident during the project”, says Jenny.

[5.2]

TIME

One of the important experiences gained from the Create project in Malmö was that time is crucial. The project was planned to consist of six sessions, but had to have an extra session in the end, to allow the students to finish the time capsules.

It is not only important to have time for the actual work with the children, but it is also important to give the children

time for their own experience, their exploring and questioning. Another important aspect is to have enough time for reflection. Alone, together with the other artist or teacher, and equally important: artists and teachers together.

“If one wants to explore what schools and art can gain from each other it is absolutely vital to have enough time to get together and talk, plan and dwell on our relationship with the curriculum compared to the teachers’ relationship with the curriculum. In that way we can pin point what is most important for us”, says Karin.

During the project many questions were asked, many voices were heard, and many new ideas and thoughts were born. “Create opens up for the unknown”, finishes Cecilia.



he was the lord of things that were not and never will be

**SCHOOL IS THE ENVIRONMENT,
IF WORKING WITH ARTISTS IN PRIMARY
EDUCATION IS THE QUESTION**

MARÍA ISABEL MORENO MONTORO | ANA TIRADO DE LA CHICA
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ABSTRACT

This text gives an account of an experience carried out in infants and primary education centres in the province of Jaén. Specifically, the C.E.I.P (Infants and Primary) San Isidro de Guadalén and C.E.I.P Nuestra Señora del Castillo of Vilches. The Erasmus + KA2 project – Cooperation for Innovation and the Exchange of Good Practices Partnerships for School Education, gives rise to proposals for artistic education in both centres. It is about implementing creation with artists. In this chapter we will first present and justify our participation in this project. Then we will express the principles and foundations that move us towards the approach in which we place ourselves in artistic education, in relation to the proposals that we present here, which, in both cases, aim at extending the school sphere into the environment, making the context understandable through their own participation in school life. We will continue with a description of how these interventions will be developed in the centres of Guadalén and Vilches, and we will close the chapter with a reflection on the importance of approaching the process of teaching learning making the school – not the built ghetto in which childhood is enclosed every morning, but another place from which we live and understand the world.

[1]

INTRODUCTION

**A PRESENTATION OF THE
CREATE MOTIFS IN JAÉN**

Throughout this chapter we will recover the development of two experiences carried out in Infants and Primary Education centres in the province of Jaén, Spain, namely the CEIP (Infants and Primary Education) San Isidro de Guadalén and CEIP Nuestra Señora del Castillo of Vilches. The Erasmus + KA2 project - CREATE - Cooperation for Innovation and the Exchange of Good Practices Partnerships for School Education, gives us the possibility to work directly with artists within the school. It is a question of implementing in the centres the creation carried out with artists. Throughout this chapter we will try to offer not only a description of how the experience was carried out in each of these schools, but we will try to record what the principles are that move us towards the approach and character that mark our socializing way of understanding the educational action of art.

[1.1]

THE ERASMUS + PROJECT CREATE

This action is coordinated by the University of Porto and financed by the European Union. It is an Erasmus + KA2 - Cooperation for Innovation and the Exchange of Good Practices Partnerships for School Education, and, in addition to the University of Porto, the other participants are: BUFF Film Festival Sweden; Ministry of Education and Culture of Cyprus; Paidagogiko Institutou Kyprou also from Cyprus; Goldsmiths College – University of London; Stichting the European Regional Council of InSEA and the University of Jaén in Spain.

The title of the project and its objective is "Creative Primary School Partnerships with Visual Artists", that is to say, creative associations between schools of Primary Education and artists in the frame of artistic education.

The main goals of the project are student participation with artists and the processes of promotion of creative thinking; to give rise to experiments with technical processes, materials and means that allow the construction of meaningful relationships, as well as endorsing cultural awareness. The project focuses on the establishment of the relationships mentioned between primary schools and visual artists within

the framework of visual arts education. It aims to promote the development of a European network of professionals to facilitate the building of partnerships between primary schools and the communities of visual artists. In the University of Jaén we have been working for a long time on visual arts integrated with audiovisual and sound art given the intermediate conception from which we stand, and we have previously justified.

Other objectives of the project relate to the establishment of communication channels for the exchange of good practices in several European countries; the professional development of staff participating in the network and a number of primary educators in service, with an interest in school partnerships with visual artists; the implementation of educational programs in primary schools with the participation of visual artists within the framework of visual arts education; and the design of an open educational resource website that will host and disseminate educational materials, resources, and databases produced during and after the completion of the project, and serve as an online educational collaborative area.

The project activities include training actions for the direct participants, as well as a large number of educators in the different partner countries, and the implementation of school projects with the participation of visual artists, among

others.

[1.2]

OUR PARTICIPATION IN THE PROJECT

The team of the University of Jaén, as well as the other partners, is composed of teachers of the different levels of education contemplated by the system: from Infant Education to University Education, all of them linked to the University of Jaén, and artists. In addition, as will be seen in more detail in the description of the development of the interventions, there are the students of the Primary Education centres that participate, and the teachers of these centres, and also other artists that are part of the actions and the project.

When we were invited to participate in the CREATE project, we sounded out several centres, and finally agreed that we would develop the activity with the two schools we deal with in this chapter plus two other centres in the city of Jaén, which are those that accepted our proposal of participation. The proposal was made to a number of centres with which we had a relationship, either because we had already worked with them or because there is a teacher with whom we usually collaborate. Each of them are characterized by different circumstances but they are all state run centres. These schools were:

C.E.I.P San Isidro in Guadalén
 C.E.I.P Nuestra Señora del Castillo in Vilches
 C.E.I.P Alcalá Venceslada in Jaén
 C.E.I.P Ruiz Jiménez in Jaén

In all of them, the participation of artists in the teaching activity was promoted from the same principles of equality and to favour the access to the arts and culture for all the people. This is a reason why the centres that participate are all state run, which does not mean that we think that access to the arts and culture and equality is guaranteed in private centres.

All the artists who have finally collaborated had sent their proposal in response to an announcement made by the University on public noticeboards and in the different forums we have got in contact with.

[1.3]

THE GENERAL PLAN TO INTERVENE IN THE CENTERS

The Erasmus + KA2 projects – Cooperation for Innovation and the Exchange of Good Practices Partnerships for School Education – are educational intervention and innovation projects. Therefore, a project of this nature implies a good number of innovation actions in which various aspects related to art and its education offer us proposals for action that must be taken advantage of.

Taking all this into account, we reviewed different aspects from which we could extract information to apply to future interventions, given that we develop continuous activity with centres of different characteristics. Among several possibilities we found that, given the conditions of each of the four centres, we would generally work with the context and promote the interrelation of the context with the daily dynamics of the school. This resulted in interventions with drifting routes in the two centres of Jaén, although with some planning, to connect the knowledge of the neighbourhood with the action to be carried out. In the case of the two centres of the province, with more rural environments in both populations, the extreme proximity of the natural environment and the ease with which it could be integrated into the daily dynamics of the centres, was important to give it a character of intervention with the natural environment.

All this was also conditioned by the creative idiosyncrasy of the different artists who worked in the centres, and that, in collaboration with the teaching staff and the students, ultimately marked the character of the project in each centre. However, there were aspects that were common to all centres, such as mediation of the environment in the process, whether it be more urban or natural, the interest in democratizing

artistic practices giving priority to the students, and above all, the demonstration of the need to maintain the arts as means to facilitate actions that otherwise are not achieved. The latter concern either the empowerment of the disinherited or respect for work or the natural environment.

[1.4]

THE ENVIRONMENT AS CENTER OF INTEREST IN CREATARTE

The particularity of this subject takes special relevance in the interventions of the centres of San Isidro de Guadalén and Nuestra Señora del Castillo of Vilches. Based on our principles, that we have already mentioned, the character of the artists in interrelation with the context of these centres, marked the dynamics.

Given the more rural environment of both, and the geographical proximity, the same artists intervened in both locations. On the one hand, a project was developed in each centre led by Lucía Loren and Juanma Valentín, and on the other hand, all participated in a collective action with Culturhaza, a group we will go into more detail below. In addition to this, in the day that Culturhaza was present, there was an intervention by the artist Francisco Nevado Moreno, known as Paco Nevado, and at the San Isidro de

Guadalén school, Alfonso Ramírez made another proposal, on patrimonial and archaeological education with artistic actions at the school.

In all these actions, the interrelation of the environment with the life of the students and of the school was the central axis. Regarding the project by Lucía Loren and Juanma Valentín, we will go on to give a more detailed description, as this was the most extensive of them all. We will make a brief summary of the others, since they were less extensive, in order to explain the intervention and the interrelation with the environment, although we will not go into great detail due to lack of space.

[2]

THE ENVIRONMENT AND ARTISTIC EDUCATION: BODY, IDENTITY AND TERRITORY IN RESPECT FOR THE ENVIRONMENT

[2.1]

UNDERSTAND WHAT SURROUNDS US THROUGH ART

Humans have always used art experimentally. Dance, sound, dramatization and plastic art have been

used by people for their experimental creations, at the same time as the creative manipulation of materials with other practical but also artistic functionality.

