COLAISTE NAISIUNTA EALAINE IS DEARTHA
NATIONAL COLLEGE OF ART AND DESIGN
FACULTY OF FASHION AND TEXTILES

PRIMARY ART EDUCATION
and
THE ARK

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TANYA GILSENAN

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LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

1."The child shall have the right to freedom of expression; this right shall include freedom to seek, receive and impart information and ideas of all kinds, regardless of frontiers, either orally, in writing or in print, in the form of art, or through any other media of the child's choice."

(Article 13 of U.N. Convention on the rights of the child)

"Parties shall respect and promote the right of he child to participate fully in cultural and artistic life and shall encourage the provision f appropriate and equal opportunities for cultural artistic and recreational activity"

(Article 31 of U.N. convention on the rights of the child)

"Education in the visual arts should develop those processes which function through imagery and visualisation. The visual arts help to develop self-esteem, self-reliance and personal identity through achievement. A good visual arts education enables students to create and master their world in order to understand it and to affect it positively. The creative and practical approach of a visual arts education which incorporates the artistic and aesthetic is an essential aspect of education."

(The Arts in Education, 1985, p16 Art 6.2.1)

INTRODUCTION

The above quotes and proclamations are but soundbytes. The reality is quite different. It is easy to understand the inaction of politicians, educationalists and parents alike when the plight of children overall, is looked at. Many do not have any of their basic rights met as citizens or as members of the family unit. Hence, there are more important uses for the scarce resources available. The physical, social, moral and intellectual development of our children shall not give way to artistic development and expression or other non-essential NEEDS in our material world. This has been the prevailing attitude for quite some time.

The National Curriculum for primary schools is currently being analysed, dissected and re-written. One of the main areas under scrutiny is 'the Arts'. I will concentrate mainly on visual art and structured art activity in primary schools. Also one has to ask: what is out there in regard to the arts for and by young people? One such place is called *The Ark* and it states that not only is it the first Cultural Centre for children in Ireland but also a first in Europe.

In the following thesis, I shall research, report and comment on *The Ark* institution itself by comparing and contrasting its approach with that of the primary schools' art curriculum programme. I should state now that I wholeheartedly support *The Ark*'s aims and endeavours but I am not fully convinced that it can achieve these aims with its current means and methodology. It stands alone in breaking new ground for the betterment of art for children. That said, this will not be a public relations brochure for *The Ark*. I will not be claiming that it is the 'Holy Grail' providing the artistic stimulus that is absent in today's primary school art education. It is as a focal point and possibly as a public relations vessel for the widening appreciation and involvement of children in the arts, that it may find its forte. I shall discuss this in greater detail in my conclusion. Throughout the period spent dealing with this subject I have formed many opinions. They are personal and I shall impart them throughout. Having clearly stated its mission and policies, my opinion shall, at times, conflict with that of *The Ark*. It is not my endeavour to shake foundations but to be informative and objective simultaneously.

Chapter One deals with the education of children in the area of art. It discusses primary art education as a whole, the downfalls of the curriculum and the need for change.

Iseult Mc Carthy (Head of Department at N.C.A.D) also gives her views on the subject. This chapter asks the question - what need was there for *The Ark*? Did the art competitions and projects of old not stimulate children sufficiently? I also ask myself, can *The Ark* step in where the curriculum fails? Not only in a practical teaching way as sheer numbers dictate otherwise but perhaps as a public relations vessel.

Chapter Two deals with the visual programmes before *The Ark* institution, its history, its sources of fundings and its purposes or policies for the furthering of children's culture. The roles of Martin Drury - director of *The Ark* and Temple Bar Properties are also discussed here as initiators of this project.

Chapter Three deals with *The Ark* as a building, assessing its architectural strengths and weaknesses in relation to its stated purpose to house work by children. This chapter also looks at the history of the programmes prior to the later ALPHA programme.

Chapter Four is, I feel, the most important aspect of this dissertation. It discusses what *The Ark* has to offer in its programmes and asks: Is *The Ark* a valuable, beneficial, cultural centre for children? To address this question, a case study has been conducted on Simon Spain's printing workshop ALPHA.

To illustrate the way in which I carried out my research for this thesis particularly because of my abundance of primary source material a note on the research method is included in the appendix.

Throughout this dissertation I have tried to provide a general analysis of child art education and the institution *The Ark* as an alternative to the primary school curriculum.

CHAPTER ONE

ART EDUCATION: HISTORY & CURRENT SITUATION

Education

> The Arts contribute as much to a person's education as any other curriculum area, and they can be as important to intellectual development as to the development of sensory and manual skills.
> (INTO,1992,P1)

Taking the above into account I believe that the development of aesthetic judgement and intellectual development should run parallel to each other. However, it seems that the potential contribution of the arts, and particularly visual art, has long been forgotten by the an outdated educational system. At present, there are few opportunities for children to express how they feel in society without also denying them the freedom of artistic expression due to inadequate art education. As Dewey states;

> Art education can acquaint children with more subtle forms of feeling and more precise images of the human spirit than they are likely to discover on their own.
> (Chapman on Dewey,1978,p.11)

In other words, artistic expression is an important part of any child's psychological and philosophical well-being. It allows them self-expression which is not only a natural mode of behaviour but is also a fundamental right necessary for children to reach their ultimate maturity.

John Dewey also recognised the importance of children and the medium of art education when he published his writings on education as far back as 1902. In one of his books *The Child & the Curriculum*, Dewey perhaps laid the ground rules to Martin Drury's ethos on children. He believed that the educational process must begin with and build on the interests of the child. Dewey believes that "education must provide opportunity for the interplay of thought in the child's classroom experience and that the school should be organised as a miniature community."(Chapman,1978,p.11)

Dewey's view of education was revolutionary and decades ahead of his time. Nearly a century later, Dewey's philosophy has been taken up by *The Ark*. One of *The Arks* main policies is that children should be "makers and doers rather than onlookers and listeners." According to Dewey, " Active inquiry, sharing of effort and experience in decision making were natural and effective means to nurture learning"(Chapman on Dewey,1978,p.11) This contradicted the traditional view of children's learning abilities such as rote learning and recitation of text-materials.

