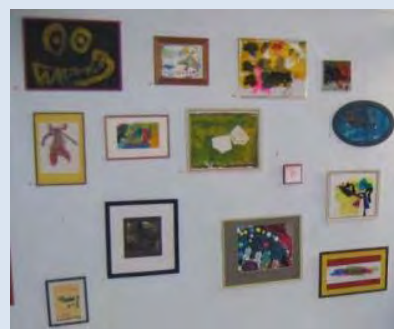




Issue 4, 2011

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Kia ora

Welcome to Issue 4 of ecARTnz.

This exciting issue focuses on how early childhood teachers are using art galleries and exhibitions (of the work of adult artists, as well as the work of children) as a way to enrich visual art programmes.

We are delighted to have a contribution for this issue from Dr David Bell, a senior lecturer at Otago University College of Education who, whilst having a background in secondary school art and art history teaching, is a keen supporter of, and advocate for, the early childhood sector. His article examines successful teaching strategies that can be used with young children in the gallery setting to enhance and enrich their learning.

Emma Parsons and Adrienne Wilkins, from Sophia Preschool in North Taranaki, discuss how developing an exhibition of their children's work was a useful tool for uncovering children's thinking about peace. The exhibition was also a way of sharing ideas with the community about peace being an important part of the centre's kaupapa.

Lorraine Andrewes and Michelle Johnston, from St Andrews Epsom Early Childhood Centre in Auckland, describe their staff and children's developing skills and confidence with exploring local art galleries which are now seen as important learning spaces that support their art programme. Cherie Jones, from Childhood Concepts Early Learning Centre in Lower Hutt, also describes a small-group visit to a local art gallery, where teachers and children were guided through the experience by gallery educators. Jeanette Clarkin-Phillips, Margaret Carr, Rebecca Thomas, Maingi Waitai, Alison Beer, researchers involved in a Teaching and Learning Research Initiative at the new kindergarten at Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongawera, describe some of the ways in which visits to an exhibition of tapa and other Pasifika art objects, have impacted on the children's learning.

Nelly Kendall-Carpenter, from Carterton Kindergarten in the Wairarapa, describes how the kindergarten developed a purpose-built art studio, and how this has led to some new ways of exhibiting children's work in the kindergarten. The new art studio has enabled the teachers to employ local artists to work with the children, and has encouraged the staff to exhibit children's work at exhibitions in their local community.

Finally, an initiative by Linda-Hua Xi and the infant and toddler teachers at Pipitea Childcare centre demonstrates how exhibiting art posters to children can extend their aesthetic awareness and oral literacy.



The International Art in Early Childhood Conference

"Art...Play...Children...Wonderment!"

June 6–8, 2011, the University of Toledo's Center for the Visual Arts and the Toledo Museum of Art

The conference will serve as a platform for discussion and the exchange of ideas and learning that can guide the way for the present and future of early childhood art education. Internationally acclaimed keynote speakers George Szekley and Christine Thompson, as well as researchers and early childhood art educators, will gather to share philosophies, theories and pedagogical strategies. As a conference attendee, you'll have the opportunity to view early childhood art education through new lenses, which can serve as a launch pad for exploring new ways of teaching art in early childhood.

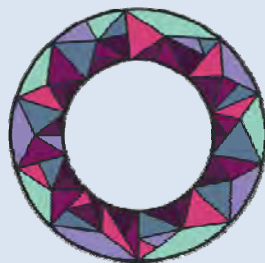
To find out more visit the website:

<http://www.ecartconference2011.com/ECconference2011/About%20the%20Conference.html>

Aotearoa New Zealand Association of Art Educators

Power Community Materiality

ANZAAE2011



School of Media Arts, CITY CAMPUS, Tristram St, Hamilton

20–22 July 2011

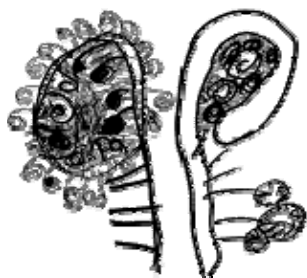
<http://www.anzaaeconference2011.org.nz/index.aspx>

The early childhood stream for this conference falls on Wednesday 20 and 21 July. Daily registration is available (see <http://www.anzaaeconference2011.org.nz/registrations.aspx>).

The Hundred Languages of Children Exhibition Conference

Teachers as Co-researchers: Creating Spaces and Places to Wonder, Discover and Inquire

With speakers from Italy, Australia and New Zealand and supported by REANZ



Conference

Dates: Thursday 13, Friday 14 and Saturday 15 October 2011

Venue: St Cuthbert's College, 122 Market Rd, Epsom, Auckland

Time: Registrations open at 1.30pm on Thursday 13, conference starts at 3.30pm
Friday and Saturday 9.00am to 4.00pm

Cost: Early Bird Fee \$450.00 (includes free unlimited entry into Exhibition, cocktails on Thursday evening, refreshments and lunches each day)

To register: <https://secure.iconevents.co.nz/ei/rs.esp?id=72&scriptid=LOGIN>

One Day Seminar

This repeat of the keynote addresses presented by our international speakers is offered to teachers who are unable to attend the conference and will be held at St Cuthbert's on:

Dates: Sunday 16 October 2011 from 9.00am to 4.00pm

Venue: St. Cuthbert's College, 122 Market Road, Epsom, Auckland

Cost: Early Bird Fee \$190.00 per person (includes free unlimited entry into Exhibition, refreshments and lunch)