The paths that art has taken today recover the space of its origins, and in its survival with human being, adapt to the means and human needs. Let's not forget that, as Maria Letsiou (2015: 84) points out, "Arts Education has defined the learning potential of students in various directions, highlighting the important role of students' participation in the material and its transformation into a work of art" And continues

The ontology of artistic practice and the role of the public have defined the role of the critical approach of artistic practice, giving rise to a theoretical framework that led to the separation of creative common action from that other area of speculation on participation and Criticism with artistic practice. The Contemporary Art establishes a new context for the critical participation with the artistic practice.

(LETSIOU, 2015: 84)

It is for this reason that, in artistic education as content, contemporary practices substitute artistic techniques in a traditional concept and other

means that today no longer have an objective. And, most importantly, the way in which traditional techniques have participated in education used to be conceptually incorporated, and, at the most, procedural, performative or installation practices are incorporated into the structure of thought to become action. We are addressing art education from the arts-education relationship when we consider the arts as a general field of education and in the general field of education (TOURINÁN, 2016: 47).

The interaction of these two approaches allows us to think of artistic practices as a model of education. It is from this double perspective that they have planned and developed the experiences that they realize here. In addition, there is a behaviour in artistic practices, in terms of creativity and flexibility, that may well be an image for educational practices, as Juan Ignacio Pozo says, citing Claxton (1990) and Olson and Bruner (1996); teachers must assume the functions of sculptors, and craftsmen, to teach to do.

[2.2]

THE EXPERIENCES OF THE ARTISTS AND THEIR LINK WITH THE CONTEXT

Interest in continuing to show how current arts serve the school organization and the many advantages they represent are well illustrated when artists enter the

school scene.

So we place ourselves in the perspective that the teaching-learning processes are

A phenomenon that is lived and created from within, that is, processes of interaction and exchanges governed by certain intentions, in principle intended to make learning possible; And at the same time, it is a process determined from the outside, insofar as it forms part of the structure of social institutions. (CONTRERAS, 1990: 23)

And, we would add, from the natural environment in which people live.

In this way we encourage creation by each person but in connection with what surrounds them. We take into account, for example, that there is a sector of society that demands the recovery of a healthier lifestyle, consumption and consequently production, being one of the most important lines in respect for nature. If we also add the concern for identity, relationships and cultural awareness, another fundamental axis of this proposal is to find culturalization formats around a more harmonious and conscious way of life of the other, where emotions and The possibility of "having a body of knowledge about the factors and strategies that can favor the experience of happiness" or what is the

same, "Flow" can reside (BISQUERRA, 2008: 227).

Even if it is nothing new to resort to artistic intervention to create ecological awareness and respect for the environment, or to search for cultural identity, it is true to say that it isn't a practice frequent enough for it not to warrant interest. We see more and more how the participation of artists is called upon on occasions for these actions. Inserting methods which favour both the survival of ecological proposals such as *Culturhaza*, to think with one's body like Paco Neruda, or archaeology to claim territory like Alfonso Ramírez together with the creation of behaviour dynamics with the population, contribute to the demand for production and spaces of this nature.

***Culturhaza*, PACO NEVADO & ALFONSO**

The set of actions carried out by the artists consisted of three actions that relate people to the things that are fundamental to our life. In *Culturhaza* (Villarubia, Córdoba), it was an artistic production whose format was an intervention in the cultural and agricultural environment offered by the farm. This place, run and coordinated by Antonio Ruano and Nazaret Harcía, is exploited as an ecological estate, and, by order or agreement with the owners, develops contemporary art activities that are embedded in the daily dynamics of

the estate. The materiality of the works is [3]
integrated in the work of the field.

An action was planned with the children to plant black chickpeas. It was organized to coincide with the training of the CREARTE project in Jaén at the beginning of November 2016 together with the actions of PACO NEVADO, who was also on the *Culturhaza* estate, and that of Alfonso Ramírez. Climatic conditions forced us to postpone the activity to January 2017, just after the Christmas holidays in order to adapt to the natural rhythm of life and to embed art in daily life.

Paco's action was a performance to be carried out in combination with the *Culturhaza* activity with the previous preparation of the participants to work on body awareness. Alfonso's action was to find out about one of the most important archaeological sites in southern Spain, Cástulo, located about 15 minutes from these towns, through creative actions by the participating students.

TWO EXPERIENCES THAT SPEAK OF LEARNING, ENVIRONMENT AND ART: GUADALÉN AND VILCHES WITH LUCÍA LOREN AND JUANMA VALENTÍN

[3.1]

THE SCHOOL SAN ISIDRO IN GUADALÉN AND CREARTE

The CEIP (Infants and Primary School) San Isidro de Guadalén in the province of Jaen, Spain, is a small state school of rural character, in which students of different courses, levels and stages of Infants and Primary Education work in the same classroom. Depending on the number of students enrolled in a school period, the teaching staff ranges from 2 to 4, including the Director. At the time of the project in question, which is the 2015-16 academic year, there were twenty-four boys and girls attending Infants and Primary Education, and three teachers and a head teacher, Juan Calero. For the following year, the number of children remained the same, with twenty-five enrolments, and therefore four teachers, one of whom would be the Head, Yolanda Jiménez.

The circumstance of having unitary

classrooms for different levels favors collaborative work and the learning attending to diversity. In the sixth year of Primary Education, there is only one student, and, depending on the activities, she participates in tasks in groups with children in first year or even kindergarten.

Cultivating coexistence and good relationships, as well as collaborative work is already a habitual dynamic. While we can not say that the concept of the school is the aesthetic space, it is true that there is a natural presence of creativity and creative action in the different educational activities that are performed. Below we give examples of some activities and dynamics that have already been undertaken in the school for some time.

The sacred territory of pets

Bordering with the school building and its outdoor spaces, is the natural environment and landscape of the territory in which the eucalyptus is one of the most abundant features. Guadalén is a small town, as it will be seen later, and the school is located in the urban limits where the population and the natural somewhat woody surroundings come together. The teachers, especially Yolanda and Juan, the Head at that time, tell us how they resolved several situations with a single action. At the back of the school, before entering

the wooded area, a small piece of land calling to be filled with debris is bounded by a discreet wire mesh. As if it were an indigenous botanical garden; it is repopulated with species which adapt to the environment. At the same time, the ceremonies and burials of the animals that coexist in school with the students and teachers also take place here. These are animals of all kinds that have been taken care for by everyone, making them part of school life, so their death can only be an act of continuation of the relationship with them, turning this location into the pet cemetery.

This integrated activity in the daily life of the school is used by teachers to work on such complex issues as affection, responsibility and care of those who depend on us, care and respect for territory and animals, and of course The assumption of death. At the same time, a relationship of mutual belonging is being generated between the center and the students, who live the school as a part of their lives and not that place to which we go to a certain academic sacrifice.

The orchard

It is another small space, located on the outside of the main building, in which all students work together planting and tending the garden. Thanks to this resource we observe the same concepts of responsibility and care of those who

depend on us, and the care and respect for the territory as in the previous example. Furthermore we include the ecology, that obviously become part of this activity, in addition to the discovery of infinity of processes, biological contents, tradition and discipline, and the risks of one of the oldest activities in today's society. Let us not forget that the concept of landscape is loaded with cultural connotations in which we can interpret the culture of past, present and future through symbols and codes (NOGUÉ, 2009: 21).

The investigation based on topics with the families' interest as starting point and working with projects

The creation of visual products as educational elements is distributed around the school, and as we have already mentioned before, without being the main purpose of the school, there is an aesthetic intention and you can guess that they do not forget that "the viewer of an image captures and interprets practically with a single glance the whole content of the image" (DURÁN ARMENGOL, 2005: 241), because "the illustrations can expose concepts impossible to understand in a conventional way. They can reconstruct the past, reflect the present, imagine the future or show impossible situations in a real or unreal world" (VERNON-LORD, 1997: 168).

The subjects that are studied from a near approach to the work by projects are circulating for a while among the students, the school and the families. These subjects are investigated, and everyone is invited to participate; the evidence and productions of the boys and girls are distributed through the school even after the project is completed. We find an educational community that is already rethinking

the curriculum organization by subjects and the way of translating it into the time and the school space. What makes it necessary to develop a curriculum proposal that is not a representation of fragmented knowledge, without a solution of continuity and away from the problems that live and to which students need to respond in their lives.

(HERNÁNDEZ, 2000: 41)

Taking all these ideas into account, we can define the CEIP San Isidro of Guadalén as a rhizomatic community (DELEUZE & GUATTARI, 1972: 13; IRWIN & SPRINGGAY, 2008:72).

But CEIP San Isidro is also a school where children are educated from a reflective practice (SCHÖN, 1987) and it is also a "Community of practice" in the sense in which Rachel Fendler speaks of it when she quotes Jean Lave

and Etienne Wenger (1991) and says that the community of practice is a pedagogical term that defines certain dynamics of a located learning, a learning based on practice and placed in a social level that involves focusing on personal relationships, a shared interest and a rich repertoire, and it is organized from the common interest of all members (WENGER, 1998). "The fact that they are involved because they have a special interest in an area of knowledge, or an activity, gives participants a sense of having a project in common, or a shared identity." (FENDLER, 2013: 223). Having practice and shared experience as starting points reflect that they want to include the arts as an artistic education with "an educational purpose focused on the use and building of artistic experience to develop oneself and know how to choose a personal project of life" (TOURIÑÁN, 2016 : 49).

