Learning through the Visual Arts

inside this issue:

- Visual Arts in primary classrooms, across the school and in the community
- Iconography in the Christian Tradition
- Dance in the Curriculum at ACU
There is a long and rich connection between the arts and Catholic tradition. In 1993 Lindsay Farrell (Lecturer in The Arts at ACU Banyo and artist) wrote in a Brisbane Catholic Education Position Paper on the Arts that the arts are both a window and mirror. As a window the arts enable us to look beyond ourselves through creative expression and imagination to see and appreciate in greater depth and in broader perspective both our life and our faith. The arts also mirror or reflect the human condition. They provide significant ways of knowing about ourselves and our world, as we reflect upon and engage with creative expression.

Mark Elliot’s article on iconography illustrates the connection between human history, art, religion and culture. Other articles also illustrate a variety of such connections and focus on areas such as learning and teaching the visual arts strand, and other strands of the arts, as part of The Arts syllabus. They also illustrate learning connections to the broader curriculum and the community.

This edition celebrates the work undertaken by teachers who have engaged in formal professional learning in the arts through the Brisbane Catholic Education Scholarship Program conducted in collaboration with the Australian Catholic University. The program leads to a Post Graduate Certificate of Education [Arts] and may be converted to a Masters Degree with extra units of study. Teachers have recognised the value of this opportunity to learn more about the arts whilst gaining formal qualifications. They learn from experts in the fields of Visual Arts, Dance, Drama, and Music. Another outcome of this process is the rich environment created to interact with and learn from other students. Further details about the course may be found in Newsy Bits.

The final edition of Curriculum Matters this year will focus on Pathways in Secondary Schools. Contributions are welcome and if you wish to make a contribution, please contact the Editor.

I trust you enjoy the variety of articles in this edition of Curriculum Matters celebrating learning and teaching in the arts.

Fran Ralston

Self portraits by Year 1 students at St Matthews, Cornubia
Iconography in the Christian Tradition

Mark Elliott
Education Officer Religious Education
Brisbane Catholic Education

The Dominican writer, Timothy Radcliffe has observed that in building connections between people, words are everything. The word art comes from a Latin stem ar, which means to fit together. The word religion is probably related to religare, which translates as to bind. The word culture derives from colere, to worship. These etymologies reflect a profound truth; that, throughout human history, art, religion and culture have been inextricably linked. At its heart, the purpose of art has traditionally been to join and bind people of this world with a higher divine world. Art as culture is an act of worship. As Hart (2006, p.1) asserts, the iconographer seeks to write a piece of sacred art "that not only depicts a world shot through with divine power and light, but is itself an integral part of the human being's union with this divine light and love".

In the opening chapter of C.S Lewis' novel The Voyage of the Dawn Treader (from The Chronicle of Narnia series), Edmund finds himself looking into a painting in Lucy's room and remarking how Narnian the ship in the picture looked. The obnoxious Eustace Clarence Scrubb walks in and begins teasing them again about Narnia. The two brush him off and again study the picture - only now, the waves seem to be moving and the ship seems to be moving. Suddenly the three of them are all drawn into the painting and find themselves floating beside the ship. Someone from the ship jumps into the water and brings Lucy alongside the ship to have her lifted up, followed by Edmund, then the completely miserable Eustace.

This excerpt is a good analogy for how the viewer engages with an icon. The art of the icon is essentially liturgical; it invites participation from the viewer, drawing the viewer into its world and sending the viewer out into their own world to live and act differently. Paradoxically, while we read an icon, the icon also reads us, challenging us to question the mystery and contradictions we see both in the icon and then in ourselves.

The earliest Christian icons date back to the sixth century and emerge from the eastern Orthodox traditions. Many would be familiar with the World Youth Day icon of Our Lady. Veneration of the icon has been a significant part of the world youth day pilgrimage but it is important to understand what contemporary Catholic Christians are doing when they venerate crosses, icons and other sacred objects. The purpose is not so much the veneration of the object itself but more significantly what that sacred object represents. We venerate the cross because the cross is a symbol of unconditional love and a reminder of John 15:13 that "no one shows greater love than when they lay down their life for a friend." It reminds us that displays of unconditional love emerge in the most unlikely of places; the untiring efforts of Terry Hicks to get justice for his son, David is but one example; the dedicated work of school staff in some of our more challenging Catholic schools is yet another.

Teaching about Iconography

The National AIDS Network commissioned this magnificent icon written by Fr William Hart and called Mother of God, Light in all Darkness. When the icon was completed, the iconographer was noted as saying, "I wanted to create a contemplative image of absolute unconditional love and hope amidst the varied experience of darkness people with HIV/AIDS, and all of us, encounter in this life. The Mother of God holds Christ Emmanuel who guards and is the living flame of love, warmth, promise and joy. She gently repeats his gesture of shielding the Light".

When exploring icons with students the simplest and most poignant question to ask is What do you see? To answer this question adequately students need time - time to contemplate, to think, to discuss, to write.

This is an icon of three candles. The Christ child holds and shields one candle flame with his small hand, the
mother shields the light with her own protective hand raised in blessing. She is wrapped in deep blood-red garments and is full of sorrow. Both child and mother are flames (human lights) against the dark of night. Notice too the contrasts of dark and light used in this icon – the darkness of the background and the illuminated faces of the mother and child in its midst. The prayer that accompanies this icon is:

Mother of God
Light in All Darkness,
shelter him
our flame of hope
with your tender hands.
And in our times
of dread and nightmares,
let Him be our
dream of comfort.
And in our times
of physical pain
and suffering,
let Him be
our healer.
And in our times
of separation
from God and one another;
let Him be
our communion.
Amen.