To register: <https://secure.iconevents.co.nz/ei/rs.esp?id=72&scriptid=LOGIN>

Evening Sessions

Tuesday 11 October - Overview of the Pedagogy of Reggio Emilia

Wednesday 12 October - The Pedagogy of Listening

Monday 17 October - Pedagogical documentation

Tuesday 18 October - Inspiring Environments

Wednesday 19 October - The 100 Languages of Children

Cost: \$55.00 per person (This includes a light supper and free entry into the exhibition)

Time: 6.30pm to 9.00pm

Venue: St. Cuthbert's College, 122 Market Road, Epsom, Auckland

To register: <https://secure.iconevents.co.nz/ei/rs.esp?id=72&scriptid=LOGIN>

The Hundred Languages of Children Exhibition

This is open to the public from the 10 to 20 October 2011 from 10.00am to 3.00pm

Cost: \$5.00 per person

Venue: St. Cuthbert's College, 122 Market Road, Epsom, Auckland

No registration needed



Hairy Maclary from Tauranga Art Gallery?



National and international celebrity Hairy Maclary is set to make an extended appearance at Tauranga Art Gallery this autumn. The gallery is holding a celebration of works by Dame Lynley Dodd – prolific author and illustrator of children's books – opening on March 5. Tauranga-based Dodd began her career in children's books in 1973 when she collaborated with Eve Sutton to illustrate *My Cat Likes to Hide in Boxes*, which is still in print today. Then in 1983, Dodd produced the first of the series of books on the infamous Hairy Maclary, which would warm the hearts of thousands of children worldwide. The exhibition contains original drawings for these books, which have never been shown to the public, and is an opportunity to display the workings of how picture books are made.

Visit <http://www.artgallery.org.nz/>

Questions from museums: Gallery educators' conversations about art

David Bell

Otago University College of Education

Art galleries are privileged settings for art learning – children can enjoy close-up experiences with real art works, appreciating qualities of scale, surface, or colour that books and reproductions cannot afford. Gallery educators use conversational strategies to engage, build on children's knowledge, and extend their appreciation of art works. The following strategies, observed in museums in NZ and USA, are readily transferable to early childhood learning environments.

Educators often build gallery experiences from previous learning, using playful interactions to engage children quickly and purposefully. They ask them to find specified objects in pictures – animals, birds, or toys – to encourage active close looking. Some use situational scenarios, for example *“the building is on fire, which work would you save?”*, to invite children to evaluate works, select favourites or works they dislike, and help them to begin forming their own responses to art objects.

Most educators employ broadly framed open-ended questions to encourage diverse responses, drawing on the multiple knowledges of the children themselves. For instance, Stephen Bowkett's 'five star questions', *What? When? Why? How? and Who?*, provide starting points for close observation of art works. These questions invite diverse responses. *“What can you see here?”* can encourage responses describing pictorial subjects, for example, “animals in a yard”; pictorial quality: “soft furry rabbits”, or material or visual qualities: “bright, sunny colours”. Some questions, however, for example *“who painted this?”* or *“when was it painted?”* may require teacher research about artists or their worlds, which they can then share with children. Open-ended questions like these encourage articulate and perceptive contributions.



Autumn Rhythm, 1950

This sequence developed responses to the *‘How?’* question from a group of four-year-old children talking about an abstract painting by Jackson Pollock:

- Teacher:* How do you think he got it all drippy?
Child 3: Dripped it.
Child 4: I think he used water.
Child 2: Water wouldn't get the colours.
Teacher: How do you think he made those marks on the paper?
Child 5: He flicked it.
Teacher: What kind of paint does he like to use?
Child 1: Fluid paint.

These are perceptive, accurate descriptions of Pollock's distinctive method.

Similar questions extend Bowkett's five to include closer examination of the materials and context of the work, and to encourage interpretation and meaning-making, for example, "*What is it about?*" (Lloyd, 2010). Questions like this one provide diverse entry points into art conversations as they focus responses around the art work itself, and they invite children to share both their perceptions of it and their own knowledge of personal, social or cultural dimensions that can inform art appreciation. This can encourage children to combine individual and group meaning-making and imaginative invention around the engagement.

Many educators build situational questions around pictorial subjects. For example, questions like "*What is this person doing?*" and "*Where is this happening?*" help children to focus on what they see in the work. Other questions, such as "*What has just happened?*" and "*What do you think will happen next?*" encourage imaginative scenarios. In some museum settings, children can explore these scenarios through role playing, dress-ups, or dance interpretations, or through their own picture making and talking (see *Our Trip to the Dowse Art Gallery*, page 12).

In other instances, educators introduce question/answer sequences to develop narrative, story-telling responses to art works, for example, "*What kind of people are they?*", "*What are they doing?*", "*Where do you think they are travelling to?*", "*Why would they be going there?*", "*What would you call this work?*". Developing stories around art objects encourages an imaginative fabric within which children can find their own nuances or shades of interpretation. Some educators ask open "*What if?*" questions to invite really inventive or multi-sensory interpretations, for example, "*What if you could put your hands inside and feel? What if you could taste it? What might it taste like?*" (Lloyd, 2010, p. 16). Weaving stories around art works creates opportunities for appreciating their expressive qualities. For example, "*What do you think the little girl is feeling? How does this make you feel?*"

Some educators recommend developing conversational sequences through inductive, scaffolded pathways. Cole and Schaeffer (1990) suggest using a description/analysis/ interpretation/ judgment sequence in early childhood settings. They use accessible strategies by incorporating questions such as "*Could you make up a picture with words to tell me everything that you see in this artwork? Can someone tell me what colour they see first? What do you think this little girl eats for breakfast?*" More frequently, however, educators move between different entry questions according to different features of each work, or in response to the different contributions of the children.