[3.1 ²]

GEOGRAPHIC CONTEXT OF THE CASE: THE PLACE

Apart from the brief introduction of the school, it is also necessary to clarify the population and the place in which the school is located. In addition to some information that we have already given in the previous section, it should be said that Guadalén is a population that is located approximately 13 kilometers away, among Vilches, Arquillos and

Linares, in the region of the County in the province of Jaén and within the Municipal area of Vilches. With no more than three hundred inhabitants, it was created by Franco in the fifties as a result of its policy of repopulation of Sierra Morena, linked to the nearby swamp of the same name. The village, until a few years ago, was called 'Guadalén del Caudillo', name by which the dictator Franco was known. The economic activity of its inhabitants mainly lies in the agriculture. Women are usually housewives, and therefore the closest partners in school activities.

[3.1 ³]

PARTICIPANTS

The authors of this chapter were participants but also part of the action. All the students of the school and the teaching body participated, as we have already mentioned at the beginning of the article, they are twenty four and four respectively. And the families in the usual way in which they collaborate with the activities of the school and that has already been commented. Finally the artists, of whom we give a brief review:

Lucía Loren, visual and plastic artist, sculptor by training, her characteristic works tend to be interventions in the rural environment although not exclusively. Her thematic line usually starts from a critical position on the

treatment of the environment and the culture. She usually works from a research based on the context, involving both the natural environment and the population, to plan integrated projects that focus on the place, by making the people of the environment participate collaboratively in her interventions.

Juan Manuel Valentín is a filmmaker. His activity is divided between the production of his own works, the realization of workshops and other training activities with adults and young people in which a collaborative approach is always necessary to carry them out.

[3.1⁴]

EVENTS

Broadly the actions carried out were: We got in touch with the school and its teaching body and worked with the proposal and its character with them. We were putting in common our approaches and idea of work in the school with artistic activities and we shared the interests of the global project. Once we made sure we all agreed on the terms of the project we decided to start it. All this happened on February 2016.

The second step was to contact two of the artists who applied for the public notice to participate in the Erasmus + KA2 CREATE project. We worked with them the same proposal that had

been made with the teachers, and once everyone agreed we arranged a first day of meeting.

This first meeting with the school had two main objectives, to begin the artists' knowledge of the context in which they were going to work, and to organize the stages of work among all the members. This happened on March 2016. The Erasmus project lasts for two years, from January 2016 until the end of December 2017. The direct intervention with CEIP San Isidro de Guadalén took place from February to June 2016.

On February we got in touch and we organized the first meeting between the teachers of the school and us. From this point we began the process with the artists who worked in Madrid and in the month of March they moved to the town thanks to the financing of the Union for all the costs of the project.

This is the first time we met all together: teachers of the school, all the students, the artists and us. In this meeting all the aims were shared. Everything started with an introduction of the participants because for most of us this was the first time that we saw each other, since only we knew them all. In this presentation the artists had prepared an exhaustive dossier of their works, which transmitted enthusiasm to the teachers and the students because their objectives of creation and training are linked with

the first, and the idea of film making or intervene in the space where they live fascinates the seconds.

At the same time, artists are also pleased to find a context to work in which the field is a breeding ground.

The teachers said that it is on their interest to increase the number of artistic activities and that although they have already developed them, it is on their desire to do them with real artists; what it is not so easy for them is to find artists who conceive their intervention in such a shared way and nothing narcissistic, in which the work is not a property but a tool. Another difficulty is the economic one because despite of the artists' desire there are certain essential expenses and in our system it is not so easy to find ways of financing the inclusion of artists in the "curriculum".

During this day, we all agreed that we are interested in producing an artistic action in which the school and its cultural and natural environment as well as the experience of the people involved in the project will be the main point of interest. From this day until May the work will be carried out in two phases. The first one was mailing between artists and teachers and students. We also were involved, but trying not to interfere in the relationship among the participants because we observe that a dialogue has been generated between them

that result in an artistic-educational production without a leadership. That is to say, everyone listens to each other and contributes with ideas to reach a decision made by mutual agreement between artists and school in which we have confirmed to agree not only on the result that produces the idea of artistic production but also by the process of the decision making. Finally, it was decided that the twenty-four students will make in groups some models in which they will develop a project of artistic production of the land including the resolution of inconveniences that they find now in their surroundings.

This phase took place during the second half of March, the month of April and part of May. In order to carry it out, all of them will be part of it in the usual way that we have already described that the school usually works, involving the families, mainly mothers, in the thought process, in the research and in the construction of the social reality in which the students live to contextualize their projects.

The reflection makes that the things that they live daily, take a present dimension in the educational field: we have already known that but now it is gaining importance as a matter on which we can work to assume it, improve it or solve it. The natural rhythms of some things condition the implementation of some of its resolutions. This also happens in

the search, because certain materials or objects need a specific moment of the day or the week to be used. We must take into account that it has been decided to develop an absolutely sustainable project as far as possible, therefore we must see what we have and with this to execute the project.

The decision of which would be the work that finally would be carried out with all the participants was something that would happen in the final phase, and by general consensus. Therefore, in this first part, we did not know yet about specific aspects of procedures and materials, except for the filmmaking in which the artist, Juanma Valentín, had decided to contribute, offering his team to do what would be decided in the end. These circumstances made the search for materials and "things" to intervene not very precise. In the models that the groups were doing, about the environment where they would like to intervene, there were clues of what kind of things could be used. Paying attention to this, the participants in the school began to collect materials and to make sorties in the surroundings. Later we would see what was worthy to keep and to use. There were also activities to classify materials: minerals, grounds, or stones, feathers, wool, cotton and other plant and animal remained. Also, there were things that could be rubbish. Curious things have emerged: a ball, almost a sphere, made of stone about

twenty centimetres of diameter that looked like an archaeological projectile. The castle of Giribaile, of Arab origin, is approximately 5 kilometres away from the town and it was built on Iberian remains. Nearby there are also Visigoth and Roman remains.

From the 16th to the 22th of May, Lucia Loren and Juanma Valentin came to the school to work with all of us. The boys and girls presented their models to decide among all, the one to be selected to carry out the artistic intervention. It was very difficult to choose one. The models represented their world. In them we find "the holy mountain of pets" which, as they explained, evokes where their dead animals are buried. We have already spoken about this space and its importance in the life of the school. But, in the models, there is also their idea of the world. And there are pine cones, there are empty snail shells, dried leaves, peacock feathers, stones, and collages made with paper. There are many things. And, despite the rectangular shape of the platforms, there is a predominance of the circular structure for the compositions. So, when we had to decide what to do, someone talks about the mandalas, and finally we decide to start with a mandala structure including the content and things that we find in all the models, and to produce something that contains almost everything. It was decided to go out to the trees next to the school, since the field belongs to everyone, in

the area adjacent to the cemetery – botanical garden of pets. There, with a rope and two sticks, a large circle was drawn of about three and four meters in which they were going to organize a great mandala with the concepts of the models.

Gatherers, draftsmen, alchemists and all kinds of roles and functions are circulating from one to another while branches, trunks, stones, leaves set the mandala's shape and composition. They want to paint the stones and create the paintings with clays of different shades of the same ground. Broken shingles and coals are used as chalk. And they are also participating as camera operators making register of their concerns about the project.

The character of the work that was generated was perceived as a plastic and spatial intervention in the natural environment, but from the installation that was the initial approach, the performative was also generated. The combined action of all the participants, the continuous growth of the work with the collective contributions, the emotion of proving how a contribution was made to the total work, was generating a collective artistic catharsis that ended in an unscheduled performance where the action of all people joined the composition of the mandala.

At the end of the week, on the 20th

of May, this part of the execution was finished. The artistic action was especially eloquent in the intervention on the ground; the part of creation and video that was being carried out in a parallel time was highlighted by the necessity to develop technical learning. To create in the space and on the ground from the collective discussions and decisions that were taken and using the endless source of materials that the environment itself provides, if the creativity was present to turn them into "art", was much easier than to record and narrate with video everything that happened. The videographic product requires more time to be a production exclusively of the students, because the difference between three years and sixth grade can be solved with a specific assignment of roles, but managing a postproduction exclusively by themselves is complex, and not only requires more time but also more resources. In any case, what has been gained so far is also an achievement, since there is a product from this work in collaboration with Juanma Valentin, who maybe had to solve more technical problems than dealing with contents. For the students it was really important to see themselves with the tools in their hands: microphone, tripod, camera, clapper, and watching themselves talking to a camera. Without a doubt, they consider their property, a product that, although they do not know at all how to edit, they have been experiencing during

recording, and that was involved in the story that has been developed through the installation in the ground, and that they have written before to be seen in front of, or behind, the camera.

[3.2]

NUESTRA SEÑORA DEL CASTILLO SCHOOL AND CREATARTE

The school Nuestra Señora del Castillo is located in the municipality of Vilches (Jaén), about 75 km from the capital of the province, approximately 60 min by car. Located in a mountain area between two important reservoirs, the main economy of the population is based on the agricultural activity of the olive grove and other crops of vegetables. This local condition of the site influences the desires and hopes of the students: a large majority of young people in Vilches inherit the social roles and work of their families; from adolescent age, they are incorporated into the work sectors of their parents: the girls inheriting care and domestic responsibility, and the boys performing tasks in the field. In this rural context of education, from an early age, the students of the school of Nuestra Señora del Castillo know that, in order to opt for a more extensive and specialized training, as well as other employment options, it will be essential to move to another municipality and, later, towards the capital of Jaén or other provinces for superior university studies.