When teaching about icons it is better to allow students time to simply contemplate the image in silence for some time rather than immediately providing background information and input. Students then might, for example,

- share any reflections on the icon discussing the aspects that stand out for them
- write about the messages or feelings the icon evokes in them.

After the sharing, students could be invited to come forward to take a candle. In response to the icon the teacher could begin by lighting his/her candle from the large candle, sharing a word, then lighting the candle of the person on either side. The teacher then invites all those gathered to close the session by praying the icon prayer:

In term two of this year fifty teachers came together to learn about the place of iconography in the Christian tradition and how sacred art might be incorporated into the classroom religion program as well as the spiritual formation of students. This workshop, led by Mark Elliott and Margaret Connors of the RE Team, provided participants with the opportunity of creating their own icon based on the charism of their school communities. Some of the icons produced are depicted below. A second workshop with a specific focus on teaching about iconography using online technologies will be offered at the Multimedia Expo on 21 August.

The true iconographer has a desire to know the beauty of God and convey this to others through their art for as the great mystic and poet of the fourth century, Saint Gregory of Nyssa reminds us,

The person who gazes on divine beauty marvels at what is continually being revealed and never ceases desiring more; what he awaits is even more magnificent and more divine than what he sees.
Dust: A visual Response to Need

John Fitzwalter
Arts Educator

In this article, John illustrates a way of responding to Colin Thompson’s book “Dust” using particular visual arts techniques in the process of composing a collaborative story.

Dust - ABC Books, Children’s Book Council of Australia Picture Book of the Year 2008 Shortlist

How do we respond to situations where poverty, starvation or injustices exist? Dust is a collaborative work written and coordinated by Colin Thompson. It is a book which challenges its readers. Whilst the topic is confronting, it is relevant in a number of present day situations as well as the possible futures of so many. By contemplating this we are able to then act.

The author Colin Thompson says: “I would hope it would be used to show children how lucky we are living in Australia where none of us are likely to die of hunger. I would hope it would inspire children and their teachers to try a come up with ideas to help right these terrible wrongs”.

http://www.writeawrong.com/pictures.html is a website which has information and illustrations of Dust.

Materials for Trust: A Response to Dust
You will need Cartridge paper, Cover Card, Glue stick and End Paper

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Materials for page illustrations</th>
<th>Illustration activity</th>
<th>Requirements</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>There are 14 sheets including the cover and imprint/title page and 7 activities enabling 4 children to illustrate 2 sheets per medium.</td>
<td>drawing</td>
<td>Coloured pencils</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>drawing</td>
<td>Soft pastel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>drawing</td>
<td>Felt pens</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>line and wash</td>
<td>Water soluble crayons</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Brushes water</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>painting</td>
<td>Tempera</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Brushes water</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>craft dye and wax resist</td>
<td>Dyeex Craft dye</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Foam brushes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Twistable Crayons</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>water</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>collage</td>
<td>Tissue paper</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Magazine cut outs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Coloured paper</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Scissors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Specialty papers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Glue stick</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Dust

I died last night.
Seventy years too young.
I had no years to fall in love, no weeks to laugh,
no days to learn that two and three make five.
It didn’t hurt.
Pain needs something to feed on
And we had no food.
They said there was food and water three days away,
but three days is across the world when you only have
hollow bones to carry you there.
So we sat together under the tree. My mother
wrapped me in sticks and we sat in silence as the sun
that gave us life took it away again.

Night came and the air was so cold
it made us transparent.
In the morning, Mother was still cold.
Her arms no longer moved, but I did not
have the strength to leave them.
Nor did I have anywhere to go.
No one here now, just the big birds waiting in our tree.
It was so quite.
The world has shut its ears
and moved on.
Tomorrow we will be back in the dust, gathered
by the wind and spread across the world.

Trust

an example of how the story may be rewritten (story is separated onto individual sheets).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1</th>
<th>Cover</th>
<th>Trust: a response to ‘Dust’</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Imprint/title page</td>
<td>Trust: a response to ‘Dust’ created by ..........</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>pp 1, 2</td>
<td>I slept last night.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>pp 3, 4</td>
<td>Serenely in my bed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>pp 5, 6</td>
<td>I had so many things to love, things that also made me laugh, days to learn two and three make five.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>pp 7, 8</td>
<td>It didn’t hurt. Love needs something to feed on And we have so much to love.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>pp 9, 10</td>
<td>We read a story called ‘Dust’ and it told of a place where people are without food and water; it was across the world and it was hard to imagine being there.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>pp 11, 12</td>
<td>So we sat together under the playground tree. My teacher and my friends spoke and then we sat in silence as the sun gave us life.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>pp 13, 14</td>
<td>Lunchtime came and the air was so fresh with lunch smells it made us so alive.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>pp 15, 16</td>
<td>The next morning, we still thought about them. Our arms reached out to them, and I now have the strength not to leave them.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>pp 17, 18</td>
<td>Nor will my friends let them go.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>pp 19, 20</td>
<td>No one here now will forget that others are in need of our help.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>pp 22, 22</td>
<td>It is of concern. The world has opened its ears and moves on.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>pp 23, 24</td>
<td>Tomorrow we will be back in trust, gathering support and spreading it across the world.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

end papers

The Island: An Exploration of Visual Feelings

John Fitzwalter
Arts Educator

The Island is a book by Armin Greder, Published by Allen & Unwin, Children’s Book Council of Australia Picture Book of the Year 2008 Shortlist

Through imagery and text, The Island expresses how a lack of objective consideration towards others can result with injustice and prejudice. Socially learned and often grounded in misconceptions and misunderstandings, prejudices are supported by inflexible generalizations. The book lends itself to
an exploration of visual expressions of mood, and investigates imagery of feelings.