If one is to look at articles 41.1 and 44.4 of the Constitution of Ireland the importance of the child and the aim of prioritising the family "as the natural, primary and fundamental unit group of society, and as a moral institution possessing inalienable and imprescriptible rights antecedent and superior to all positive law"(COI,1937,p137&145) is highlighted. It aims to prioritise "the physical, mental, and spiritual well being of the child."(Democratic Programme of the First Dail,1919) In the past, the first two aspects of the entitlement (physical, mental) were put into practice. The third, the spiritual aspect, which could also be aligned with the artistic aspect, was ignored. Even now, it is being practically ignored. If one looks at the primary school curriculum concerning art, mainly visual art, it is shocking to think that it has not been updated since the nineteen seventies. That primary school education has been neglected for so long is a sad reflection on our educationalists. Thankfully, this oversight is being addressed at the present time(Feb 1997).

In the chapter given over to arts and education, the Primary School Handbook states that; the child expresses himself in pictures long before he can do so in writing.(DOE,1971,p.279)

It also states that...

> the child finds Arts & Crafts activities absorbing and satisfying. They are outlets for his creative ability. They enhance his sensitivity and develop his appreciation of design, pattern, texture and colour in the world around him.(DOE,1971,P.279)

These are worthwhile aims but sufficient adequate measures have not been put into place to ensure that they are practised.

The neglect of the arts, particularly the visual arts can be seen within the formal curriculum of Irish schools, particularly regarding the time allocated to such art activities. Iseult McCarthy (Head of the Department of Education at NCAD), while in favour of the activities of *The Ark* believes that if the arts education in primary schools was adequate there would have been no urgent need for this institution. McCarthy infers that *The Ark* was only the tip of the iceberg concerning the realisation of a proper art education programme, where arts education is concerned. *The Ark* is bridging the gap between art activity and actually teaching art. In theory the Irish National Teachers Organisation (INTO) believes that the Arts are as important as mathematics, science, history or languages, but when it comes to putting this theory into practice, we see a different approach altogether. The maximum amount of time given over to art activity in primary schools, as set out in the primary school curriculum, is one hour.

From my research, 90% of the schools I surveyed strictly adhered to this recommendation. During this allotted time, the children were required only to make a copy of a pictorial composition, which was constructed by the teacher earlier, denying the children the freedom and spontaneity of artistic expression.

When asked why so little time was given over to art, the answer received was 'mess'. From my interviews with members of the primary level teaching profession, the general consensus was that art activities were too time consuming and chaotic to fit in with normal schooltime. They felt that, taking into account the minimal amount of time given over to art activity, no sooner had they set up than it was time to clean-up. It just wasn't practical. Nevertheless, some schools have broken the mould and put into operation their own initiatives concerning art activity within their individual curriculum.

One such group of schools who have broken the mould are the multi-denominational primary schools, of which there are fourteen in all the country. They are parent/teacher organised schools which place great emphasis on the arts and visual art as a means of learning. Iseult McCarthy stated that children need to have their "analytical capacities and their appreciative capacities developed."

However the primary school structure is unable to cater for this type of teacher as training in particular is inadequate.

In the Arts & Primary handbook, it states that "the three years a student spends in a college of education is but the final phase of a teachers pre-service education."(INTO,1992,chp.1) It is important therefore to examine influences already experienced at first and second levels which will affect a student's attitude to the arts and the standard he/she will have reached in the artistic subjects before entry to the college of education. In other word, there are primary school teachers who have a lot of experience in visual art, from primary, through to secondary, right up to third level. There are also primary school teachers who have minimal arts experience because it isn't an entry requirement into third level. Keeping this in mind, if teachers themselves are inadequately educated in art how can they be expected to teach children? Staffing levels in the departments of the arts subjects in the national colleges of education, such as St.Patrick's, Drumcondra and Mater Dei, Cloniffe Road., are much lower than in other departments and the allocation of time given over to courses in the arts subjects is unfavourable.(INTO,1992,Chp.1)
Through my research I have learned that only 3% of primary school teachers studied art to Leaving Certificate standard.

That leaves a staggering 97% of primary school teachers without art experience apart from perhaps Intermediate Certificate level. So how can we expect them to teach, appreciate and understand a subject they know practically nothing about? The system is undoubtedly to blame. The system of teaching practice can also militate against proficiency in art. Therefore, it is only natural that some teachers, because they feel less than adequate in teaching arts subjects themselves, particularly visual art, then tend to omit them. Clearly the system of teacher training needs modification before we will see a noticeable change in primary school learning in regard to art.

As McCarthy states, "It is important to teach the child to engage with art; to appreciate, to enjoy, even to dislike it, and to be able to discriminate." This is important at primary level. A young child has the ability to do all these things and at *The Ark* this is recognised. As quoted by Martin Drury, "An eight year old is not a quarter of a thirty-two year old." They are a "whole person capable of doing whole things and activities". In the primary school handbook, it also suggests that, "It is for its intrinsic value, rather than for any specific training which it involves, that a place must be found for arts and crafts in all classes in the primary school."(INTO, 1992, Chp.1)

All very laudable but again we are faced with the same problems: inadequate teaching facilities and teaching skills. Art is after all a discipline in itself. 'Appreciation' is allocated a paragraph in the handbook but even it states there is no specific mention of appreciation in the syllabus for the junior classes.

The Dublin Arts Report of 1992 acknowledged the inadequacy of the primary school curriculum concerning Arts and Children. The author Martin Drury also pointed out the absence of policy within the Arts Council regarding children. In the report he made a submission as follows:-"We submit that there can be no substantial development of the arts without provision for young people until there is a stated commitment from the government that youth arts and the arts for young people form a legitimate and significant part of youth affairs."(Drury, 1992) This was submitted to Temple Bar Properties in 1992,the result being the establishment *of 'The Ark'*. The report even went so far as to say that there have only been short term solutions to the education problem and unless the present generation of children is provided with high quality experiences of the arts, mainly visual art the education problem will worsen.

Children are also seen as dependants, not really useful in society until they reach a certain age.

They are not so much a hindrance but seen as not really having a purpose in society. The state and society in general has a tendency to disregard children's needs when it comes to financing the arts. Martin Drury and Temple Bar Properties emphasised the importance of the role of the child, "they remembered that they were citizens, they remembered that not only were they the audience of the future, but they are part of the here and now. One writer remarked that *The Ark* is the most important initiative ever in Ireland in the area of children's arts. *The Ark* is committed to the twin values of excellence and participation. *The Ark* is determined to develop a high quality cultural programme for all. Children are encouraged at *The Ark* to show their individuality and they are left to envisage what they want art to be. A hands-on approach is to be promoted. As stated by Martin Drury, "It is a curious cultural phenomenon that we have never thought of children as being a legitimate public."