As for the cultural and artistic services of the municipality, these are limited. Therefore, the media and communication of art and culture in contact with young people in Vilches are, for the most part, those of the mass media: Spanish digital television, Spanish radio frequencies, and their extensions in the network of Internet and a municipal theatre opened in recent times. In this way, the artistic and cultural references of these groups of young people are very much at the expense of those family traditions and the fashions of the cultural industries that spread to middle classes in Spain.

The educational offer of Nuestra Señora de Vilches school covers the following levels of national education in Spain: Infants (from 3 to 6 years) and Primary (from 7 to 11 years). The school is situated in the center of the municipality of Vilches. It includes three buildings and a covered sports hall. The school has extensive open spaces. Next to the pavilion, there are multipurpose sports courts. The whole of the enclosure is closed by a wall and fence. There is an important out-of-school use of the sports and recreation areas of the center by the youngsters of the village in the afternoons and weekends for games and other activities.

One of these recreational areas of the school, which the students also use in their play and rest times outside of

school, was of interest to the students to work with artists in CREARTE. Thus, based on the proposal that the group of researchers of the University of Jaén did with the theme of the environment in the school, finally the students decided to direct the artwork of CREARTE to an unattended garden area that is on one side of the school grounds, next to the wall. This choice was made from several options. In Vilches there is also a large unoccupied piece of land adjacent to the school. There is also a smaller square next to the school used by adult inhabitants as a shaded rest area for social gatherings with stone seats and a garden of trees. Finally, the students showed more interest in intervening in this area of the school, which was covered by high grass between a row of trees.

Participants

The main participants and recipients that we considered for the CREARTE experience were a group of Primary students and the artists. In the case of the Nuestra Señora del Castillo school, the participating groups were from 5TH grade Primary (9-10 years). It is composed of two classes, with a total of 34 students. The participating school teachers were the tutors of each class (2 in total), the English teacher and the teacher of the plastic arts subject. In line with the proposed work on the rural environment and context,

the artistic profiles of LUCÍA LOREN, JUANMA VALENTÍN were considered appropriate. A third role of participants was occupied by the faculty-researcher of the University of Jaén who carried out tasks of coordination and study of the development of the project and of the artistic intervention itself.

The intervention

The work between schoolchildren and artists for CREARTE in the case of CEIP Nuestra Señora del Castillo in Vilches (Jaén) was developed in three main phases: first, the contact and exploration of the place; Second, the definition of the participants' interests (students with artists, mainly) and the design of the intervention; And, finally, the stage of execution of the artistic project. The whole of the intervention took place over five months from February to June, taking into account the general schedule of the CREARTE project.

First, the artists met the students on the morning of a school day. It was an opportunity for the artists to visit and explore the school and hold a meeting between school teachers and artists. We started the day over coffee, and participants from each sector (University, CEIP and artists) met. It was a chance to introduce ourselves to each other, and also to coordinate the availability of work schedules with

students, explore the place and possible sites for artistic intervention, specific needs, etc. First doubts were also solved on both sides, and different points of view about the artistic work and the educational possibilities of the arts that we wanted to explore were put forward. While waiting to meet the 5TH grade students, a general visit was made to areas in and around the school. In this way, the intervention options in the different areas were looked at and evaluated: the sports courts, their gardens, and the esplanades around the school. The meeting between students and artists took place in their classrooms. At one time or another, the artists, accompanied by the faculty of the center, visited one and another class. It was the occasion to introduce themselves to the students and to make known their artistic profiles, with the showing of some of their works. This helped the students understand the relationship that existed between the proposal of the CREARTE project and the work with the artists.

In a second phase of the project, the students made the designs and sketches about the type of artistic intervention that interested them. It was decided that the place for the artistic intervention was to be the walled garden area bordering one of the sides of the school. Students were interested in choosing an area that was not properly school-based. The choice of the students was motivated

by two main reasons: one was that this garden area was abandoned and in a bad state (a row of trees along the wall, in the middle of dense grass about a meter high); And, two, it is an area of non-school use, which is accessible in the afternoon and weekends, outside the school hours. This linked this area of garden with personal interests, social, play and leisure for students and, therefore, constituted a space that acquired an important motivation for

The project

Once the environment was chosen for the intervention, it was time then to design the modes and forms of intervention. It was from this moment on that the mediation between students and artists acquired importance. The first issue in this regard that the students were asked to address was what concerns they found for intervention in that space. They gave several answers, but they were mostly characterized by proposals for functional and personal free time use. It is worth highlighting the students' interests in thinking and designing elements and structures that will comfort this garden area. In here artwork, the artist Lucía Loren works with materials that belong to the place, a motive and artistic element on which her intervention is based. In this sense, she proposed to the students for their designs and first models, that they consider the natural material available

around the school. The students imagined different corners according to each tree in the garden: a meeting place, a hut, a zone of obstacles. To these, a scarecrow area was also added to give the place identity.

Finally, it was the moment of realization and execution in situ of the different proposals of intervention. With the reference of the students' designs for each zone, it was time to collect the necessary site materials (branches, logs, rope, mainly) and, also, it was time to prepare the intervention area, in an artistic sense. It was an intervention on an area of vegetation and rough ground. If we followed a traditional artistic parallelism, we would say that the artistic techniques were to prune with scissors, to plough and to rake the ground with the hoe, to tie ropes, etc. Students and schoolteachers had assembled a series of fieldwork tools that had been compiled by one and another among their families: hoes, a wheelbarrow, ropes, pruning shears, rake, etc. And work began.

The artist LUCIA LOREN had planned the moments of accomplishment, in relation to the characteristics of the place and the work with the materials. In the first place we had to "rake" the whole area with rake. The hoes and rakes were distributed among the students, and they took turns to use them. While some were removing the

vegetation, others provided the branches, trunks and ropes for the interventions. During the process, the artist took care of the problems of the materials, the manipulation of the different elements and the strategies of phases and execution in each corner towards the achievement of the desired designs. School teachers also collaborated in the preparation and disposal of materials and needs.

Results

The possible results of this work among students of 5th grade of CEIP Nuestra Señora del Castillo and artists for the CREARTE project are identified according to the qualitative nature of the research. In this sense we can highlight the following results of artistic education:

[1.]

The dynamics of group work and social relations

The work on ways of organizing the group of students, the distribution of tasks, the contribution of the work among themselves and their forms of communication with each other, were very present in the development of the project. The artistic activity performed in an open environment, where the materials came from different places, required different treatment and

required collaborative work at the same time to be able to manipulate the objects according to the previously made design, etc.; it extended and diversified group organization towards collaboration, and the forms of communication, towards listening to the other, tolerance towards others' proposals of the others and tolerance towards different ways of thinking and doing things. The dynamics of student participation that brought this issue to the fore were: discussions about having one tool or another for the work; discussions to defend reasons and the most correct way to carry out a proposed intervention; the raising of voices to give indications to others, among others. This matter of group organization and of the forms of communication, required the artist and the participating school teachers to constantly mediate in transforming a communication conflict between young students into situations of listening and tolerance. In this respect, it is worth highlighting as a result of the project the possible scenarios to which artistic education opens up for the work on group dynamics, social communication and educational values.

[2.]

The alteration of the leadership roles of the classroom

The use of rakes, hoes, wheelbarrows, buckets of water, pruning shears, trunks,

knotting ropes to trees, laying branches in the form of a hut, pruning a branch, etc., requires attitudes and skills related to physical effort, coordination of body movements, group work, sharing roles for joint production, exploration of new materials, manipulation of objects, among others, that necessarily alter traditional roles Of the classroom, where mainly intellectual competences, mental concentration and individual work evaluation are required. In this sense, the team of teachers of the center involved in CREATE, together with the artists and researchers of the University of Jaén, especially highlighted the new roles of success, good execution, collaboration and leadership, which had not previously been observed in the classroom.

[3.]

The new views of school teachers on their students

The artistic work of the CREATE project in the school, gave rise to new meetings of groups of students and their teachers. The teachers of both the 5th grade classes involved, as well as others from other subjects, had the opportunity to observe the forms of participation, behavior, motivation, involvement, problems, etc., in their students, in view of the new work scenario of artistic education. The new observations motivated the creation of moments of discussion and socialization among the

teachers, who shared their impressions in their short meetings about the students' work. They celebrated the new implications and efforts achieved, suddenly, students who in the dynamics in the classroom were not very visible and whose results did not reach outstanding successes, became the reference for the rest of their classmates to advance to get the job done.

[4]

FINAL THOUGHTS

We have verified that contemporary artistic action and participation action action from art, articulate the activities and interaction between all those involved in the actions, as we have been able to observe as we have worked collaboratively with all participants. It requires the help of others to transport, collect and exchange products, also to save time in the search and investigation of the information and to agree on decisions and to share emotions. Activity in artistic practices and their relationality has allowed us to observe what exchanges and empathy take place between the different groups participation. Contemporary artistic practices dissolve in everyday life as we have seen, enabling an education more in line with social reality and getting the school embedded in everyday life, allowing the active intervention of teachers and a flexible school structure

that adapts to the events and the daily biological rhythm in an exchange between school time and the natural environment that is part of daily reality when people outside the school context are allowed to interact if the occasion arises and they do so with a contribution of knowledge. As climate and time mark the life of the earth, people must adapt to nature.