Fear and Anger Activity (Middle Primary)

Is the cover of The Island illustrating an island?

What feelings may exist in the people who live behind these walls?

The drawings, dark and muted in colour; loose and expressive in line, course and unrefined in texture, are indicative of the pervasive mood expressed by the islanders. As a group, children explore their feelings of fear and anger (this may also include aspects of anxiety and confusion). Children share personal situations that have resulted in these feelings and how these feelings are visually expressed. Having observed these expressions with a partner, the group notes the visual characteristics of these feelings e.g. This activity can be done prior to reading the book. Another consideration is to have children respond to the book’s imagery, relating this to the story as the text is being read.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fear and Anxiety</th>
<th>Anger and Confusion</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- open wide eyes and small pupils</td>
<td>- small eyes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- raised eye brows</td>
<td>- lowered eyebrows</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- long sunken or shallow face</td>
<td>- contracted or projected face</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- head tilted backward</td>
<td>- head tilted forward</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- open mouth</td>
<td>- closed down turned mouth</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Materials for The Island activity

- Face cut-outs (available through Speedy School Supplies)
- Wax/oil crayons
- Paper (if drawing an outline)
- Glue sticks
- Scissors
- Craft paper
- Pencil
- Old paper sheets

Artwork by Year 6 students Christ The King School, Graceville

The Island: An Exploration of Visual Feelings.

[These are general characteristics and therefore should not be stipulated as obligatory to conveying a particular expression]

With a partner, children further explore the expressions of fear and anger in order to create a drawing of either expression. Using a face outline or cut-out, children are asked to consider ways they can depict fear or anger. If using a cut-out, consider reshaping the face and hair with scissors so as to make adjustments to best suit the mood. Place the face cutout onto a sheet of old paper and with a dark crayon angled on its side and pointing outward, shade around the entire edge of the cut-out. Using a crayon, draw the facial features of fear or anger: Using other colours, create highlights - eyes, hair, cheeks, mouth, etc...Display the drawings and have children consider the expression they best relate to in terms of specific feelings. Group these into fear, anger (and a group of undecided feelings if they are not clearly identified as fear or anger). Cluster the faces around one expressionless face, not unlike that of the visitor to the island. Glue them onto a craft paper or large background sheet, then using a dark, loose and coarsely textured line, draw the bodies around the faces along with the hand forms that express fear and anger. Display this image and have children reflect on what may have caused these feelings towards this person. Having fueled their minds and imaginations, the students write about the scene before them. This activity can be done before or after reading The Island.

Art work by Year 6 students Christ the King School, Graceville

Background notes to illustrations in The Island

A number of well known artworks can be referenced in relation to The Island.

A greater appreciation of The Island illustrations can be gained by viewing images that are in some ways similar or related to them. The following is a brief synopsis of these images.

Page 13 The Scream 1893 Casein/waxed crayon and tempera on paper (cardboard), 91 x 73.5 cm; National Gallery, Oslo.
The Scream was created by the Norwegian painter and printmaker Edvard Munch. This painting is regarded as an intense expression of anguish and fear.

Page 18 The Nightmare 1781 oil on canvas 101.6 × 127 cm, 40 × 50 in Detroit Institute of Arts.

This painting by Swiss artist Henry Fuseli of a dream brought him wide public acclaim when first exhibited. The unsettling subject matter and treatment reveal the disparate influences of Classicism, Michelangelo, William Blake and the grotesque, Arcimboldo.

Child Carrying the Cross by Hieronymus Bosch 1490 Oil on panel. Musée des Beaux-Arts, Ghent, Belgium

Bosch’s artwork was unique and often very allegorical as in this painting in which Christ is seen surrounded by a sea of scornful faces [apart from that of Veronica’s face in the bottom left corner of the painting where she holds a shroud of Christ face].

Research and Art Activities

Research these works and find out why the expressions in them are depicted as such. Students also select other artworks that express fear, anxiety and prejudice.

Using images (cut-outs, photocopies, drawings etc...) or colours, create an artwork that symbolically represents an idea such as an island in isolation. Allegories are composed of several symbols or metaphors - for example, a cluster of boy images surrounded by girls may address gender inequity. Display these works and have student share the ideas and feelings that they have in response to viewing these works.

Research ‘island’ quotes and create an image that visually explores its ideas.


“No man is an island, intire of itselfe; every man is a peice of the Continent, a part of the maine”

(No man is an Island, entire of itself; every man is a piece of the Continent, a part of the main).

John Donne Meditation XVII, English poet 1572-1631

Fractals* provide interesting possibilities in that they express the idea of sameness within the whole.

*Fractal “a rough or fragmented geometric shape that can be subdivided into parts, each of which is [at least approximately] a reduced-size copy of the whole,” a property called self-similarity. The term was coined by Benoit Mandelbrot in 1975 and was derived from the Latin fractus meaning "broken" or "fractured." http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fractal
Tibetan Buddhists say that a mandala consists of five excellences: the teacher, the message, the audience, the site and the time. With the addition of a further two important considerations: the technical and the team, these seven key points became the organizer for this project. A comment from a parent influenced and lifted the proposal from idea to reality. This was: "Evelyn, thank you for this. We have given so much thought to design of buildings and playgrounds but this is adding the heart." With the green light from all concerned it was time to begin the project.