One could agree with Martin Drury the above-quoted columnist, however, it is difficult to agree that *The Ark* is meeting all of its policy objectives as set out in its mission statement.(Chapter two) I would argue that *The Ark* should act as a training ground for teachers who in turn can pass on their knowledge to the children.

An art programme at *The Ark* differs from any other art activity in schools, for the simple reason that the people working in *The Ark* are either artists or are purely involved in the arts.

The Ark is a model through which many teachers can gain practical teaching experience even if that is not its overt role. It could be extremely beneficial in broadening the minds of the teachers through practical involvement. By accompanying the children to *The Ark* they too can learn different art activities and art appreciation and this may encourage them to experiment in art or even do employ it as an integral part of their educational strategies.

Visual Art Programme

It is only after in-depth analysis of the current situation of primary school art syllabus and education programmes, that I can state how the inadequate amount of time provided can in no way meet our children's artistic requirements.

> "Art education should naturally give every child the opportunity to evolve organically out of himself".
> (Eisner,1972 p.107)

Numerous reports from intelligensia research states the importance of both expressive and mental development of children.

It is therefore hard to fathom why education policy makers have deemed it unnecessary for inclusion in state syllabus apart from the one hour per week token gesture. One of the main features of art activity in the past were the school art competitions usually organised as public relations exercises by companies interested in promoting their public image and social conscience. For those teachers who pursued these art activities with their pupils there was little reward when one considers that they were already overburdened with an expansive range of subjects and an inadequate amount of time for art education allotted in the school syllabus.

These activities such as the bi-annual workshops held in the National Gallery of Art, the education and community programme at Irish Museum of Modern Art (IMMA), Texaco children's art competition, along with local programmes held around the country had been the only solace through many decades of primary art neglect. Competitions such as 'Texaco' among others succeeded in setting up and developing visual art to a higher degree so that children were recognised for their endeavours on a local and national level. The benefits for the children were that it created a sense of self-importance and acknowledged the value of artistic ability.

For the schools benefits were reaped as competition presentations became an auspicious occasion accompanied by an influx of V.I.Ps including government ministers and foreign ambassadors. Nation-wide press coverage and an opportunity to view the exhibitions in the principal cities throughout Ireland invariably aroused great interest.

Texaco has been running children's art competitions since 1955. They were introduced purely as an advertising concept to boost sales. At that time it was known as Havoline motor oil. Its advertising campaign was presented in the form of humorous cartoons and it was decided to run a children's art competition and to use the prize-winning entries in their press advertising. This received such a great response that they decided to make the competition an annual one. They offered scholarship prizes, in the hope of making it a public relations project as well as an advertising campaign. This venture was recognised by the Department of Education as an important and viable activity for children. Thus, they supported the plan by making available suitable venues for the judging and the exhibition of pupils' endeavours. The competition was included in the curriculum and became a compulsory activity in the majority of schools throughout the country. However it was generally down to the teacher's discretion to allow his or her pupils take part.

Mainstream subjects in the curriculum generally took a preference over art. This attitude prevailed in secondary schools where it was deemed the lesser of two evils to miss out on art class when some other extra curriculum activities such as drama, cross-country running etc., required time. This attitude prevails not only among competing teachers but also among parents, pupils and principals alike. In my experience and from the research that I conducted in a number of schools throughout the country - the general consensus was that children who showed a flair for art were encouraged more to participate. Children who have proven themselves to show competence in this field were encouraged to take part. This illustrates that not all children are equal and not all are given the opportunity to develop their artistic talents.

CHAPTER TWO

TECHNICALITIES OF *THE ARK*

History & Development of *The Ark*

The Temple Bar area was identified by the Department of the Environment as an area for commercial re-development and re-urbanisation with a special emphasis on retaining its old character and style. It had been a run-down and dilapidated area thus attracting artists and alternative groups availing of rock bottom rents. The Temple Bar Area and Renewal Act 1991 set out the terms for the re-development of the area. Temple Bar Properties(T.B.P), the company managing the development identified children as a major un-served audience, and included the idea of an arts centre for children in its plans. Martin Drury, author of the Dublin arts report and a member of many national committees on the arts and education, was invited by T.B.P. Ltd. to prepare a study into the feasibility of developing such a centre. Drury submitted two reports towards a children's cultural centre, the first in April 1992 and the second in December of the same year.

In the December report Martin Drury stated;

> The centre was conceived as a foyer to the whole quarter and not a "kids" ghetto. It will have a critical role in terms of attracting parents, teachers and other adults who for socio-economic or geographic reasons would not otherwise come into the quarter... establishing that Temple Bar as a safe and attractive venue for families.
> (Drury,1992)

Drury investigated cultural provisions for children and realised that it was more developed in other countries than in Ireland. Therefore, it was one of his key objectives to provide such a centre for children. Also it would facilitate young foreigners visiting Dublin to improve language learning through art programmes and enjoyable family events.

vs. "lot of its kind"

An influential report in 1986 on *The Arts* indicated that one of the primary concerns of many Irish adults, was the lack of quality cultural experience for their children. Many studies have been carried out by the Irish National Teachers Organisation (INTO) stating that their members "felt strongly about the value of education in *the arts* but often lacked the support mechanisms and resources needed in this area."

After the 1992 reports were submitted Drury was invited to engage in the development of the project. Shane O'Toole among others of group '91 architects were requested to design and create Europe's First Children's Cultural Centre. T.B.P.Ltd., applied to the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) for assistance in funding the project.

In 1993 T.B.P.Ltd. received approval for ERDF funding.

Upon receiving these funds, it published its development programme and a formal announcement claiming they were going to "create a feature unique to Dublin or indeed to Ireland; a dedicated performance studio and exhibition space providing cultural amenities for children".(Drury 1992)

Funding

Capital funding of *The Ark*, was assisted by ERDF and the Department of the Environment on a pound for pound basis. As construction progressed the artistic and business plan for the new organisation which was to run *The Ark* was refined. Fas played a major funding role in its development by financing a business plan selection and training of staff and by creating the organisation which would run The Ark on its completion. Preliminary artistic programmes and planning were assisted by a seed grant from the Arts Council, grants from Dublin Corporation and a substantial award from the Ireland Funds.