Open-ended questions successfully engage diverse responses through which groups can develop layered, multidimensional understandings. These conversations recognise and build on children's knowledge, empowering each individual child to make sense of the art in relation to their own world. They do, however, make demands on teachers. For example, teachers need to develop a good understanding of art-related language and knowledge, and to undertake reflective evaluation of the teaching and learning that took place in the gallery.

Gallery experiences encourage rich engagements with art works. From having exposure to art in these settings children can begin to describe the qualities of art work, express their sensory and emotional responses, as well as articulate their cognitive understandings of particular works. Gallery learning experiences are easily transferable to the children's early childhood settings as gallery experiences characterize many types of learning. Conversations about visual art, whether it is in a gallery or in the early childhood centre, provide stimulating and challenging opportunities for enjoying and sharing understandings of the visual world as depicted in the work of artists.

Bowkett, S. (2007). *100+ Ideas for teaching thinking skills*. New York: Continuum International.
Cole, E., & Schaeffer, C. (1990). Can young children be art critics? *Young Children*, 45(2), 33-38.
Lloyd, H. (2010). Exploring Kusama's world: Art as experience. *ANZAAE Journal*, 20 14-19.

A Celebration of Peace: An Exhibition

Emma Parsons and Adrienne Wilkins

Sophia Preschool North Taranaki



In the city of Reggio Emilia, children's clay representations, loose material sculptures, and murals (among many other visual images) proudly embellish and adorn streets, parks, and theatres. The new Loris Malaguzzi Centre, for example, is devoted to exhibiting children's artworks (<http://zerosei.comune.re.it/inter/aperto/index.htm>) and Reggio Children sponsors children's art exhibitions that travel around the world (<http://zerosei.comune.re.it/inter/100exhibit.htm>). In Reggio Emilia pre-schools, there is a strong belief that children can produce important art work, which is seen to be as important as that of adults and it is clearly evident that educators have a strong image of children as being confident and competent. They also highly value the pleasure, joy and importance that the visual arts play in the culture.



In Aotearoa New Zealand, however, exhibitions are dominated by adult artists. Rarely, if ever, does the public get the opportunity to view children's art in local galleries, community centres, or cafés. Always inspired by a challenge, staff at Sophia Preschool felt that having an exhibition would be a great way to show-case our children's work, and also be appropriate for our annual peace day celebration which we hold each year on September 21st. The International Day of Peace is recognised throughout the world as a day of non-violence, and global ceasefire. This fits well with our philosophy, as the centre was founded on the idea of creating a better place for children, their families, and teachers. We decided that our Day of Peace exhibition would be called *Peace in Our Hands*. The visual immediacy that an exhibition offers was seen to be the best way to communicate to the community our work with children regarding peace, and to encourage peacefulness and awareness of peaceful practices within our world.



The staff spent time reflecting together as a teaching team, sharing our own understanding of what *Peace in Our Hands* meant for us. We posed the following question for ourselves: "As a person and as a teacher, if I am not peaceful in my daily interactions then how can I expect children to resolve conflicts in fair and mutually agreeable ways?" Knowing that peace begins with us put a very different perspective on our relationships with children, parents and other teachers. Our hope was that the exhibition would portray our children as active citizens of their world, citizens with a voice and their own unique contribution to make to peaceful relationships and peaceful communities.



We pondered whether this concept was within the young child's realm of understanding so before approaching the project within a visual arts framework, discussions were held with the children asking them about what they thought peace was, and where their peaceful places were. These are some of the ideas that came from the children: "Peace is sitting down and stopping". "Reading is peace because it's peace and quiet time". "Peace means closing your eyes and sometimes sleeping". We felt that these responses indicated an understanding that many adults would draw hope from.

We learnt a lot about the children through the process of developing the exhibition not only through discussion, but also because the children's meaning-making about peace was evident in their art work. However, we felt it was necessary to bring documentation from previous years in order to create a sense of fullness to the exhibition, and to show the cumulative understandings of Peace Day, our culture, and our shared history.

In the exhibition, the children's art works were displayed in varying ways, for example, with wall displays, work on bamboo tripod stands, and a hand mural on ply. We also displayed work created in different media-photos, paintings, print-making. We felt it was vital that the children's words accompanied the artwork to show their learning theories, which may not have been understood to the viewer unless the work had been documented. The placing of the exhibition title required consideration and, ultimately, it was positioned in the centre of the exhibition to tie it all together.

The opening day of the exhibition was both daunting and exciting for the staff. Our eyes and ears were opened by hearing the parents' responses, which sometimes made us look again or more closely at things in the show. We were reminded of Mirella Ruozinni's (2010) keynote speech at the Dialogue with Materials Exhibition, where she said, "exhibitions enable teachers *to bring everything back to themselves* when others start looking at the project". The local community of parents, grandparents, brothers, and sisters totally embraced the exhibition and the celebration of peace. The children were so proud to have their own work on display and to share this with their parents!

When we reflected on the show afterwards we determined key considerations that need to be made. Some of these ideas include:

- being very mindful of the space where the exhibition is to be held (ensuring uncluttered space, having good viewing spaces and ensuring there are clear walking spaces, and having good distance between the exhibits)
- advertising exhibitions to the wider community to generate even more discussion and participation
- having a feed-back area where viewers can make comments
- having recorded background music to complement the art work.