The Goal
My goal was to make this project as inclusive as possible thus generating a sense of ownership from the whole community. This goal was driven by the belief that what we create, we value. Involving as many people as possible in the creation of this special place would see the value being ‘built in’. Conversations took place with many community members and the notes from these informed the final design. On a more practical level it was felt engaging helpers in the making of the tiles and construction would have other very positive effects.

A community project such as this is not for the faint hearted but the results exceeded all expectations as the collective energy took hold. Integral to the success of a collaborative community project is the development of a shared vision, a realistic time frame and keen organizational processes. I spoke with many members of the community, adults and students, to gather their thoughts on such a place. I searched many texts to find a tract that really captured the collective spirit and understanding. It was the verse from John which resonated loudly with the thoughts I had gathered.

'I came that you may have life and live it to the full’
John 10:10.

What meaning does it hold for the students?
It is interesting that a complete shift in what started as discussions around how we remember people who have died, moved to a discussion about ‘living life to the full’. This, perhaps, is the essence of what it means to be Christian.

Strategies were then employed to find a more specific illustration of what this meant to the students. The
Prep children felt that living life fully was ‘having fun with family and friends at school and basically everywhere’. The Year One children focused on ‘giving, loving and kindness’ and it was agreed that ‘the hands’ could be used effectively for their symbol. The Year Two children wanted to express their love of nature. For the Year Three children ‘family’ had special meaning. The Year Four students chose ‘friends’, with the Year Five students choosing ‘peace’. Year Six students chose ‘living with spirit’, and the Year Seven class this was best expressed in all forms of ‘love: being loved and showing love’. With these clear messages we began the creation.

Involving the Community

Whilst the students of Mater Dei were the core of the team creating the mandalas, there needed to be a broader team approach to see this project to its conclusion. My mentor, Stephanie Outridge Field is a ceramic artist with a passion for community based projects. She has a firing service and was able to provide valuable advice as a consultant on all technical considerations including the non-slip properties needed for the ceramic mandalas. I wanted to extend an invitation to as many as possible and approached two mums I thought may have liked to be involved. Their offer of help escalated to a level which was truly invaluable. Within our active community we have an extraordinary number of parents passing through the school each day, and an invitation was extended to all to roll tiles. Many accepted this invitation, and then other parents offered to take small groups of children for glazing. My room became a hub of activity after school with parents, children and toddlers all keen to be a part of the project. Two dads were asked to provide advice and they physically helped with the landscaping and concreting skills. The level of support didn’t wane and was perhaps best illustrated when the original two mums grouted for a whole day in the rain and would not be dissuaded!

This project has been truly amazing from start to finish. The magic of involving the whole community brought so many unexpected benefits. The children have been a part of all steps in the creation of the prayer space along with many parents who brought specialist skills. For the children, being involved in all aspects of the creation - from the mundane such as packing and cleaning tiles – to the final step, was a valuable experience. They loved being engaged in all steps and I could see the illumination on their faces as each step made sense. With a large project like this it is difficult despite the best efforts to convey the whole picture. It gave me great joy watching them finally laying the tiles on the concrete slab – discussing the tiles they had chosen and their merits. It became like a huge jigsaw puzzle with the picture developing over the time.

Conclusion

For the last few weeks I have posted a sign “Watch this space” and it is so funny and heart-warming to see groups of children watching and talking about the space and what is to come. I have seen children lead parents and grandparents to the garden to show the progress. The place as yet doesn't have a name and has been referred to as the ‘prayer space’. The students will be asked for suggestions regarding a name for the ‘prayer space’ on its completion.

We are all looking forward to the opening and blessing of the space which will coincide with the anniversary of the death of one of our community and then observe the space take on a life of its own.

The question now on everyone’s lips is ‘What’s next?’

Symbolism in art work:

• The circle represents community, life and love
• The spiral represents growth both inward and outward and our connections with the universe
• The many different shades of blue symbolise calming, healing water
• The stars represent those who have died
• The heart is for ‘ourselves’
• The cross reminds us of Jesus at our centre
• The smaller mandalas are the children’s response to the theme
A Whole lot of Warhol
Art Project at Sts Peter and Paul’s School Bulimba

Carolyn Burchill

The Andy Warhol exhibit at the Queensland Gallery of Modern Art in early 2008 was too good an opportunity to miss for students and teachers to examine the life and work of an influential 20th century artist. Many school students visited the gallery during the exhibition and our school used the impetus of the exhibit to complete a visual arts unit on Warhol. The unit was done with year 6 students and covered some level 4 outcomes.

Outline

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Exploring</th>
<th>Developing</th>
<th>Responding</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Students:</td>
<td>Students:</td>
<td>Students:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Explore the life and work of Andy Warhol. The students examine more closely some of Warhol’s Art work over the internet and in the classroom.</td>
<td>Select three of the fantasy trees in the Ad and copy them, having already discussed Warhol’s role in advertising and his use of other public images. The students then create their own fantasy tree and display their page in the classroom.</td>
<td>Analyse how they explored and developed their ideas for their fantasy trees. They create a collaborative display of their works including Andy Warhol Photo fantasy trees screen prints and large class canvas.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>View the Andy Warhol Exhibition at the QLD GoMA. They discuss concepts such as representation, media, purpose and process. Explore the art work used in a Mount Franklin Water Ad and discuss the audience and purpose. We explore the repetitive nature of the Ad and how this relates to Warhol’s work.</td>
<td>Create a screen print poster of snowflakes considering use of colour and predicting the result.</td>
<td>Analyse and compare their own and the work of others. Students may annotate their drawings and collage experiments to communicate their understanding of how they have used elements and concepts to deconstruct and reconstruct meanings.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Assessment
Teachers gather evidence of students’ demonstrations of core learning outcomes through visual folios, display folios, student–teacher consultations and peer-assessment.