Operational Funding

Day to day running costs of *The Ark* come from public grant aid and awards from foundations and trusts.

It is in the corporate sector that *The Ark* has been successful in raising donations and individual programme sponsors, for example, Arklife Assurance sponsor of the 'Once in a Life' programme. These successes are a result of hard work on the part of fund raisers. The fact that there is a permanent building structure and focal point for sponsors to fraternise with is also helpful.

However such sponsors may often wish to be associated with a selective grouping of arts and artists. This in turn could have the affect of programmes being tailored to suit their sponsors and not the children. This is in no way a criticism but a pointer towards the fact that often in a situation where raising finance is a priority, personnel who would normally involve themselves with artistic content, must deal more and more with the financial aspects of the business.

Mission Policies

Prior to opening in September 1995, *The Ark* published the following 10 guiding principles as its mission and policies. These policies are discussed in detail in Chapter 4 on the Case Study evaluation.

1. The Ark will initiate, host and promote high quality cultural work, both Irish and International, which is by children, for children and about children.

2. The Ark believes that children are citizens of the present with cultural entitlements and that they are not merely "the audience of the future". Nor should children's cultural entitlements be limited to their being lookers and listeners and so The Ark has spaces and programmes where children can also be makers and doers.

3. The more integrated world of the child will be reflected in *The Ark's* programming which will emphasise the connections between the arts and other aspects of life such as history, the environment, religion and the sciences.

4. *The Ark* will be a common meeting-ground and a source of shared experience for children, parents and teachers. Its daytime school-term role will complement its evening, weekend and holiday presence in the lives of children and their families.

5. Through programmes of courses, workshops and other activities, *The Ark* will be committed to extending the knowledge of parents, teachers and other professionals in the area of arts and cultural education of children.

6. *The Ark* will not be a "ghetto" for children within Temple Bar. Rather it will be a foyer to the unique range of facilities in history, culture, environment and communications represented by the other centres in Dublin's cultural quarter. *The Ark* will develop programmes in partnership with other cultural institutions in Ireland and abroad.

7. *The Ark* will invite and commission work by Irish and other artists of all disciplines for children of all ages. It will seek to develop repertoires of work and presentational modes that take account of the distinctive opportunities and challenges of making high-quality work for children.

8. *The Ark's* practice will be to relate the major programmes of the centre to the ongoing programme of work being pursed by children at school. A high premium will be placed upon providing teachers with support materials so that a visit to *The Ark*, while special, will be understood by the children as being continuous with the rest of their learning.

9. *The Ark* is committed to developing materials, resources and programmes in its area of expertise which it can disseminate widely within the primary education system for the benefit of all, including those schools which, for whatever reason, find it difficult to avail of a visit to the centre.

10. *The Ark* will levy a modest charge for most activities. It has no desire to be a place only for those who can pay but it does not believe that all of its programmes should be free. The business plan of *The Ark* incorporates "a social disadvantage clause" and has made appropriate financial provision for a loss of income arising from the need to provide for all children. *The Ark's* capacity to implement this policy depends on the level of support it receives from the public sector.

CHAPTER THREE

STRUCTURES OF & WITHIN THE ARK

'Ark'itecture

The Ark is sixteen thousand square feet of modern defined space in what was once an old Presbyterian meeting house. It could be said, that it was a strange idea to locate a Children's Cultural Centre in Temple Bar as it is a trendy and cosmopolitan place full of adult entertainment and activities. Temple Bar is also an extremely fashionable quarter, where no children reside. So to locate *The Ark* where it is, could seem bizarre. However, if one were to look at the guidelines as set out in the development plan, Temple Bar Properties had good reason to place *The Ark* where it did.

Under the heading of key objectives, Temple Bar Properties state that;

> Temple Bar is a place of daytime activity and not just a night-time quarter and by encouraging families to visit, it will increase the sense of the quarter as a secure and friendly environment.(Drury 1992)

In other words, they wanted to assist in bringing visitors to the quarter who, by virtue of their age, location or socio-economic circumstances, would perhaps otherwise believe that Temple Bar was 'not for them'.(Drury 1992)

Hence, they were trying to attract people who wouldn't normally visit Temple Bar to come into the area. Another reason for *The Ark* to choose 11A Eustace street as its location was;

> to re-new it and redefine its usage in a manner congruent with its original function as a place for public congregation.(Drury 1992)

This was the original function of Meeting House Square. It was and still is a place of great activity for the performing arts and in line with this, T.B.P, chose these premises as an ideal location to contribute in a special way to this amenity through the provision of a performance facility adjacent to the square.

The Ark was originally a Presbyterian meeting house until the eighteen seventies. It was then used as a printing works and in the latter part of its pre-Ark era as a storage warehouse. Both uses had severely degraded the building interior. The front facade had been painted over and the original roof and fittings removed.