With these in mind, we are sure that our next exhibition is likely to be even more inspiring!

Sophia Preschool is currently taking registrations of interest for professional development courses/workshops on sustainability and Reggio-inspired curriculum. These will be held during this year at the preschool. If interested, please email Adrienne Wilkins at sophiapreschool@xtra.co.nz



The Gallery as an Educational Space:

Art Connoisseurs at St AndrewsEpsom Early Childhood Centre

Lorraine Andrewes and Michelle Johnston



The TSB Bank Wallace Arts Centre.
Monte Cecilia Park, Hillsborough,
Auckland.



In 2008, our staff participated in a stimulating workshop run by Margaret Tolland from Pataka Museum called *Visiting Art Galleries and Museums*. This workshop was part of *Artists in Residence*, a TRCC course for early childhood and junior primary teachers. Empowered by this workshop, we have since taken many groups of children to visit art galleries and we still have our sanity!

Managing lots of small children in open public spaces, such as galleries, can be very daunting. Add to this the possibly disapproving gaze of the ladies behind the desk, and members of the public who expect to view art in a quiet contemplative atmosphere devoid of small children. Furthermore, even the parents of our children sometimes express doubts about the sense of taking their preschoolers to an art gallery.

However, the following guidelines have increased our confidence to visit galleries.

- Always do a reconnaissance trip before taking the children, to assess both possible difficulties and opportunities.
- Identify the location of artworks with appropriate content you want to explore with the children, avoiding work that may not be suitable.
- Teach the children to touch with their eyes, not their hands.
- Encourage the children to walk with their hands behind their backs or in their pockets while looking at art works.
- For optimum enjoyment and least stress for all adults (including the general public) reduce the size of the group to the most manageable size possible to visit the gallery at any one time.
- Ensure the ratio is no more than one adult to three children but preferably to two children.
- Choose exhibitions that relate to recent topics of interest or that are particularly child friendly.

Five kilometres from St AndrewsEpsom Early Childhood Centre is Auckland's newest art gallery at the Pah Homestead, which houses the extensive collection of James Wallace (see <http://www.tsbbankwallaceartscentre.org.nz/>). Because of its proximity to our centre, we often take small groups of children to view the ever changing exhibits. Our groups consist of only eight children, and sometimes we take two or more groups of eight but with a high ratio of adults to children. When taking two or more groups we plan a 'circuit' of places of interest within walking distance, so that no more than one small group is in the same gallery space at any one time. We also set the time that any group is to enter the gallery, but have no fixed time to exit. This allows flexibility for the adults responsible to withdraw the group as soon as they see that children's interest is waning – we have found this to be very important!

Sometimes in the outdoor sculpture garden at The Pah Homestead we suggest the children copy a pose of a particular figurative sculpture. To do this they need to study it closely. We encourage them to think about what emotion the person is expressing in the sculpture and why this might be. We get them to think about how the sculpture is holding its limbs. Or we might respond to a sculpture in the garden by making our own piece of ephemeral art.

Another gallery we enjoy visiting is Lopdell House in Titirangi. One trip was to look at ceramic sculptures. In our reconnoitering visit we realised that these works were displayed on low plinths, which were very accessible to the children. Consequently, several times before our visit we practised 'touching' with eyes only, and practised walking with hands behind backs. We put artifacts onto a low table in the centre, inside a rectangle of masking tape to delineate a 'no touch' zone and practised viewing the artifacts from all sides without touching (we also use this technique when we have our own exhibitions at the centre). As a result of this, we have noticed that our children are much more skilful at working in the gallery space and show more respect at our exhibitions than, for instance, their younger or older siblings.

Because the ratio of adults to children is high and also because the total number of children in the gallery spaces is small, this results in a relaxed experience for everyone. Once in the gallery, the adults are able to fully concentrate on the children's viewing and interaction with the art works, facilitating their learning about the works. Questioning and discussion are used as tools to understand what children's impressions are and how they feel about a particular work of art. For example, we discuss what media have been used to create the work - is it made of charcoal, oil, gouache, acrylic, ceramic, glass etc? We ask what parts of a work they like and why they like them.

We have noticed that in the gallery children might stand and contemplate an art work for a very long time, or they might pass by a work quickly. Children often like a range of different types of work. We encourage the adults to go with the flow and let the children lead.

Some of the difficulties we have faced in our gallery visits have included:

- art works that are hung too high for children to view easily
- not being able to take photos of the children (because this has been restricted by the gallery) is a real challenge for following up our visits with displays back at the centre and with narratives for the children's portfolios.

After seeing the wonder and fascination shown by all the children we have taken to the galleries, these difficulties are insignificant. Nonetheless, we have yet to see the full impact of the types of art language learnt on the gallery visits, or ideas for art work being used back at the centre. Parents often tell us that they subsequently visit the gallery themselves as a direct result of their preschooler's visit with the centre, and recognise that their preschooler is now the 'expert'! Teachers at the centre are also visiting galleries more often and returning with more confidence to discuss with colleagues works seen.

Visiting the art gallery is no longer the scary monster that it once was – we enjoy our visits with the children and we know they enjoy them too.