Lessons

Week 1: Andy Warhol Power Point presenting students with information about the artist’s life and family. We learn about his art work and examine some pictures including the shoes, soup cans and famous icons.

Week 2: In the Computer lab, students access the GoMA web site and complete the activities designed for kids.

Week 3:

Week 4: GoMA excursion

Week 4: Evaluation of excursion. Students discuss their favourite and least favourite art works and activities.

Week 5: Mount Franklin Ad Activity and Fantasy trees.

Week 6: Screen printing Snowflakes and shoes.

Week 7, 8 and 9: Large class canvas lolly wrappers.

The students make a poster of Photo booth pictures taken at exhibit.
Art Works and Working Arts in the Community: Exhibitions of Art

Jo Murphy
Our Lady’s College Annerley

Jo Murphy is trained as an Experiential Creative Arts Therapist and Community Arts Facilitator. She has also worked as a Primary Arts Specialist (Mary McKillip, Birkdale) and is a Campus Minister now at Our Lady’s College Annerley.

Jo’s work in the area of the Arts is extensive and she is enrolled in the BCE/ACU Post Graduate Certificate Education (Arts) scholarship. The article that follows presents some snapshots of her work in programs using forms of visual arts that support, enrich and enliven the lives of local community groups.

Multi Variant Scripting

In 2005, I began to explore community facilitation through artistic process. This involved working with digitalised artwork in Photoshop in order to illustrate a comic book production commissioned by Child and Youth Mental Health.

As a way of collecting data for the book, I worked collaboratively with mental health workers and older youth who as acted as mentors. We produced a Multivariant Comic book that showed not only the story of grief associated with addiction, but also presented alternatives and ways that students and their parents can seek help when faced with addiction dilemma.

The Zillmere Story

Early in 2007, I facilitated the Zillmere Story Book for the Brisbane City Council. This was completed under the direction of Deannah Vieth, and families were guided to tell their personal Zillmere Story through an artistic process. It is a blend of hand drawn and digital processes and the book is now a permanent acquisition of the Zillmere Library.

The Zillmere book

As an Experiential Creative Arts Therapist, I visit and regularly work in many kinds of healing communities within already existing educational, rehabilitative or corrective structures. I organized an exhibition of art work created by women from the Women’s Correctional Centre Wacol which is now showing at the Australian Catholic University at Banyo. The art work enables women to express their feelings and hopes for their families and for the future.

Trail of Recovery

Cath Ovenden of Artforce/Brisbane City Council worked with me to paint a “Trail of recovery” on Traffic Signal Boxes in strategic places in Inner City Brisbane.

The simulated trail will stand as a symbol of empowerment. The travel signal boxes will start at the Train Station at Wacol in Brisbane. This is a place where passengers alight and proceed to the prison. The trail of recovery then spreads out in two directions. One trail works its way passed Lucinda House a women’s rehabilitation centre towards Moonyah - a Salvation Army Rehab Centre. The trail winds back towards BIALA Community Centre to join up at a junction outside the...
Mater Hospital. The other side of the trail works its way up Ipswich Rd and when it reaches Annerley Junction, it features the same symbol of hope, which is a mirror image of the Phoenix Rising featured on the Wacol Station box. This is outside the Annerley Community Centre where I have recently been granted the privilege of being able to paint community signage, which I hope will be inspired by and inspire “community vision”.

**InFusions 2008/2009**

“InFusions” refers to the melting pot of recovery. It includes the meltdown that youth often refer to when they talk about the emotional overload that so often accompanies life in the fast lane of inner city urban living. It also includes the connectivity and cross-fertilization of intermingling that occurs between rehabs, prisons and community centres, when people try to engage in Life Long Learning.

Transformation is experienced in these situations when people attempt to rise above life’s hardships in the way the Phoenix is imagined on the Annerley and Wacol Traffic Signal Boxes.

The artwork will come from group work already taking place within various communities throughout Brisbane. There will be cartoon strips, comic books and children’s books as well as a variety of artworks that will include multimedia presentations.

Scaled down versions of facilitated community murals will be featured. Small mosaic pieces will be placed beside digitalised mosaic murals. Inspired by Andy Warhol’s Brillo Boxes freestanding installations that mock up the traffic signal boxes dotted around Brisbane will be the thread that binds the theme of the exhibition.
Andy Visits Queensland

Holy Family Primary School
Indooroopilly

Faye Graham and Mariangela Bonasia Lewis are the Art teachers at Holy Family Primary School Indooroopilly. They are both undertaking the Post Graduate Certificate in Education (Arts) through a scholarship from Brisbane Catholic Education. They took the opportunity for their project during the Visual Arts unit to engage all classes in an arts event. This event ‘Andy visits Queensland’ was the culmination of an enormous range of arts projects in classes across the school. It provided a ‘real’ context for children to learn and apply many visual arts techniques, including integrated learning across most Key Learning Areas. Faye and Mariangela used the interest surrounding the Andy Warhol exhibition which opened the new Gallery of Modern Art (GoMA) in Brisbane, as a central theme.