It has also been proven that many concepts are learned by experience and the need to solve a problem, such as the composition of the soil, or the anatomy of an animal or the parts of a tree, and their denominations. You also learn how to avoid sunstroke and to take care of the materials collected and classify them by categories to make the job easier. This shows that it is possible to develop knowledge and skills included in the curriculum in general terms and students are more interested in learning and developing skills when they need them.

As a consequence of this we have found that contemporary artistic action is very effective for studying social reality because in the artistic action converted into daily activity social roles and behaviors are put into play. The process and relational conception of current art sets in motion projects in which it is not possible to advance individually and independently, the need of the other, their collaboration and teamwork

in which the success of the operation depends on everyone, invites us to ensure that our part and also the part played by others is successful. In this way, to compete, in the sense of passing over peers does not take place, because the success of others contributes to the benefit of all.

We find that contemporary artistic action allows flexibility in the school structure making the rhythm of life have its space and time. In addition, this flexibility makes the biological rhythm important and relativizes certain patterns of organization that castrate the learning of questions that appear fortuitously and that also serve to the educational action and therefore to the improvement of the learning process.

They also allow us to merge the educational context with everyday reality by making things look like they don't come out of a book, or are occurring in other people's contexts.

It shows once again that performing arts activities demands to develop knowledge and skills included in the curriculum in general terms and that students learn with interest because they need them to develop their work and check that they are aspects of everyday life. This knowledge and skills are related to all areas of the curriculum, from science and language or foreign languages, to the handling of different technologies.

The educational possibilities of the contemporary artistic intervention are positive and effective to bring about changes in the educational and social scene. We think these changes are slow, for although we have seen immediate results in this sense, an intense transformation will take more time and will serve in the light of what happened with this project, together with others. We want to say that although some aspects of what we defend offer immediate proof of the effectiveness of artistic practices for direct objectives such as fostering coexistence and serving as an educational tool, others such as social changes, which demand on the one hand continuity in the application of these methods and on the other, the temporal perspective to make a real evaluation of lasting long-term social outcome, are not so immediate.

But in an immediate way, it is evident that we were all apprentices and teachers, that contemporary artistic practices as an experience of school coexistence for learning mediated among all the actors making us listen, contribute and express by sharing. By respecting the times and the interventions of each one, whether they are three or fifty-three years old, when he or she is doing his or her part in the work, we are giving them the opportunity to know what they want to say, and although what they contribute of the world is something known by us, we in turn learn something about

what he or she knows. We learn how we learn and we know best how to help learners learn. Work of this scale with so many people involved and a concept that is drawn from so many complexities and collaborations lasts for months as was this case, and this forces us to understand that learning has no deadlines and that schedules are orientative, that the contents do not last so many sessions of a given time, because learning like creativity has no beginning and end, it is a continuous movement that crosses with everyday activity. We learn by living together and researching-doing we learn.

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**THE ARTOGRAPHIC EXPERIENCE
IN THE IMPLEMENTATION
OF ARTISTS IN PRIMARY EDUCATION**

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MARI PAZ LÓPEZ-PELÁEZ CASELLAS | MARÍA LORENA CUEVAS RAMÍREZ

ABSTRACT

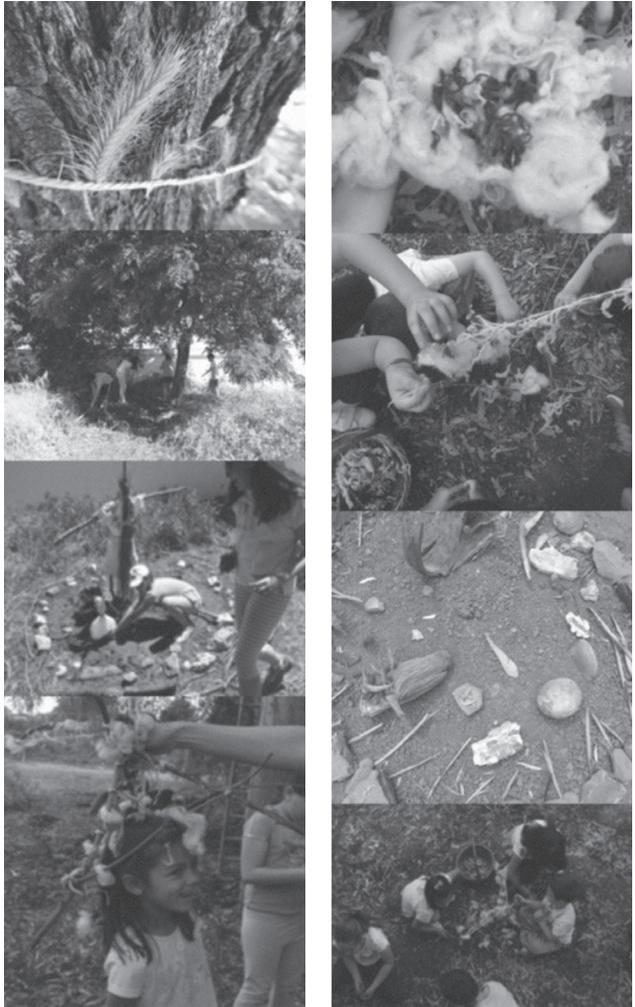
This work is a visual essay through which we recount the various ways in which we implement artistic practices in education, understanding creation in education, as well as the necessary educational research that constantly seeks the improvement of teaching practice.

To do this, firstly, the images show how we approach the question through the trinomial artography, heuristics / derive and postproduction. Then, we continue with some visual clarifications of these concepts inserted in our practice, i.e. artography, derive and postproduction. Since we have found many advantages so far, in this approach, we will finish the essay with some visual reflections on our achievements in this area.

Each section is composed of our visual thought elaborated from images realized by ourselves in the experiences. With these images we have made a compositional game in which, beyond illustrating, we have synthesized the idea, in each case, of what, for us, represents the creation-education-research experience.

INTRODUCTION

**CONTEMPORARY ARTISTIC PRACTICES IN THE INTEGRATION
OF ART EDUCATION: THE TRINOMIAL ARTOGRAPHY -
HEURISTICS / DERIVE - POSTPRODUCTION**



ARTOGRAPHY AS AN ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE OF THE TEACHING ACTION



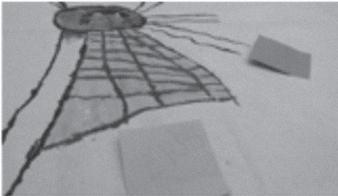
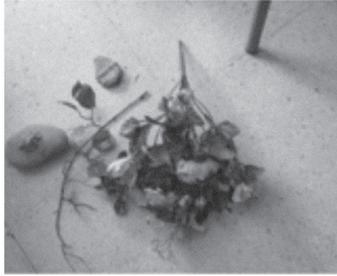
THE DERIVE, RESOURCE OF CREATION TO PRIVILEGE THE HEURISTIC METHOD IN EDUCATION AND IN THE EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH

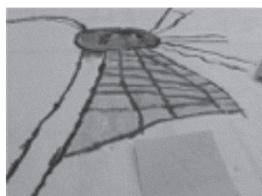


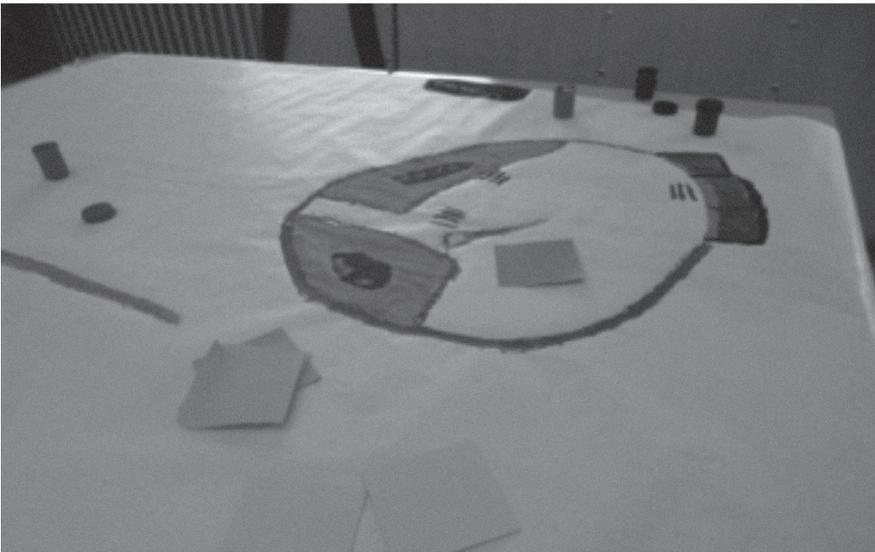


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**The Paradox of the *Representation of Violence*
and of the *Violence of Representation*
in Artistic Projects in Elementary School**

MARIANA DELGADO

This article results from an activity inserted in the project CREARTE (2015-17), done in a neighbourhood in Porto, at the Fonte da Moura Elementary School, with nineteen second grade students, aged between seven and nine years old. CREARTE, as an European promoter of creative partnerships between artists and elementary schools, was not incorporated within the *Atividades de Enriquecimento Cultural* (Activities of Cultural Enrichment) –which were optional and extracurricular–, neither was it a substitute for the subject *Educação e Expressão Plástica* [Visual Education and Expression], though one may say that, in a way, a “subject” was drafted regarding program, schedule and project.