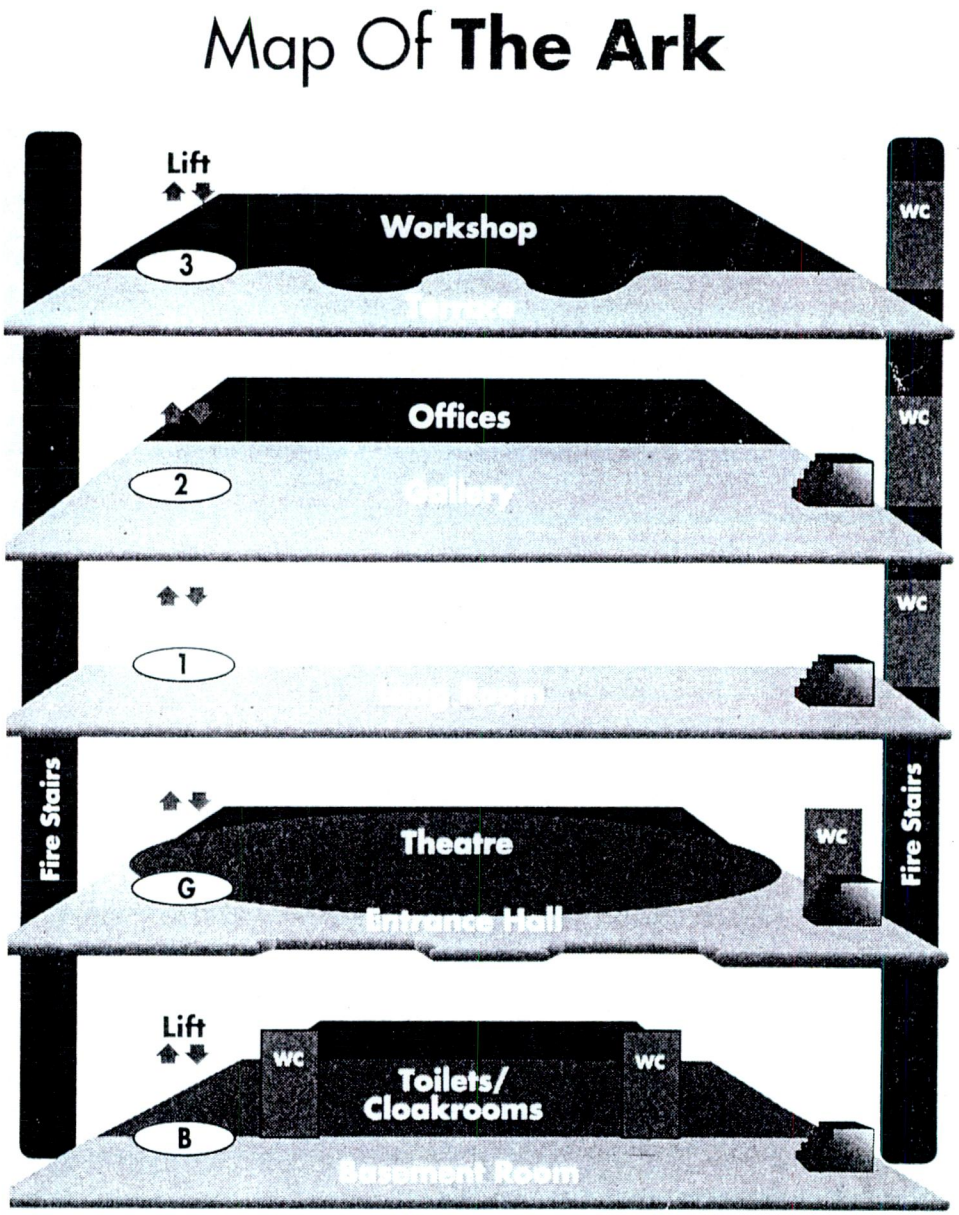

Fig.1-Layout of *The Ark*

Shane O'Toole of group '91 architects and his colleagues Michael Kelly and Susan Coogan were given the task of re-designing the building. O'Toole and his associates considered many aspects when re-creating the look and feel of the building, such as layout, safety standards, feasibility of use, etc. A building for children, but with a difference as shall be discussed.

Without knowledge of the actual location of *The Ark* within Temple Bar, one could almost mistake the stucture as being a civic building or high-standing educational institution. There is little indication regarding the exterior that would lead one to a conclusion that it was a cultural centre for or to do with children. This is a feeling that one perceives throughout *The Ark*.

The front facade is formal eighteenth century. The entrance is structured and somewhat daunting by the ridgidness of the architecture itself. The photographic images on the window panes (Fig.2) are faint, and are practically unnoticeable from the outside, in contrast to the same strong images conveyed on the inside. When one first looks at the design and location of this institution, children are not what first comes to mind.

Fig.2-Window Panes of *The Ark*

To qualify this, it has to be remembered, that it is a 'Cultural Centre' and not a playground or adventure park. As Martin Drury states "*The Ark* is a product of a rich and complicated dialogue between myself and the architects".

The first apparent feature in the reception area is the high ceiling which creates a sense of awe as the children enter the building. On the first floor, a long corridor hosts play activities for small children as well as puppet shows and story telling. The second level houses a gallery as well as administrative offices, while on the third floor a spacious workshop with a curved glass wall is used for activity based learning. The feel of the building in general is far from claustrophobic with a great emphasis put on wide, clutterfree and open spaces. As this is a building for children, the use of a glass wall in the children's workshop seems somewhat strange. Shane O'Toole of group '91, assures me that while there is always a risk with kids, it meets all stated safety standards. The main area or what can be described as the centre-piece of *The Ark*, is the theatre. This space is quite flexible and was designed with a view to accommodate other activities such as workshops. Also in the original Temple Bar development plan it was envisaged that the back wall of the building could be removed to allow for open air performances.

Group '91's design incorporated two doors between the theatre and the square, an inner flying door which can be lifted to allow natural light to accommodate indoor activities inside and an outer door made of metal which opens fully onto the square to accommodate outdoor performance activities. Finally, the basement is divided into public and private sectors and the former has become a home to a steel and glass sculpted ceiling by artist to the design team, James Scallion.

One of the most noticeable aspects of *The Ark* is its use of colour or rather the lack thereof. There are many reasons why colour in *The Ark* surroundings may be kept to a minimum. Perhaps if the walls were a mass of colour, it pose to be a distraction. Maybe this way, the work created by the children becomes the main focus of attention. On the other hand psychologists suggest that colour can be used to educate and increase awareness among people, especially children, of themselves and their perceptions of their surroundings. The graphic identity was designed by Jole Bortoli of the public communicational centre. She was given a brief...

> "to create an identity that encompassed the spirit of *The Ark;* a place where the imagination and the creativity of the children can express themselves at their best; a place where even the rules of the graphic designer can be broken" *(The Ark)*

Fig.3-Glass wall in *The Ark*

This is the most prominent use of colour to be seen throughout *The Ark* on a permanent basis. If we look at schools, playgrounds and institutions given over to children we predominantly see bright and primary vibrant colours employed in their design and use. In *The Ark* this is not the case. One would also expect to see a lot of plastic soft edged and miniature 'child-friendly' furniture. Michael Kelly of group '91 architects stated that they "deliberately veered away from such features because we felt it represents a slightly condescending attitude towards children". Shane O'Toole stated that "they are not to be treated as if they are not fully formed yet". O'Toole also expresses the view that they would design a building that was scaled and dimensioned to children and would be the adult - child alternative to plastic primary coloured environment as is associated with children. However, perhaps one has to remember that they *are* children and there may need to be distinctions.