The artwork of all children from Prep to year 7 was exhibited under the general theme ‘Andy Visits Queensland’. They understood that Warhol loved to travel when his financial position enabled him to do so and had he lived longer he would surely have loved to visit Queensland. The students planned this visit, and on the ‘event’ day, viewers of Andy’s travel’s were are to position themselves as fellow travellers capable of their own independent reflections.

Teachers of each year level were provided with a list of questions to enable students to navigate the exhibition in a sequential way and through discussion to interpret and analyse what they saw. They also had suggestions for further appraisal activities and critical literacy.

The exhibition had two main areas defined by artwork and soundscape: the Beach Zone (surfing songs) and the Bush Zone (Australian bush birdsongs). The Riverways landscape links the two zones.

A dramatised play was broadcast over an intercom system to introduce the viewer to the school’s cockroaches in the scenario – having been resident at the school since it was built in 1928. Excitement loomed with the arrival of New York Cockroaches with their guest – Andy Warhol, to organise the locals. The cane toads muscled in on that plan.

The art work includes the arrival of Andy by plane; the cockroaches and the cane toads interaction; Andy surfing at the beach along with all the apparel fitting this scene; Andy flying over the flood zones with rivers; scuba diving among the tropical fish, sharks etc; Andy at Lone Pine for a bush experience and finally a presentation to Andy of a souvenir Vegemite jar painting to hang with his soup prints.

This brief overview provides some idea of the range of art work and associated activities undertaken by class groups and individual children. The event itself had students undertaking many of the organisational roles, with parents, relatives and friends invited and the P and F providing lunch. Money raised was donated to a charitable organisation.

The photos provide a ‘taste’ of the culminating event as a whole school project celebrating creativity and learning associated with the arts.
Beach Towels

Seagulls fighting over the ‘food’

Thong Art

Andy scuba dives in the Barrier Reef

Andy flies to the bush

Andy the parrot man

Andy flies home

Blending of Cultures
Snapshots

The following snapshots illustrate learning in visual arts in a number of classrooms. They are selected from the work of some of the teachers undertaking the Visual Arts unit of their Post Graduate Certificate in Arts at ACU. The complete version of their units of work will soon be available on SharePoint (A BCE Intranet initiative which is currently under development). For more information you may contact the authors.

As We See It!
Unit of Art for Year 6
Our Lady of Lourdes, Sunnybank

Terry Druery
tdrury@bne.catholic.edu.au

This unit is built around a very brief exposure to various styles of portraiture. This was used as a spring board to have the children explore self representation along with some basic instruction in facial imaging techniques.

Students explored how cultural icons are portrayed through a brief examination of work from the Pop Art movement, in particular Warhol [with reference to the exhibition held at GoMA earlier this year]. They produced a version of their 'cultural icon' and used Super 8mm film to illustrate their '15 seconds of fame'. The last activity in this unit examined the way Mary has been portrayed in the Catholic Church over time, including the Black Madonnas and current culturally diverse images.

In this unit, students produced an image of Our Lady of Lourdes for our school. The final outcome was an exhibition of their art works from the unit and a presentation of the Mary paintings to the school for perpetual display in the classrooms.

The Syllabus Outcomes addressed in this unit are:
ME 4.1 Students apply media languages and technologies through genre conventions to construct media texts.
ME 4.2 Students select media forms and apply technologies to construct and present media texts to target and audience.

Children as Lifelong Learners:
Healthy Bodies, Happy Kids

Theresa Sisalio
St Francis Xavier School, Goodna
tsisalio@bne.catholic.edu.au

Theresa’s unit of work was titled: Food for Life and she planned around the Roles for Lifelong learners, clustering outcomes from Levels 1 and 2 from English, Science, Technology, The Arts and H and PE.

The Unit focus was to develop a broader awareness of food and healthy life choices using visual art lessons. The activities were aimed at integrating knowledge and understanding based on the 4 modes of learning in contemporary art education and supported through the QSA Arts Syllabus.

These activities included self portraits using unconventional portrait styles [e.g. Picasso], drawing healthy activity choices with oil pastels and 2D modeling of figures with pipe cleaners.

The unit of work is comprehensive with many different types of art activities integrated across learning in the curriculum. Theresa also composed a school brochure “Celebration of the Arts” which outlines the school vision, the role of learning in the Arts as part of this vision and the integration of the Arts in the curriculum of St Francis Xavier.
The project involved all year four students and teachers at our school with the focusing activity being an excursion to the Andy Warhol Exhibition at the Gallery of Modern Arts (GoMA). This was followed by class sessions based on a learner-centred approach to explore the elements of art and design concepts. The culminating activity was an exhibition of the students’ visual art work for their families. This project allowed the students to interact with visual art media to make sense of their world.

Activities included:
An exploration of colour, texture and design concepts was achieved through the drawing of soup tin labels, portraits and Marilyn Monroe collages in the style of Andy Warhol.

The class, with the assistance of the year four co-teacher, used the photo booth computer generated technique to produce individual images of each student.

Another activity employed the medium of screen printing using leaves, paper leaves and the design of a class logo. Although this activity involved considerable time, the excitement and total engagement in the collaborative work was a high point. Certainly the amount of paint, time and cleaning up were challenging aspects of doing screen printing, however the outcomes and the ‘highs’ made up for any challenges.
From ‘me’ to Picasso - Year 1
at St Matthew’s, Cornubia

Kati Poli
kpoli@bne.catholic.edu.au

“The beginning of the year and so much to learn”.