Studying sculptural and interactive art works



Physically interpreting a sculpture



Our Trip to the New Dowse: A Learning Story

Cherie Jones

Childhood Concepts Early Learning Centre, Lower Hutt

Recently, another teacher and I took a small group of four children (3 and 4 year-olds) to the New Dowse art gallery which is near our centre in Lower Hutt. We were met by Jen, one of the museum educators, who works at the gallery. Jen had pink hair as part of her gallery persona (the children talked about this a lot when we returned to the centre) and she told us about the shows we were going to see and some of the gallery rules. Then she took us upstairs to the *Who am I?* exhibition, which consisted of portraits, done in a variety of media, hanging on the wall as well as porcelain sculptures of some well-known New Zealand characters e.g. Ken and Ken, Split Enz.

One of the activities designed for the children as part of this exhibition involved silhouettes, and the children viewed silhouette portraits being made of Jen and myself (made by a projector which shone onto a white surface) and they had a go at tracing around them. Another activity involved masks, and the children were able to put on face masks and see a range of different facial expressions as depicted on the mask.

Jen introduced us to *The Lounge*, a special kids' art space for the exhibition, where we did a lot of different activities. We were able to draw on the chalkboard or on paper, trace the silhouettes of an object on the light box, trace over different patterns, cut and paste, as well as play with some interesting hollow blocks. One of the children discovered that when these blocks joined together a tunnel was formed through the block that marbles could then run through. Jen also showed us the boxes with iron sand inside them. By moving a magnet around the top of the box, we were able to move the sand around as it became magnetised and make patterns.

After we said goodbye to Jen we went downstairs to have a look at the *White Cloud Worlds* exhibition which is a collection of science fiction and fantasy artwork by New Zealand artists. Lisa, from Victoria University, was the gallery educator for this exhibition. In preparation for the visit I had done multiple readings of *Taniwha* by Robyn Kahukiwa and *Maui and the Goddess of Fire* by Gavin Bishop. This helped the children recognise the paintings in the exhibition that we were going to explore.

We all looked at two paintings of Maui fighting unfriendly monsters (see <http://www.whitecloudworlds.com/artist.php?artist=13>), and we pretended to be those monsters! We also pretended to put out the fire in the painting of Maui and the Goddess of Fire. We acted out being robots when we looked at Greg Broadmore's painting (see <http://www.whitecloudworlds.com/artist.php?artist=11>).

12



Who am I?



We looked at a big sculpture of a weta (see <http://www.whitecloudworlds.com/artist.php?artist=24>) and then, finally, another one of a moa which was made out of bits of metal. We pretended to be moas as we left the gallery and headed down to the cafe.

In the cafe we had cups of warm milk Fluffys, and glasses of cold water to drink. The Fluffys came with a marshmallow that we could eat or dissolve by dropping it into the milk. When we had finished our drinks, we said goodbye to the gallery and the taxi van took us back to our centre.

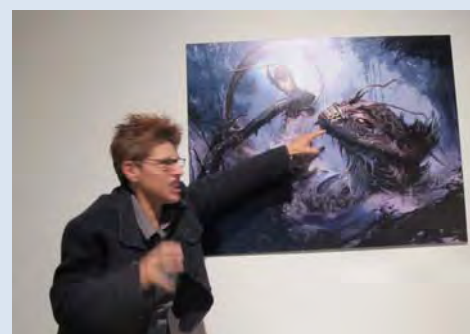
Short-term review

This trip was a great opportunity for our children to explore, discover and engage in new interests outside of their usual experiences. *The Lounge* was especially welcoming for the children as it provided adequate light, space and resources for them to investigate, explore and experiment with new materials and techniques (in a safe environment which catered to their interests) after seeing the exhibition.

As a teacher, this was a valuable experience about how to work with young children in a gallery or museum, learning how to bring the subject matter to life in a way that children can relate to. Once the children have demonstrated an interest and sense of trust in the gallery, teachers can then encourage children to express their responses to art by helping them to become actively involved in the subject matter. The cafe visit after seeing the shows allowed an opportunity for the adults and children to relax in each other's company and share any questions and answers about what they had just seen.

What next?

We will continue to extend the learning activities, firstly by providing opportunities for all of the children in our centre's group to visit and revisit the trip by viewing an e-book of the trip, and viewing the photographic display on the wall that the two teachers have developed. All children will be provided with opportunities to sketch and paint self-portraits and make faces out of clay, and to sketch and paint the Taniwha and Goddess of Fire, and make a Taniwha out of clay. In addition, children will continue to hear pakiwaitara about Taniwha, The Goddess of Fire and other pakiwaitara related to Maui, and learn waiata-a-ringā about Taniwha. Finally, an e-book will be created to show all of the activities the children have engaged in, and friends and family will be invited to view an exhibition of the children's learning experiences displayed in the centre.



Acting out in the gallery

A new space for exhibiting: Developing an art studio at Carterton Kindergarten

Nelly Kendall-Carpenter

In 2007, the teachers at Carterton Kindergarten decided to find funding to build, develop and resource a specialised art studio for the children. This innovative idea became part of the kindergarten's vision statement, which stated: "we are committed to providing a space (studio) where children and families will be inspired in many diverse and meaningful ways, where learning will be supported, enriched and deepened and children's learning is made visible". Inspired by knowledge of Reggio Emilia programmes, which follow a rich tradition of art and community involvement and participation, some of the teachers travelled to Perth to see a Reggio-inspired centre with a studio space and where they were able to see a studio in action.