As a visual artist in an elementary school for the first time, I sought out information on the program’s official guidelines of the subject and its discourse, tackling them with the research I’ve been developing in the field of Arts Education. The curriculum omits, almost entirely, other dimensions necessarily important to the making in/of art. Not seldom, the symbolical and metaphorical properties, and the contexts’ cultural particularities are excluded; the child’s “expressive” competences suffice, falling into a fake common sense, consisting in students of this age group not being able to understand, nor to connect, the

mentioned concepts. Just as the name points out: education and expression are separated and, I’d say, aversely displayed.

A main goal of my proposal *Andar aos Papéis* [Topsy Turvy] was to not opt for a book that was included in the *Plano Nacional de Leitura* [National Reading Plan], so as to directly entail the students in the narrative, thematic and conceptual construction of the project. Choosing to produce narratives in small groups and in class allowed for the stories to be created and developed by the students. As the workpieces emerged I acknowledged that the non-imposing of external narratives, by itself, was not a reasonable premise for the children’s entailment in the activity.

From the observance of the processes of creation, I’ve realized that the dangers of linearity and of illustration were present – precisely, two dangers that I wanted to avoid with the mandatory tales – and gaining an increasing importance in the pieces. The students repeated technical formulas, compositional ‘recipes’ and, above all, they mechanized strategies of expressing signs (symbols, icons and codes) associated to a certain traditional visual grammar.

The activity was therefore failing: when drawing (or any other medium) stops being a mechanism to grasp and to apprehend the world, to produce knowledge (ways of knowing)

and to potentiate the expression of subjectivities, the experience of ‘making’ becomes a task. Once the elemental structures are dominated, the artistic process is embodied as, yet, another repetitive action, mnemonic and automatic. After all, children weren’t doing more than what is incumbent upon them in the classroom: to be perfect labourer’s executors.

We were halfway through the project when I proposed working the self-portrait. It was necessary to break from the expectation’s linearity, as well as the results. The proposal, initially, consisted of producing self-portraits that would focus on the relation of the ‘I’ (self-image) and the body, cutting and pasting. The Collage had yet to be experimented and, as simple as it may seem, the handling of the cutting tools and its application on the sheets of paper has proven to be extremely difficult within this group. In addition to this technical difficulty, the suggestion to represent the ‘self’ –in this particular exercise, of their bodies – had left them perplex, leading many to not engage with the process. During the session, I had observed that the students, through the moments in which they were searching for elements (colours and/or textures) so as to compose their own portraits, took that opportunity to collect images of personal interest –football players, comic book heroes, landscapes or consumer-objects –

featured in the newspapers, magazines and broad advertising, available in the classroom.

The following session, I made a presentation about the self-portrait in the history of art, following an asynchronous methodology, with various techniques and of, mainly, female artists. We returned to the self-portrait, but, this time, the game would be between the “I-body-world”. The media, the techniques and the supports followed each and everyone’s criteria. I just asked them to alternate between, at least, two other media (pencil, ink, pen, etc.) and two other techniques (drawing, painting, *collage*, etc.) with which they had worked before. If they wished, the word could also be included as a graphic and textual element.

The images that they saw, chose, and then cut from the sources of information and communication and from advertising, along with the presented works of art, were preponderant. Let’s say that both image sources are the references from which the students drank, freeing themselves from the limitations of figurative representation, traditionally associated with the idea of the self-portrait. The manipulation of references marks a turn, or better, signals an inflection towards an acknowledgement of an identity, as subjects that inhabit and experience certain socioeconomic, cultural and

political contexts.

In that way, the reflection I will now devise is supported by the selection of three students' self-portraits, those which led me to the problematization around violence, the heroes and the future (aspirations/dreams/desires). The pieces of work gather, and elicit, with greater or lesser sharpness, these 'imagistic' elements widely manipulated by the class.

Nevertheless, there is a need for an essential remark on the problematics of violence. Trying to understand the presence of violence's visual references is not about expressing an idea of 'demonization' nor 'sanctification' in the objects made by the children. There are many risks in the intentional alignment of these pieces of work that, perhaps, can lean towards an apology to violence. My goal is not about exacerbating nor about denying the presence of violence itself in the pieces, but to relate them to the oral and written stories that students recounted during those months. I considered, and I do consider, this dialectical exercise important to make sense and guide one, or several, possible directions during the project, and, in particular, to critically reflect upon the proposal of the self-portrait.

The relational understanding of the expression of violence in childhood was often marked by 'key-moments' in the

(apparently) informal conversations. I didn't seek out to scrutinize the truthfulness of the episodes the children narrated because, in art, the truth and the lie are fundamental to operationalize experience. Imagination, memory and fiction are structures which allow the subjects to act and to position themselves in the re-interpretation of the reality that surrounds them, also providing the construction of meaning(s) within the artistic experience.

The first work (fig. 1), Marco's, has an assemblage of muscled models' bodies with heads of businessmen, doctors and writers. Terrorists are soldiers, by the way they present themselves, I was told, and they have drones. The garment's code gains meaning in the green colors mixed in their clothes. Pattern, boots and berets also help to identify the military. By addition, weaponry is also a relevant element of clipping, often used. Of various sizes and shapes, adapted to diverse figures, guns are central to this work, as well as to others produced by him or by other classmates. They are present in the children's everyday life in two contexts: the virtual and the 'real' (physical reality). The appearance of several gun clippings deserves an attentive contextualization.

Despite their tender age, students play videogames and/or online games at home, alone or accompanied. The access to these games comes through

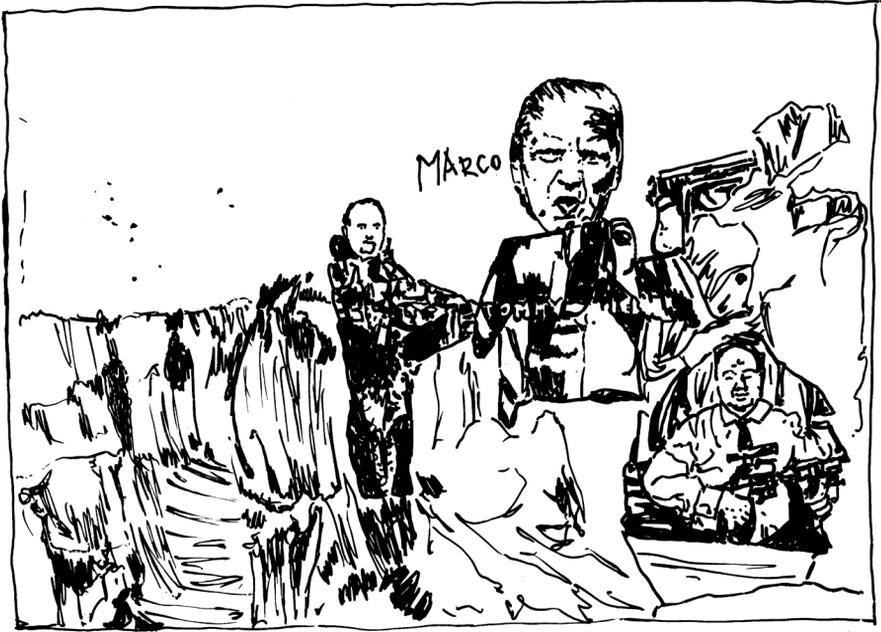


FIG. 1

family members, and, the truth is, they experience various forms of violence in a virtual environment. To deny these explicit facts in the conversations, and in the objects, would be a mistake. The Teacher and I opted to continue the conversation to deconstruct the web of intentions, actions and values underlying the virtual games. This simplified binary can be dangerous, but students understood that the reality in the screen in front of them was not the same reality outside of it. In the games they could kill people, pummel the characters, steal, escape from the police, do drugs, and, some, were just into hearing the games' soundtracks. However, the

daily experience of the violence in the neighbourhood where they live is present, as well as in the media to which they can easily have access. Questions followed: "The intentions and the actions driven in games can or cannot be carried out in 'real' life?", "What do they make of the values of good, justice, respect and equality?"

In the second piece (fig. 2), I will focus on two critical incidents. The first one is the generalized appliance of the element of alcohol (bottles of wine, alcoholic products, figures drinking, etc.) that, throughout the activity, I was able to understand that it was something

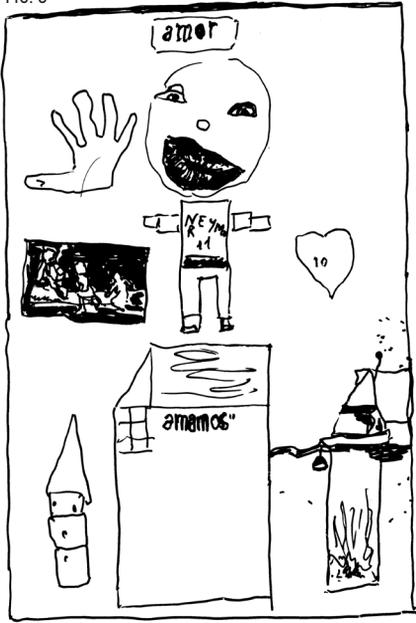


FIG. 2

familiar to the students and some of them had already tasted it. The second interesting element is that of money: when Tiago exhibited and discussed his work, in a round table, he told us that his dream was to have a lot of money when he grows up. In short, some of the most stimulating questions were: “What is money?”, “What do you do, or what can you do, with it?”, “How do we get it? Do you gain it? Do you steal it?”, “Will we be happier if we have more money?”. But the question that raised the ultimate strangeness – “How was the world before money existed?” –, made way for us to talk about the possibility of exchanging goods and their value in society, beyond the monetary aspect.