The learning referred to include the routines of school life, Language and Mathematics and looking at ourselves and our families, and for the class of Year 1 at St Matthew’s, their integrated learning had a major visual arts focus.

They began with ‘Portraits’ using mirrors and a book about ‘Ish”. This ‘Ish’ book concerns a boy who painted pictures that looked a bit like ‘ish’ – ‘tree-ish’, ‘house-ish’...The class, after viewing portraits – some real, and some looking ‘portrait-ish’ - did their own ‘ish’ portraits. Clay was used to build houses and made a suburb complete with trees, cars etc.

A link was made to their learning in Religious Education – about Jesus, the clothing of that time, the housing and the food.

In term 2 the children learned about real artists, their work, colours and designs. The artists were: Vincent Van Gogh (Sunflowers), Picasso (Three Musicians), and Michelangelo (The Sistine Chapel). The artists and their particular paintings provided the stimulus for children to experiment with screen printing and painting in that style and manner.

In this next term the children are visiting the Picasso and Sidney Nolan exhibition and are being visited by personnel from Ngutani Lui to learn about Aboriginal culture including indigenous art work.

They then discussed ‘feelings’ and how these are represented in their facial and body expressions. “Mrs Poli printed the photos of us showing different emotions and we attached our ‘emotion’ statements to a mural of the these”.

Families and how they provide us with food, clothes, shelter and love was the next topic and children made models of their families with plasticines. Parents donated frames for the models to be presented.
After reading “A Secret Record of Me” by Roland Harvey, the children in my class were keen to make ‘A Record of Me’ - a self portrait. The inspiration was a collection of a range of portraits and self portraits by famous artists sourced from the internet and presented as a PowerPoint. The children were captivated and very interested in the slides they saw.

In the Exploring phase of the unit children found pictures of faces in magazines. It was interesting to hear them discuss their belief that faces were in fact ‘circles’. Some of the children persisted with this thought until they actually cut the faces away from the hair. This process also lead children to ‘discover’ that eyes are in fact about halfway down the face. This was truly an ‘ah ha’ moment for many of them.

Cutting out the individual features of faces helped the children learn about the shape of each of the features. It also gave them concrete evidence of how everyone is unique and special. This is an important concept to understand as they are part of a diverse community which includes children from non English speaking backgrounds and children with special needs enrolled at the school through an Inclusion Unit.

To begin the Developing phase of the unit, a self portrait was modeled for the children. They were given the opportunity to practise drawing a self portrait, paying particular attention to the shape of their face, the position and shape of the eyes, nose and mouth. There were many learning ‘moments’. For example, one child was able to put into practice what had been discussed and modeled about the face and its features, but was unable to draw the body in proportion to the head.

Another child in this class is autistic and she refuses to draw herself as a person, preferring instead to depict herself as a cat. In the last of these 3 drawings, she drew more ‘person-like’ limbs, and excluded the tail. She then commented “I look like a person!”

When the children were first drawing their self portraits, many of them commented that it would be easier if they had mirrors. Mirrors were made available when we used chalk pastels on card.

In the next activity of the developing phase, a close up photo of each child’s face was photocopied and enlarged to life size, twice – once in black and white and once in colour. The black and white copies were displayed and the children identified themselves. Each child pointed out how they knew it was them – “It looks like me.”

“The hair is long like mine”; “I can see a gap where my tooth fell out.”

We continued with a number of activities of different ways of composing portraits and the final activity in the Developing phase provided an opportunity for the children to display all of the skills and knowledge they had gathered during the unit. They were given a piece of paper which had been framed with colored card and were encouraged to produce a self portrait using a medium of their choice.

Throughout this unit, I have had John Fitzwalter’s words chiming in my head – “You don’t do one, you do many!”

In the final stage in the Make – Display – Appraise process, the children chose 1 or 2 of their own self portraits for display and explained why they had chosen them.

“This one has the right shape head”
“I made the skin look like mine.”
The children then chose a portrait of a buddy which was also to be displayed. Once again they had to appraise the work and give a reason for choosing it.

I chose this one of Mohaba because it looks like her. The colours are right."

And finally we presented a display to celebrate the great artworks made by Year 1!

---

**So You Think You Can't Dance?**

**Rachael Jacobs**  
Lecturer – Creative Arts Education  
Australian Catholic University

Dance Education has undergone some dramatic changes over the last two decades. But a lack of professional development opportunities for teachers has meant that dance in schools is sometimes still confined to bush dancing, rock eisteddfod or the Macarena.

In July a group of Catholic Education teachers challenged themselves by participating in a Dance Curriculum Studies unit offered by the Australian Catholic University in Brisbane. These teachers will complete studies in Dance, Drama, Visual Arts and Music to form their post-graduate qualifications in Creative Arts Education.

The week-long intensive unit included participation in practical workshops, meaning that the teachers danced and moved their way through the week. The workshops included animal dances, shape making, rhythm development, freeze framing, body percussion and physical theatre. They explored integrating all areas of the curriculum with dance, including Maths, SOSE, Literacy and Technology.

Most teachers possessed no dance background and they arrived on the first day with some apprehension. However, armed with a positive attitude and willingness to have a go, everyone soon saw the possibilities of learning through movement.