They are competent human beings but physically and mentally they are children. They are not miniature adults. If one looks at the ten guiding principles Martin Drury aspired to achieve when setting up *The Ark* initially, one sees a conflicting view. Martin Drury expresses that *The Ark* is "by children, for children, and about children".

However, it is clear that in terms of its architecture and design, *The Ark* is for children but by adults. On speaking to Shane O'Toole, I asked him whether or not they consulted children when they were designing the building. "We didn't speak directly with children, but we spoke with teachers who were selected by Martin Drury and the Department of Education. We spoke with them about their experiences of bringing children to public facilities". To quote the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, "Children have the right to express their own opinions and to meet together to express their views".

In theory, children should be on the board of Directors at *The Ark*. They should, in conjunction with the adults, be permitted to expresses their views on a regular basis. Otherwise, it is not in keeping with the ethos of *The Ark* 'by children'.

Programmes

When *The Ark* set out to schedule its programming it decided, as the brochure states, it would "reflect the integrated world of the child by emphasising the connections between the arts and other aspects of life, such as history, the environment, religion and science". Since opening *The Ark* has had varied programming encompassing and for the most part has encouraged a wide audience including children, their parents and teachers.

It is all very well after reading the brochures to applaud and praise *The Ark* for its innovative approach but the real question is: have these programmes been successful in the eyes of the participants? Have the audience, particularly the children, benefited from and indeed enjoyed the activities? I wish to address these questions, taking first the "Once in a Life" programme.

This programme was a celebration of children, time and photography. This, *The Ark'* first photography project, combines history, Polaroid cameras and digital scanning technology. The Fr Browne Collection of photographs was indeed a wonderful, historical exhibition depicting childhood over the past one hundred years. These photographs were restored by

These photographs were restored by Davidson & Associates, and used for the programme to create an appreciation of photography.

Another programme example by *The Ark* was the metaphorical "Two by Two" project which ran for forty days and forty nights. *The Ark* commissioned ten artists to make arks for children. The result was an exhibition containing a wide variety of work in a range of materials, medium to large in scale, capable of being touched by children. The artists involved featured sculptors, ceramists, toy makers and theatre designers. The variety of arks was remarkable. For example, sculptor Imogen Stuart created a huge wooden tortoise large enough for a child to sit in. The work depicted her understanding of the theme, a container of precious objects, that is, a child. Una Kelly took a more ecological approach as stated in *The Arks* press pack on this programme "she created an *ark* which contained bottles of clean air, water, earth and seeds to be used in case of an apocalypse". The only physical involvement of the children here was aiding Genevieve Murphy, the artist in residence at that time, to finish off large scale animals in time for her exhibition. There is no mention here of the children presenting an exhibition themselves. In the "Once in a Life" programme the children got a chance to display their own work but here they are little more than admirers and onlookers- a passive audience.

Fig.4 Young Musicians, Dublin, 1937,

Fr.Browne Collection

The Ark accommodates the artist in residence on a programme to programme basis, giving them access to print and photographic facilities of the other cultural organisations in the area. One cannot help but wonder if the "Two by Two" programme was used by Genevieve Murphy and the other artists to house their work. This is where we see an unbalanced approach between the children and the artist. There is a saying that children should be seen and not heard, however in *The Ark* this could and should be applied to the artists. The children should be heard. They should also be seen and recognised for their work; which would be their own. The work on most programmes including the current project called ALPHA (Feb 97) is never exclusively their own work. They help the artist to aid the artist's exhibition. In *The Ark*, artists should be viewed more as technicians. In other words, they should act as guides for the children in order for them to create *their* final masterpiece. On a more positive side, aesthetic judgement and critique are exercised on the part of the children. They know what they do and don't like as well as adults.

The project now running in *The Ark* is ALPHA - a print project for children which was billed as an exciting hands-on print project (*The Ark Schedule* Feb'97).

In the brochure, it sets out some guidelines as to what the programme involves. It states it would introduce children to some of the basic principles of print making, Allowing them to(re)discover the power of letters and the joy of printing them. Give them a chance to work with an experienced printmaker and to be involved in the making of a large print installation. In the following Chapter I present my own case study of this programme.

CHAPTER FOUR

CASE STUDY

Introduction to ALPHA

Is *The Ark* a successful, beneficial and helpful institution? Has it lived up to its mission policies as set out by Martin Drury and Temple Bar Properties at the onset of its programming? Is it committed to children, the arts and the learning and teaching of these two subjects? In short is *The Ark* educating our children in the area of the arts (visual art) adequately? Has it bridged the gap between art activity and teaching at primary level?

If one is to arrive at truthful, objective and logical conclusions one has to observe *The Ark* and one of its programmes in detail. For the purpose of this study, I have chosen the ALPHA programme which was initiated by Martin Drury who invited Simon Spain to be artist in residence, for the period from October 1996 to January 1997. Approximately, three thousand children attended the programme from the beginning to the end. ALPHA itself is a 'hands on print project'(The Ark's Brochure) for children aged four to twelve years. For the purpose of my evaluation, it was necessary for me to sit in, on the same 'Alpha' programme with several different classes in order to get an overall view.

From my observations of the different age groups, I discovered that the 10-12 age group, appeared to be more advanced and I believed that this age group would portray the programme to show the optimum performance level, that could be reached. Consequently, I chose the Rathfarnham South City Multi-Denominational School for my study.

Object of ALPHA

In *The Arks* brochure advertising the ALPHA programme it stated that the programme would do four things. It would:

1. Introduce children to some basic principles of print making.
2. Allow children to discover or re-discover the power of letters and the joy of printing them.
3. Give children the chance to work with a printmaker, experienced in leading print projects with children.
4. Involve children in the making of a large print installation.