Fábio’s object (fig. 3) is centred in another form of violence: violence in school. In his self-portrait he sees himself not as a child, but as a grown, bearded man. The drawing of the school resembles an archetype for a house (a “standard” visual structure representing a home). The student represented himself on top of the school, on the roof. In a conversation, I asked him about that option and he said there was no particular reason. Then, I asked him why didn’t he put himself at the right, at the left, behind or below the school. Then, he told me that the purpose of drawing himself over the building was to allow him to crush it. He wanted to destroy the school. But, “What is school for?”,

FIG. 3



Always, sometimes, never?,” “And until when?”.

What the three pieces (fig. 4) have in common and what they illustrate is the biographical trans textuality, i.e., where the multiple dimensions of identity unfold and blend in the self-portraits. The students’ identities acquire expression in the mixing of the stories and gain materiality in the artistic objects. These narratives are constituted by biographical references, which are accessed through memory, by the heroes (like football players, actresses, singers, dancers and comic book characters), apprehended by the students through visual culture, and by the dreams frequently aligned with the desires to possess material assets and

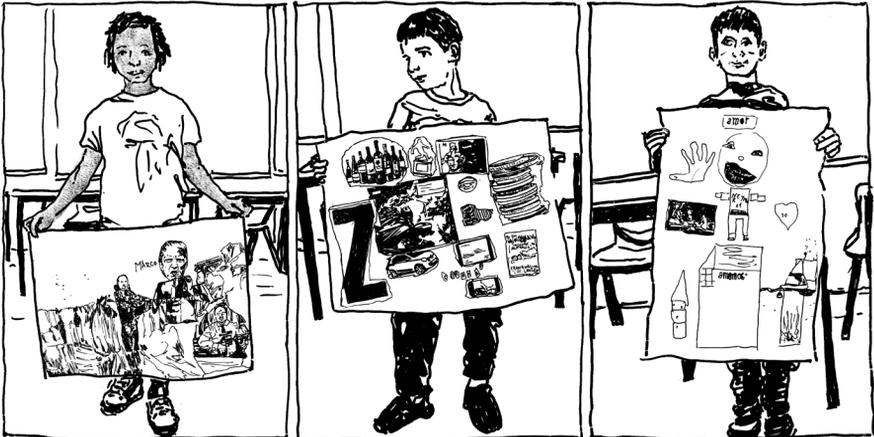


FIG. 4

“Is it important?,” “What do you do in school?,” “Why do you like it or not?”

However, the concept of trans-textuality isn’t solely materialized in narratives. The

workpieces interrelate the metaphorical dimension of signification (symbols, icons and codes) in the visual structures, using the techniques and the media that go beyond the usual scribe instruments. For example, students worked mixing paint, drawing and collage to adjust the figures (the body, the head, the yes, etc.) and the scenery of ambiance/ landscape to their compositions.

The word, as an element, has a different relevance in the relation text-media-image in the workpieces. I cannot deepen about connection/disconnection, but it seems to me that word and image have very different meanings to the children. With words, it is only said (or written, or cut out) what the teacher intends to hear (or read, or see): “love”, “freedom”, “friends”, “heart”, “sweet”. However, in a single workpiece you can see an armed man with the body of a supermodel and, at the same time, read the word “love”. As paradoxical as it may seem, the word leans closer to the ornament and the visual compositions towards a subjective expression (of someone, something, a situation).

Lastly, it is important to convoke the curricular trans-textuality that has mediated this project with some issues present in the official curricula. Due to the use of newspapers, magazines and advertising in the manufacture of the paper and the cut outs, Portuguese literature was involved in the

development of the written compositions and in the approach to the news. Mathematics was related to the use of proportions, quantities and sizes, and in the shapes and geometrical solids. *Estudo do Meio* [Sciences] was involved in the colour spectre’s observance (physics) and in the production of paint, with chemical reactions that were visible and experimented during the execution. The activities were neither separated from other subjects nor were they compromised by them. Themes, techniques and developed processes were conjoining with other contents from the various taught subjects, and even triggered by the artistic activities made in the classroom. The aim was to avoid, as much as possible, any intention of instrumentalising art in the service of the school’s curricula.

In my opinion, arts education’s actual underlying problem in primary school is structural. For example, there isn’t a single guiding curriculum specific to *Educação e Expressão Plástica* (Visual Education and Expression) in the first cycle of basic education at Manoel de Oliveira Schools Cluster. The effort, although misinformed and insufficient, is a result of the marginalization and fragmentation of knowledge(s), that starts in the teachers’ training. The project implemented in this school is revealing of such marginalization, because when some subjects are taken as more important than others,

hierarchy provokes curricular isolation. Consequently, the fragmentation that comes from arts' non-mandatory character leads to interested teachers electing projects like this; occasional and discontinuous.

The contemporary educational policies anchored in the neo-liberal ideology of 'employability' and 'competitiveness', that simultaneously shove away arts education from the place of learning, inform a limited, and limiting, reality. The possibility of coexistence, of conflicting and challenging, is obstructed by withdrawing the world's multiple variations from its experience. A multidisciplinary educational project, where different areas of knowledge have equal importance and are of mutual implication in the children's curricular enrichment, is refused.

Here, I've learnt with the children that disobedience is not an option; it is an urgency of discovering. It is urgent to disobey so as to provoke and to be provoked, to disturb and to be disturbed. It is urgent to disobey so as to think and to think ourselves. And we disobey searching for a place, even if unstable and temporary, in order to keep breathing in the asphyxia of school. The complexities of the discovery, and their unprecedented paths, belong to life and there is not (nearly) a place for them in school.

The project *Andar aos Papéis* followed creative dis-orientations, often fallible and unsuccessful, but it didn't stagnate before the actions' uncertainties. It was aimed at mediating a horizontal discovery of knowledges – technical and visual, interpersonal and of the subjects, curricular and educational – that were expressed within the artistic processes. We understood that it was crucial, in this process of teaching-learning, to grant autonomy and experience, so that the students would stop to simply illustrate the stories, and start to construct the 'self' in their own stories.

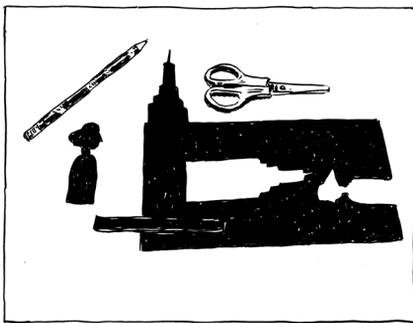


and sprung hope through eternal storytelling

EXPOSING AN ARTISTIC POINT OF VIEW

MARGARIDA DOURADO DIAS ¹

The acceptance of my participation as an artist in an educational context at the Oporto Music Conservatory, implementing a personal research within the European Create project, raised questions about what was my role and what was important for each of the involved participants to achieve. Should I prepare all the sessions by myself, or exchange experiences and needs with the teachers? What did the project asked me to develop and achieve? What was the role of the teachers in the project? Should I “teach” art or artistic skills? Should I offer experiences and contexts to develop some kind of thought? What subjects could be interesting and even important for the development of the students? How could I promote “the thinking” and “the free exercise of the imagination”, using the words of manguel (2015, p. 12), that is not so common in the educational institutions nowadays?



In the initial project meeting, with the co-ordinator of the Create Project and

other selected artists, the individual projects were shared, and information was disseminated about the need to explore artistic projects with the students and with the teachers. From this meeting I realised that the project was never meant to involve the artists imposing their knowledge and way of being. The teachers would be invited to participate in the project through their knowledge of teaching and learning. The students would be invited to participate as people with their own life experience.