Nelly Kendall-Carpenter, one of the teachers at the kindergarten, describes the process of developing the studio and the benefits this has had for the kindergarten community:

The main aim for the Carterton Kindergarten studio was to be able to support long-term projects by having a dedicated space where these could be made visible to parents and children, and be worked on over days or weeks. We wanted to provide a variety of art media, tools, resources and equipment that the children could use to express their ideas, giving them the opportunity to represent their ideas in graphic and symbolic language, and allowing them the freedom to explore and experiment with art materials. We believed that the extra space we created by developing the studio would enhance the art activities already available daily. It would also enable the children to be able to leave their creations, knowing they would be able to work on them the next day and that this would provide more opportunities for children to reflect on their ideas and be more aware of their own learning. We envisaged the art studio as being a significant place where children could revisit their art experiences with their peers, reminding each other of their ideas and hypotheses and, through assessing their past experiences, provide a springboard for further development of ideas.

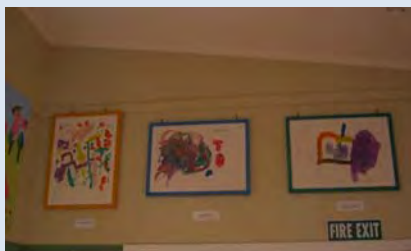
During the period in which we found the money for our studio, we trialled having an artist work with children at the kindergarten. We wanted our children to be exposed to art and artists, and become familiar with the process of building up a piece of art over time, learn new techniques, and be able to be creative and expressive in their own way. The artist we got to work with us started the project by sharing a piece of their work with the children, and then created a new, similar work but involving the children in its creation. Alongside this process the children also began working on their own individual pieces of art.



Children working with artist Jo Roffe



A parent creating a mosaic at an evening workshop



Art displayed in the studio space

The teachers documented and discussed this experience and the impact this had for themselves as teachers and for the children, and it was agreed that this had been an extremely effective way of working. Consequently, this experience strengthened our enthusiasm for the studio space and we have continued to use artists as part of our programme. Over the past year we have had four artists work with the children - Paulette Harris, Jo Roffe, Jane Giles and Maria Parr. All these artists have provided our children with opportunities to explore and experiment with art and different art media. The children have gained confidence in their artistic abilities and it has given the children a better appreciation of art.

In 2010, the studio space was ready to use and it has added an exciting new dimension to our programme. We believe that the studio space is special and gives children a greater sense that their work is of value. The studio has also allowed for the hosting of two art classes for parents and teachers. The night classes in mosaic and multi-media art proved to be very popular and they had the added benefit of allowing parents and teachers to get to know one another better. The children have eagerly taken an interest too in the progress of the art produced by their parents and teachers.

The studio space allows us to display the children's work more professionally. For example, we purchased four frames from our local picture-framer and now use these to prominently exhibit four selected pictures. When we want to display new work, the paintings are given back to the children and new pieces are then put into the frames. Unframed work, however, is still displayed in the studio alongside the framed pieces.

We also show the children's work in the local community. As each artist finishes their contract with us, we exhibit in the community if it is possible and appropriate. We have had three art exhibitions to date - two in the Wai Art Centre (see <http://www.waiart.org.nz/carterton/main/main.php>) and the other at Cafe Bambino. Our children were also involved in creating an art piece for the Carterton Outdoor Gallery. These have been wonderful opportunities to show-case what the children have achieved. We believe this supports our children to not only feel part of the centre, but also of our wider community. When work that has been in an exhibition comes back to the kindergarten, we hang this within the studio before it is returned to the child artist. Thus there is a cyclic process of exhibiting work – from the centre, out to the community, and then back to the centre again.

The studio space has added a vibrant and exciting addition to the art programme at our kindergarten. We feel that the space encourages our enthusiasm for exhibiting the children's work. Participating in local exhibitions has strengthened our relationship with the community, as well as enhancing the children's visual art learning experiences.

The World Upstairs: Children Connecting Two Learning Contexts

Jeanette Clarkin-Phillips, Margaret Carr, Rebecca Thomas, Maingi Waitai, Alison Beer



Tai Tamariki Kindergarten, located at the Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongawera, opened in February 2010. The full-day mixed-age centre caters for children whose parents are employed in a wide range of occupations at Te Papa. In 2011, a Teaching and Learning Research Initiative (see <http://www.tlri.org.nz/our-place-being-curious-te-papa/>) was awarded to Jeanette Clarkin-Phillips and Professor Margaret Carr from the University of Waikato to investigate the ways in which the children at Tai Tamariki Kindergarten construct knowledge from hands-on exploration and observations as they interact with the artifacts and collections at Te Papa, and to examine the opportunities offered at the museum that motivate children to construct this knowledge. Findings from this research should help teachers from other early childhood centres develop useful strategies and tools for working in museums. This article draws on some of the data collected by the research team to date that highlight key aspects of learning that have been fostered through the centre's relationship with the museum and its gallery spaces.

When the teachers and children at Tai Tamariki were beginning to settle in to the new kindergarten environment, the children began exploring with fabrics and dress-ups. Maingi, a teacher who has a fashion design background, brought in different types of material to foster this interest. The centre also began discussing ideas for special rituals in the kindergarten, particularly around children leaving. It was suggested that the children help make a korowai (cloak) to be worn by children on this special day. On another occasion, one of the teachers brought in some brown paper bags which the children used to make masks, painting them and adding decorative elements. To support their learning, teachers began taking small groups of interested children, on a fairly impromptu basis, to visit different things in the museum. For instance, they visited a display of korowai and the large wharehau (meeting house). Children were given individual sketchbooks which they took with them to draw pictures of what they saw. The teachers learnt from this initial use of the sketchbooks that they needed to talk to the children about some techniques for observational drawing, such as spending time carefully observing objects in the museum collection in order to capture detail and proportion for their drawings.