The children were to "explore screen-printing in particular and experience the transformation from work in progress to a finished piece".(The Ark's ALPHA programme brochure)

DETAILED CASE STUDY

On the twenty-third of January this year, a group of 5th & 6th class students from the South City School project, arrived at *The Ark* to take part in the children's printing workshop ALPHA. The group consisted of twenty three children(fifteen boys and eight girls). The students were greeted by the members of staff, and brought upstairs to the long corridor on the first floor. The children were all given name tags and protective smocks before they began the workshop. Dara Carroll an assistant of *The Ark*, introduced the children to ALPHA. The kids were accompanied by three of their school teachers. The children were asked to kneel in front of a roller and ink, which had been laid out earlier.(fig5) Each child was given a letter block and paper to print on. The paper had already been block printed with one flat colour. This was done in order that the letter block print would stand out from the background colour. Each set of roller and ink was shared between two children. Dara Carroll explained to them, firstly about the various types of printing processes. Dara demonstrates how to ink up the roller and the foam letter block. He then shows them how to register the block letter onto the Indian handmade paper by applying pressure.

Fig.5 Long Corridor-*The Ark*

There were three members of staff including Dara present on the day. Dara, however, was the main instructor for the initial printing process, until they met artist in residence, Simon Spain.

Firstly, they were asked to ink up the roller, then the letter block and register it with the paper. Then, exert force while pressing the block onto the already printed coloured paper. Only one half of the group were allowed to print at any one time. Dara explained that the letter blocks were made from pieces of foam, cut into different shapes, so as to print irregular textured letters. The children appeared to enjoy this process and seemed even happier when they were told that they were allowed to take these prints home with them.

The children are then escorted up the steel staircase to the studio were Simon Spain takes over. Simon introduces himself by showing examples of some of his prints. These prints were mono-printed, screen printed and block printed, with a strong emphasis on colour. Simon talks about his involvement in printing and publishing children's books with the help of school kids. He also shows examples of some the books he designed. The children's reactions to these printed books appeared to be quite enthusiastic.

Fig.6-SIMON SPAIN Demonstration

Simon indicates the difference between professional and unprofessional artists. The children had some interesting responses to this. Simon expressed that art can be a full time job and should be acknowledged and respected as such. He then talks about ALPHA and that approximately 3,000 children have worked on this project. Simon goes through the block printing processes that they had previously done in the corridor with Dara.

Simon signifies the differences between Indian handmade paper which they had used earlier and the paper normally used in schools. He details the various mediums they can print on, for example cloth, aluminium, paper, canvas etc. Simon indicates how prints can change from two-dimensional to a three-dimensional printed form. Cameras and computers can be used to print alternative images. This is what the artist used when trying to translate the idea of the five senses, touch, taste, hearing, smell and sight. Simon suggests that he wants to combine the images of the senses with the children's print for the installation 'Cardboard City'.

The children were then asked to move to the screen printing area where Simon explained the make-up of the screen and the printing tools.

Fig.7-ALPHA Workshop

He then runs through the procedure of how to screen print successfully before he begins his demonstration. The ink used for screen printing was of a lighter consistency than that used for the block printing. The children often compared these printing tools to items they were familiar with at home. As said by Derek, aged 10, "The screen is like the sieve, my Mum has at home". Also Jane, aged 11 said "The squeegee is like a thing used for cleaning windows".

Simon allows the children to help him to screen print, one on either side of him. Therefore each child gets an opportunity to print. Firstly they print a flat colour onto a large sheet and in turn print this onto cardboard. It is illustrated to the children that it is possible to print onto many different surfaces. Simon then makes a paper stencil of the letter 'C' for Ciara- one of the children in the group- and then explains how the stencil blocks the ink from going through the screen onto the paper. The kids and Simon printed over other layered coloured prints, creating interesting effects. Teachers were given the opportunity to print but unfortunately they declined. The artist made another screen with a photographic image transferred onto it. He then made the connection that this was the same process used in magazines and newspapers. The practicality of the photographic stencil is that it can be used over and over again.

The children were then invited to sit at one of four tables. Simon and three of *The Ark's* assistants were designated six children each per table. The children were then required to experiment with the potato and block shapes in order to create a pattern. They sampled first of all, before printing onto the large-scale cardboard prints. The kids tried to create interesting patterns. Some were more interested in this process than others. This is similar to any normal classroom situation as there are always going to be some children who are more interested in a particular subject or process than others. The fact that some of the children observed, lost interest is down to basic child psychology. On the other hand this could be attributed to the usefulness of the programme. The nature of the project and its application denied any real contribution from the children.

The printed cardboard's were then lifted off the floor by the staff and left standing by the wall to dry. It was then time for the kids to get cleaned up and get ready for a talk by Simon about the installation. He tells them what it consists of. The cardboard tiles on the floor of the gallery had printed images of fossils which in turn had flower prints emblazoned over them. Simon gave the children's prints to the teachers. These had been wrapped in tissue and stamped with *The Arks* logo.

Fig.8-ALPHA Workshop

The children were then lead downstairs to the gallery where the project was to be exhibited. The children were allowed to walk around the cardboard buildings. Simon explained how it was all put together and specified that for the exhibition the buildings would be lit up and there would be background sounds to accompany the installation. The children were invited along with their teachers and their parents to attend the exhibition when it opened to the public. It was then time for the children to leave and catch their bus home. Had they enjoyed their day and more importantly had the programme ALPHA and indeed *The Ark* lived up its policies and reputation?

Teachers Involvement on the Day.

All schools were accompanied by between one and three teachers. The overt role of the teachers was a disciplinary one as opposed to that of the artist in residence who needs to able to minimise time wasted associated with these activities. Simon Spain proposed active involvement and participation to each teacher in the programme. However on every occasion that I observed the ALPHA programme each teacher declined the offer. As was mentioned in Chapter one, in order for teachers to teach art effectively they must have artistic knowledge and experience be able to impart this adequately.

This is another role of *The Ark*, as it helps furnish teachers' artistic abilities regardless of the level they might be at, to enable them to close the cavity between art education and art activity.
I would consider it important for the future endeavours of *The Ark* to coax teachers to take a more active and artistic role and involvement with their pupils during the workshops. A major part of this would be to persuade the teachers to allow themselves to be at an equal standing with their pupils for that day. Therefore there would have to be other options considered for the control of their pupils.

The Ark is concerned with pleasing their audience, therefore getting positive feedback from the teachers and children, who take part in the programs, is very important. Negative feedback is also appreciated, discussed and acted upon. A questionnaire which was given to teachers on completion of an *Ark* workshop. Through this they can get feedback from both teacher and pupil whether positive or negative and in turn adapt their workshops to suit. Also notes are given to teachers to show how such printing activities can be further experimented on in the classroom.