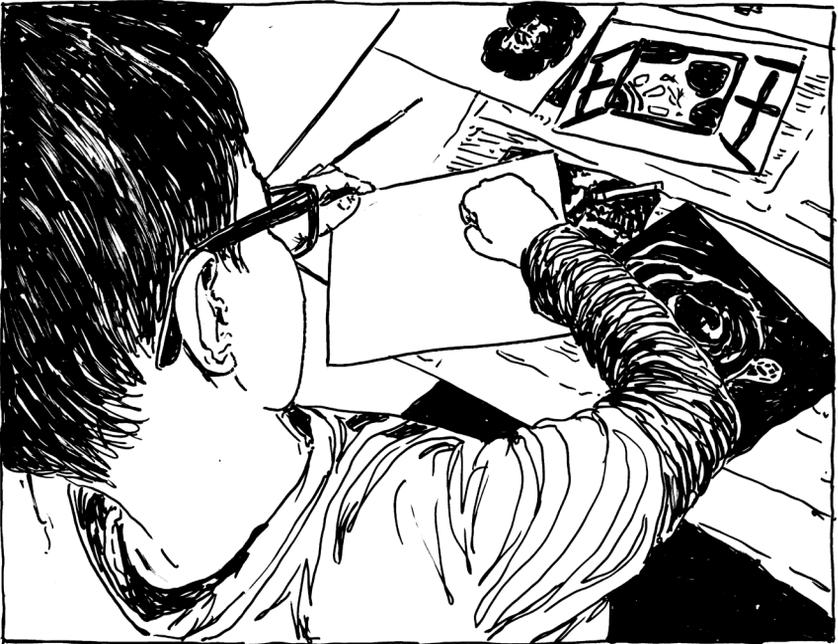
The experience that I had as teacher of art was not the role that I had to take on at this time. I didn't enter the project to be an art teacher, but rather an artist that would provide artistic experiences and an alternative point of view for the teachers and students. Having an artistic way of thinking (which is different from being an artist²), and presently being involved in a PhD research, provided the basis to think and draw a plan for my participation in the Create project.

My research on “the idea of death acquired through picturebooks” has a direct link with the children's experience: traditionally these books are seen, erroneously or not, as books for smaller children, although this is a thought that has been challenged in the last few years (BECKETT, 2012, p. 3); and the illustrations are used also to trigger a *need* for the book. With this I mean that whomever picks up a picturebook,

picks it up because of the illustrations (images), firstly, and, secondly, because of the text (story/ideas). The need of a book is (perhaps) emotional – a need of fulfilling our experiences with new points of view and/or a need of teaching something by “showing”, depending on the person that is choosing the book.

It is not very common to see the use of picturebooks in the learning process in the second grade. The tendency in primary schools is the use of handbooks, by 1st grade teachers, with images to communicate with the children, but not different kinds of illustrations to explore in different ways. The (stereotyped)

images are there only to convey an idea, or a sequence of a story, “a more literal level of comprehension” (ARIZPE & STYLES, 2005, p. 70), but there is no exploration about the mediums, forms, colours or styles used, for example. The purpose of the illustrations in these books is to make a link to the words, avoiding offering different interpretations. The purpose of reading, in this case, is to teach the discovery of communication through written words. In my experience as mother (of five children), it is very difficult (if not impossible) to hear about the reading of images/illustrations in school, unless the students are in an art course.



Once more, the picturebooks are most of the time seen as inappropriate to more advanced or grown up students and, as discussed by Arizpe and Styles (2005, p. 64), the number of pictures in books decrease in those intended for older readers. It is easy to notice that the first books that are given to the little ones have almost exclusively composed of pictures (ARIZPE & STYLES, 2005, p. 64) – these picturebooks help the adult to communicate with children and, simultaneously, help the children to learn to communicate through verbal language.

So, using the picturebooks as a medium to work with was comfortable and familiar for the young participants. However, the theme of death was something that I could see was an uncomfortable subject to deal with. Hayes and Murriss mention that in our society there is an environment of “protection”, “security”, “supervision” and “control” that make death a theme to be avoided in the dialogues with children (2008, p. 2). In this particular context, just hearing the word “death” made one of the teachers, and some of the parents, shiver, raising doubts about participating or letting the sons/daughters participate in the project.

Addressing the lack of knowledge (of these people in doubt) about the huge quantity of picturebook publications related specifically with death was,

actually, a way to get around the problem. When, in the first formal meeting with the teachers Cristina Rodrigues and Felisbina Antunes, I showed about ten picturebooks about death, suddenly they started to pick up the books to flip the pages with excitement.

At this point, I proposed that the picturebook selection should be decided by us (teachers and artist). This was an intentional approach to make the teachers feel that this project could be also controlled by them. The picturebooks were left with them and my proposal was that one of the specific books should be worked with the two classes, because there was an opportunity to have the illustrator and the writer in a session with the students. The second decision that was made by us together was the timing of the sessions. It is interesting to remember the fact that the teachers chose the picturebooks according to the learning stage of the students. Therefore, the picturebook selection wasn't related with the choice of illustrations, but with the text choice. They felt that some of the stories wouldn't be interesting for the children from the 3rd grade, and that other could be difficult to work with because of the inexperience in reading in the 1st grade.

The feeling of not knowing how the students, the teachers and the artist would react and what could happen

was present throughout the sessions. Although these were planned in a way that we thought would avoid non-controlled situations, the fact is that unpredictability always followed the work. The adults (teachers-artist) had the control over the choice of the books, but could never predict the response of the students to the situations. With the role of an artist, I never had in mind to teach anything, but to offer opportunities for exchanging experiences and “opportunities for thinking”, like Hayes & Murriss said (2008, p. 3), by giving the materials and scenarios through visual and textual stories. And

for that I had prepared myself to be also a student in the sessions: I had the five chosen picturebooks, but I was not familiar with any of them. This strategy and behaviour was intentional because I really wanted to discover these books with the children. The advantage that I had over the children in this instance was that I knew about the existence of these books and that all of them talked about death. However, the sessions were prepared in order for the theme to be “discovered” by the children (I had made this special request to the teachers in the first meeting³).



My presence in the school environment was felt as an external participant. Even when I had tried to bring the teachers to the project, asking them to participate, the response wasn't what I expected. Their responses were not proposals for "actions" or "opinions", rather their participation was as "school managers" in terms of: the management of children's behaviour, the link with the parents, the arrangement of class periods (day/time/space) for the project's sessions and booking of the conservatory's specific areas, like the Piano Bar. They knew how to control the space and the children's behaviour, but they didn't know how to share the same stage with the students and the artist. We (children and artist) were acting on a stage, "reading together", but I felt that the teachers were observers that could enter or get out of the play⁴. Simultaneously, there was an issue with the teachers' perception of me and their concept of "the artist" as being the "expert" – the responses of the teachers indicated that they felt that I had all the artistic skills and knowledge that could never be challenged.

Nevertheless, with the teacher of the 1st year there was some kind of joint working relationship, because she always accompanied the sessions and shared work materials. With the teacher of the 3rd year it was more complicated because she was on sick leave for a few weeks, which meant she was present only in

the first and last sessions. In the other, a substitute teacher took place and she never interfered in the activities, giving me full responsibility in the sessions.

In an attempt to provide different ways of looking at a book, the sessions approached the picturebooks firstly through illustrations (images only), secondly through words (text only) and then through both the illustrations and words, exploring the different stories in each picturebook. Meanings told by the text and meanings told by the images united in a "book as a whole" (ARIZPE & STYLES, 2005, p. 68). During the sessions, children felt the opportunity and the need to share their own experiences with death. There were so many stories/episodes that they wanted to share, and so little time to hear all of them. Even at the end of the third session, that included a meeting with the illustrator and writer of the "Efémora" picturebook, the children asked many questions but also shared their feelings. Since this meeting had so many participants (around 55) and the time was in a way limited, not every child was able to ask or share experiences, which was a little bit disappointing. My purpose for this session was to maximise the link between the children and the picturebooks, presenting them to the creators and original illustrations/stories, giving a little bit more. In the final session, using the world of music as an impulse to initiate dialogues,



I attempted, once more, to provoke meanings and thoughts about death that would end in an artistic expression.

The exploration of different artistic styles to express the death experiences and thoughts of the children in the sessions gave the opportunity to share and to construct ideas and feelings about death (as recorded at the end of the last session). The text of Hayes and Murriss (2008) shows clearly my intentions and relationship regarding the children:

The children are respected as the experts on the personal experience they bring to the sessions and as active participants in the creation of knowledge. Personal experiences are treated as examples that can help to illuminate the conceptual exploration in the movement back and forth between concrete and abstract forms. (p. 3)

The picturebook, as an instrument explored from an artistic point of view to reach the theme of death, was never meant to be used as an answer

(philosophical or artistic), but more as a trigger for new questions and new artistic experimentations (techniques). Hayes and Murriss also support the use of picturebooks because they “generate enquiries into the complex meanings of abstract concepts leading to more questions than answers” (2008, p. 8)

Looking back to the project’s implementation, I sense that all the involved parties enjoyed the experiences of thinking about death through art and sharing of points of view, but the feedback and participation obtained from the teachers was, somehow, not the one I expected. On the one hand, their participation was limited because the project was “imposed” from the outside – as artist of the project, I selected the theme, drew and conducted the sessions, presented the picturebooks, dealt with the children, the teachers and the invited persons. On the other hand, the lack of time to work in the sessions was a limitation that was felt by the children and by me. As for the teachers, the importance was given to the curriculum’s fulfilment and this project wasn’t there. Perhaps the strategy of involving, from the beginning, all the participants – children, teachers and artist – would be helpful in giving opportunity to think and construct new experiences and possibilities with the interest and commitment of all. And why not try to have more time to prepare the session and with the question “what

do you want to know?” addressed to all the participants, just like in a history lesson told by Manguel (2015, p. 43)? This question would be the beginning of new questions (and some answers?) for exposing alternative points of view.

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² In my case, being an artist, it is not a constant or unique way of being.

³ In the 1st class, the children didn’t know about the theme of death, but in the 3rd class some of the children knew because they had read the request for the permission to join the project directed to their parents, or their parents talked to them about the project.

⁴ In the last session, for example, we were left alone by the teacher of one of the classes.

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