The children's interest in fabrics and mask-making came together with the opening of the *Paperskin* exhibition (see <http://www.tepapa.govt.nz/WhatsOn/exhibitions/Paperskin/Pages/default.aspx>). This exhibition included large patterned tapa cloth wall hangings from the Pacific region, a number of large and striking masks, and a video of Papua New Guinea Baining fire dancers. The teachers and children went upstairs on about 5 different occasions to see this free exhibition. The visits involved a variety of children, some under twos and some older children, in groups of approximately 6-10 children. Once again the trips were relatively spontaneous and children could choose to go or stay at the kindergarten. In the *Paperskin* exhibition the teachers talked with the children as they looked at the various objects. As had become common practice, the children used their sketchbooks to draw their favourite objects from the exhibition. Taking photos of the exhibitions was prohibited so the teachers had purchased a book about the exhibition which helped provide extra information about exhibits, and having the book enabled them to reproduce the photos back in the kindergarten.

After the first visit, the teachers laminated copies of photos from the exhibition book, and displayed these on the walls and art tables at the kindergarten to prompt children's thinking and ideas for art work. The photos, drawings from the children's sketchbooks, and Learning Stories written by the teachers about the trips into the gallery all became useful tools for helping the children make meaning of what they had seen at the museum. These tools allowed children to make connections between the kindergarten and the museum upstairs.

The university researchers made a book for the children about the Baining fire dancers with photos and text, and this was read to them, both at the kindergarten and also when visiting the *Paperskin* exhibition. The book was used to prompt discussion between children and teachers. It was useful for enriching the children's learning and allowing children to, among other things, use analogies and make comparisons about familiar things such as; the video and the book, sticks in the fire being like sticks used in fires in their own homes and the tall bamboo sticks being like the 'tallness of [a] giraffe'. The dialogue created by the book helped to sustain the children's learning and provided conversations that travelled between the gallery and the centre contexts.

After several visits to the exhibition and becoming very familiar with tapa patterns and their purposes (a video in the museum about tapa making was useful for this), four-year-old Maggie drew and then painted a personalised pattern, adding symbols in a way that was similar to those on a tapa cloth.



A Learning Story about Maggie's work describes her process:

You began your very own Tapa creation by looking through images of some of the works on display and discussing what you could see. From there you drew horizontal lines across the length of your paper and started creating your own pattern...They are very similar to the ones you had seen upstairs. As you worked I asked you about each step. I was very interested to hear that each shape had a very clear meaning to you. Maggie you began with the long horizontal line which stood for the land, below

the land, between another line, were side by side circles, these stood for the sea. The triangles above the land you described as trees and at the very bottom you had drawn a picture of Lili “swimming below holding her breath forever”. The Tapa and masks in Te Papa seem to be an interest that you revisit often in different areas of your day Maggie at the kindergarten and I really look forward to seeing where this may go to next!

Mahir (4 years), used a range of resources to reconstruct a crocodile with two heads at the kindergarten after seeing a two-headed crocodile mask made from bark at the exhibition.



Taesoo (3 years), another child who had visited the exhibition, was particularly fascinated by one of the masks and using a laminated photograph as a prompt, painted a picture of his favourite mask. The children's face-painting also took on the look of masks as they recreated ideas from upstairs in the gallery to downstairs in the kindergarten.



As described here, the data from TLRI research is helping highlight some of the ways in which museums and galleries can extend and enhance children's interests and learning. As shown here offering tools such as sketchbooks, photos of objects and artifacts for children to revisit back at the centre, documented stories and photographs of the children's engagement with museum objects, all help children to make sense of their worlds. The unique context of Tai Tamariki means that there are multiple opportunities for children to revisit exhibitions and collections and for teachers to explore different approaches for these visits. However, all museums and galleries offer rich learning opportunities for children and teachers need to be thinking how they can use these facilities to complement their centre-based early childhood education programmes.

Exhibiting art posters to infants and toddlers

Linda-Hua Xi

Pipitea Childcare Centre, Wellington

At Pipitea Childcare Centre we regularly try to introduce art activities to our youngest children as an opportunity for self-expression. These activities can include: painting and brushwork, clay sculpture, messy play and finger painting, the use of natural resources, and drawing with chalks and crayons. These form part of the children's everyday experiences and they are made part of the overall education experience by incorporating them into other areas of learning such as literacy, language development, numeracy, and sensory development.

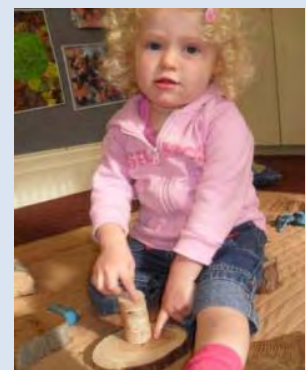
As Terreni (2001, p. 1) has observed, "Because infant and toddler development is so focused on sensory and physical learning, there is a presumption by many that art experiences for infants and toddlers are not particularly useful to their development." We suggest that this comment may reflect an attitude that so-called 'artistic' activity is something special and elite, a particular type of behaviour or activity that demands an advanced level of artistic appreciation and learning. We would respond by suggesting that art involving exploring with colours, shape, size, textures, and with teachers providing associated vocabulary that describe and define these artistic qualities, is very much a basic part of any child's learning!