The week was exhausting, but rewarding and a lot of fun. The Drama unit will be held in January during the school holidays and the excitement is already building.
Fran Ralston

Professional musicians and artists from Musica Viva (MV) offer a range of professional development and concerts as part of their education [in schools] program. This year Gipsy Tober from MV are working in three primary schools as part of a co-funded project [i.e. with costs being shared between the school and Brisbane Catholic Education]. The schools had a choice between two models being offered: a) Repertoire and Skills Development and b) Creative Development. Model b) may involve the school composing a new work e.g. a school song.

The workshops culminated with a joyous concert for the school community on Wednesday 25 June involving the school choir, groups of children, Gipsy Tober and at times with everyone joining in the vocal and rhythm renditions.

At All Saints, the Gypsy Tober group worked with the school choirs and Ruth Skippen, the music/choir teacher. Their performance was presented in the church with the voices lifting the spirit as they sang a selection of traditional folk songs from across the continents.

The children were asked: How do you feel when you sing?

“Alone and surrounded at the same time, but in a good way”

“I am free and I can do anything”

“Refreshed”

I want to sing because…

“It makes me feel happy and all the bad things disappear when I sing”

“It makes me feel fizzy and fuzzy”

The Year 4 children were asked: How did you go when you worked with Gypsy Tober?

“I thought they were sensational, especially when they taught us Bella Mama and Mouth music”

Gipsy Tober also performs for the children at the culminating performance...children and adults alike appreciate this opportunity to hear the talent of the women in this vocal group.

“I liked it when they sang because they all sang in different parts. I would love to hear them sing lots more”.

“I liked the warm ups they taught us and the group activities. I liked the singing and the dancing because...
In June, primary teachers undertaking a Post Graduate Certificate in Education (Arts) through a scholarship from Brisbane Catholic Education met to undertake their 2nd unit of study – Dance at ACU Banyo Campus. This edition features a window into some of the work undertaken by some of the teachers from their first unit...Visual Arts. There is also some information regarding the unit on Dance Studies in the Curriculum currently underway. The teachers are an enthusiastic group (as you can see from the photos and by reading about their various projects) and are keen to enhance their knowledge and pedagogical skills to support student learning in the Arts.

A second cohort of teachers will have the opportunity to apply for this scholarship and commence study in 2009. The Post Graduate Certificate consists of four units – Visual Arts, Dance, Drama and Music. The course is structured around a one week vacation school per unit and the completion of a project for assessment. As you can see by reading Curriculum Matters, the projects have practical classroom/school application.

If you are interested in accessing formal professional development contributing toward a Post Graduate Certificate (which can lead to a Masters Degree), please keep an eye out for an information brochure about applying for a Brisbane Catholic Education (Arts) Scholarship. It will arrive at your school in August. It is intended that the next cohort of teachers will begin this course during 2009.

A conference coming your way:
Association of Women Educators Biennial National Conference

“Choices, Chances & Opportunities: Women and girls in the 21st Century”

Where: Cairns at the Pacific International Hotel
When: 1-3 October 2008

Details re keynotes, workshops and registration can be found on the website http://www.awe.asn.au/conferences/cairns08/index.php
CURRICULUM MATTERS - SURVEY FORM

This survey is to gather feedback on Curriculum Matters - a quarterly educational journal published through the Religious Education and Curriculum Team for Brisbane Catholic Education. We wish to see if the contents and format meets your needs and if there are directions we might take for the future to improve this means of communicating teacher practice.

We ask that you could take a few minutes and complete the survey and return by either fax or email to Fran Ralston, EO Curriculum Communications and Special Projects.

1. Please tick those roles that best describe you
   - APA
   - Deputy
   - APRE
   - Early Years Teacher
   - Campus Minister
   - Early Years Teacher
   - Counsellor
   - Education Officer
   - Guidance Officer
   - Learning Support Teacher
   - Primary Teacher
   - Principal
   - School Officer
   - Secondary Teacher
   - Staff BCEC
   - Subject Coordinator (HOD)
   - Teacher Librarian
   - Other: please specify

2. Have you read Curriculum Matters?
   - Yes
   - No

3. Describe how you usually access Curriculum Matters
   - In the Staff Room
   - In the Library
   - On the BCE website
   - Other (please specify)

4. Is Curriculum Matters of any practical use for you?
   - For your newsletter
   - As professional reading
   - Linked with school professional development plans
   - To assist planning curriculum
   - Other: please describe

Continued overleaf >
5. Curriculum Matters has the intention to celebrate and share the many great things teachers are doing in our schools. How well do you think it does this?

[ ] Poorly  [ ] Okay  [ ] Well  [ ] Really well

6. In your experience has Curriculum Matters contributed to quality learning and teaching in your school in any way?

[ ] Yes  [ ] How?
[ ] No  [ ] Why not

7. What suggestions would you have for the future directions for Curriculum Matters?

Presentation (please comment)
Frequency (please comment)
Topics: (please suggest)

Continue?  [ ] Yes  [ ] No
On-line?  [ ] Yes  [ ] No
Paper-based?  [ ] Yes  [ ] No

8. What are the most worthwhile aspects of Curriculum Matters?

________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

9. What are the least worthwhile aspects of Curriculum Matters?

________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

10. Additional comments?

________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

Thank you for your feedback.
Please cut along the dotted line and return to:
Fran Ralston, EO Curriculum Communications and Special Projects
Fax: 3844 5101 or email: fralston@bne.catholic.edu.au
A link to this survey can be found at: https://staffportal.bne.catholic.edu.au/docushare/dsweb/Get/Document-15076/Evaluation+survey+Curriculum+Matters+August+2008.doc