Recently, we exhibited large photographs of ephemeral art (natural objects arranged aesthetically in their natural environment) on the walls. These were taken from the work of artist Andy Goldsworthy. Because the photos were positioned at the children's eye-level, the toddlers were immediately involved with the artistic qualities of the images presented to them.

We observed that the youngest children's attention was most readily drawn to the largest pictures that displayed easily recognisable patterns, colours and shapes. However, our children's first response to the photographs was not one of wild excitement however. Rather, it was reflective and thoughtful.

At first they observed the photographs from a distance, and then they gradually drew closer to the pictures, and started tracing out the shapes of the images presented with their fingers. One child verbalised his impressions, saying "big... big... big" while tracing his finger around the circular shapes in the photograph.

The teachers encouraged the children to verbalise their impressions of the photographs, introducing new words into their vocabulary, eg. 'round', 'circle', 'green circle', 'black circle'.



In the following days we introduced other objects and shapes into the environment, eg. wooden blocks, which extended the circular shapes in the photographs to other play objects presented to the children.

Two children readily made the connection between the circular and spiral patterns in the photographs with circular patterns in the wooden blocks. We shared the children's experiences of the posters with their parents at the end of the day. We discovered that the children took their impressions back home with them, and in their home environments were able to review and deepen their learning experience which had begun at the centre. We saw clearly that the children had learnt to appreciate various shapes, sizes and colours, and readily recognise these in the environment around them.

Over the next two weeks we followed up the children's art activities by giving them further opportunities for learning using marbles to create paintings, using chalk drawings on large pieces of art paper, and using excursions outside the centre to point out shapes and colours on buildings, street fixtures, and transport vehicles. The children enjoyed these activities and we noticed that while doing them, the children were intent and focused. We also noticed that the children are more able to express themselves as their vocabulary is extended, and their relationships amongst themselves are improved as their command of vocabulary expanded.

We made a photographic record and developed Learning Stories throughout this process of learning, and this record will help the children to reflect on their learning.

We are always open to new ways of encouraging artistic expression in the children, and we found that exhibiting the art posters was an effective practice. Our learning programme for infants and toddlers will continue to include art activities, such as using art posters, as part of providing a wide mix of activities on an on-going basis.

Terreni, L (2001). Art experiences for infants and toddlers. Available at <http://www.lead.ece.govt.nz/~media/Educate/Files/oldECF/artexperiencesinf%20todd.pdf>



Books that will inspire and provoke

A review by Janette Kelly



Back and beyond: New Zealand painting for the young and curious by Gregory O'Brien

“Alongside works painted during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, this book features art by contemporary painters and printmakers, all of them seasoned travelers across time and space. Angels, rugby players, whales, kiwi and canoes, moa and mountains, the bush and the beaches all play starring roles in this bird’s eye view of New Zealand paintings” (Publisher description).

If you have not yet seen this book then I highly recommend that you check it out. Many of my favourite painters, paintings and prints are featured amongst the 40 full-colour plates. The text provides insights into both the artists and their subject matter along with a historical commentary about people, places and things significant to New Zealanders over the past few hundred years. I can’t wait to share this book with the children in my life and the student teachers I work with as I know they will be delighted by it. I am also mindful that the ‘things to do now’ section at the back of the book can not only guide me in assisting their appreciation of art, but also motivate my own art explorations.

This affordable book is a follow-up companion volume to the successful and prize-winning book *Welcome to the South Seas: Contemporary New Zealand art for young people* and both are highly recommended for early childhood centres seeking to extend their libraries and develop their visual art programmes.

Both books are available for \$34.99 from Auckland University Press.

Editorial Board information

ecARTnz, an e-magazine of professional practice for early childhood educators, is a quarterly publication developed to generate new interest in visual art education in Aotearoa New Zealand. The intention of the recently established editorial board is that *ecARTnz* will showcase examples of teaching and learning, literature, and conferences of interest to educators in early childhood education and beyond.

Members of the editorial board are: Lisa Terreni (VUW), Janette Kelly (UoW), Dr Beverley Clark, Nicky de Latour and Janita Craw (AUT), and Lesley Pohio (UoA).

The board is responsible for promoting the magazine, writing, reviewing and editing contributions, and ensuring that the e-magazine is of a consistently high standard. The views in this journal do not necessarily reflect those of the editorial board members.

Contributions are invited for the next issue of *ecARTnz*. Submissions of 500–1000 words accompanied by up to eight photographs are welcomed. For further information or submissions please email Lisa Terreni at lisa.terreni@vuw.ac.nz



Rosemary Richards is a senior lecturer in the School of Arts, Development and Health Education at Massey University, Palmerton North. She lectures in art and the arts over the primary, early years, and early childhood sections of undergraduate and graduate programmes. She is a teacher, artist and researcher and is passionate about supporting young children's art experience and helping teachers to do likewise.

Rosemary is completing her doctoral research which is a longitudinal visual ethnographic study with four young children. This research focuses on the nature of four young children's art experiences in their home, early childhood centre and school. One of the interesting side issues that has arisen from this work has been an understanding of children's use of digital cameras to communicate about, and extend, their art experiences.

When in Australia, Rosemary and Margaret Brooks convened the 2nd International Art in Early Childhood Conference, established *The Institute of Art in Early Childhood* website and launched the new online peer reviewed journal, *International Art in Early Childhood Research Journal*.

ANZAAE Member profile

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