Teachers Printing Workshop

Ark aims to educate not only the children but the teachers as well. *The Ark* in response to this also ran a teachers workshop on ALPHA.
This consisted of a printing workshop for teachers which ran for two days after the ALPHA programme. Many teachers attended the workshop, and the programme had the same schedule as for the children which included both block and screen printing with mono-printing being explored.

The ALPHA Exhibition

A special viewing of ALPHA took place on February 2nd. It was an opportunity for both parents and children to visit *The Ark* and see the outcome of ALPHA. The exhibition consisted of a walk through the installation, entitled 'The Cardboard City of Letters'. It was a collection of the twenty-six printed letters of the alphabet in a screen print format. Also there was an opportunity for parents to watch their children take part in a practical arts activity which consisted of hand prints onto various mediums. The exhibition lasted for a period of one week after which the alphabet print section was sent as part of a touring exhibition to Poland.

Fig.9-ALPHA Installation

Case Study Evaluation in Relation to Polices

It is obligatory for one to discuss the ten mission polices as stated in Chapter Two in reference to the ALPHA Case Study. In order to obtain an accurate and significant evaluation, one was required to select the ALPHA programme which was the sole visual art schedule running at the time of this dissertation.

As one can see the first policy in Chapter two quotes "by children, for children and about children." One believes that this is not entirely true. From my research of this programme, one found the process to be quite structured and regimental, not allowing the children enough freedom for experimentation. The process appeared almost factory-like making few concessions to allow for children's own input and character. Children in this case, as quoted in the 2nd policy are 'makers and doers rather than 'looker's and listeners.' One must consider the fact that children require a certain amount of routine or structure. They need to be told that what they're doing is correct or at least going in the right direction. This could be accomplished in a way that was both spontaneous and individual.

Although print-making is a technical constructive process one believes that it could have been taught in a more personal way, to ensure its continuation i.e. that the practical knowledge learned could be used again in the classroom. Suggesting *The Ark* as 'a common meeting ground' (policy 4), one feels it could be made more inviting by introducing a continuous computerised visual exhibition featuring past and present art programmes and activities, and situated in a prominent position to make it more visually accessible and stimulating to both visitor and passer-by.

The polices are like guidelines as they encompass and incorporate everything we would want or expect to see in a children's Cultural Centre. At times these polices fall short of their aims, not due to poor organisation or neglect but because dedication to the policies depends on the level of financial support received from the public and private sector. This is because people normally concerned with policy content and furthermost are obliged to chase funds.

CONCLUSION

Throughout this dissertation I have stated by analysis of historical fact and by practical example, that there exists a lack of dedication on the part of the educational establishment to art and visual art in particular. This is despite the fact that virtually everybody is in agreement as to its educational and therapeutic value. I believe this to have been detrimental to the physical and mental development of our children. This lack of importance within the educational system has in turn contributed to the general public's misinformed assumption that there are few, if any worthwhile careers or 'real jobs' available in relation to art. This attitude filtrates from adult to child. As one ten year old child happily told me, "What do you say to an artist with a job? Big Mac and small fries please!"

Initially on starting out on this dissertation and from my first visits to *The Ark* I was filled with a sense of excitement and enthusiasm at the realisation that such a centre existed. Since starting out on the process of this dissertation I have formed many opinions and criticisms. Both *The Ark* and members of group '91 architects had well defined mission statements when the project was being initiated.

On meeting the principle characters involved in *The Ark* development it was also clear to see that they knew exactly what they did not want *The Ark* as an institution and building, to be. It is therefore, I, with my pre-conceived ideas of mad colours, junky plastic furniture and raw pictures as 'norm', state that their interpretation was not what I understood child-art to be. In relation to child art content and surrounds I asked myself, why *The Ark* was inclined to take the unproved and untested path to that of the existing and excepted 'norm'? I believe that the excepted 'norm' has not been given a fair chance to prove or further explore itself in a specialised and dedicated environment.

What or who should *The Ark* aspire to? *The Ark* is a 'first' and has received much written and vocal applause from the simple fact of its existence aswell as its obvious benefits. My approach was somewhat different. What if there were numerous institutions similar to *The Ark* out there? How would 11A Eustace Street stand out from the rest? To do this it would only need to live up to its ten guiding principles. Overall I found this not to be the case. My overview was cold and objective. From building design to programme content I found it did not adhere strictly enough to its own guidance principles as I have exampled throughout.

The role of children as involved artists, creating complete finished works must be the paramount concern of all involved. It may be that sheer numbers involved dictate these attitudes. I would accept less child numbers if it meant output was more child-orientated.

To counter this deficit I envisage *The Ark* of the future, as a public relations vessel for the betterment of child arts. A mother ship if you like, directing its countrywide satellites by training and offering artistic direction and input. Also it is presently succeeding in creating a better awareness among teachers through training and programme involvement which is already having an impact in the classroom. *The Ark* itself as a structure and institution must become more customer and child-friendly.

When one sees and experiences, at first hand the real dedication of the people involved, one knows that at the end of the day, the people who matter, i.e. the children, will not be lost in the politics of art education. I firmly believe *The Ark* is not an experiment gone wrong but going in the right direction, helping to bridge the void in primary art education.

APPENDIX

Research Methods

Because a vast quantity of primary sources and first hand interviews were what was required. Not only had I become a student doing a large amount of research but a non-secular, objective and psychological approach is what seemed to work most successfully in writing this thesis. As J.P. Dwortzsky, a leading psychologist once said, "all research is based on systematic and objective methods of observing, recording and describing events "

My main problem was the angle I was going to take. The main criteria was that I must find something new to say about this topic; something interesting. I had to ask myself the question "had it all been said before?" Frankly, I felt it hadn't. While, there had been an abundance of newspaper articles singing *The Ark's* praises, when it first opened in 1994, and a small paragraph had been given over to each new programme in the reviews page of most newspapers like The Times, Tribune etc but that was it. Most articles I read dated back to 1994 and 1995 and most of them, had nothing but praise for this institution.

I'm not exactly a pessimist, but it seemed not one article that I had come across had anything unfavourable to say about *The Ark*, this by its own merit was enough to stimulate my interest. A more objective approach was what was needed.

I found the Director of *The Ark*, Martin Drury from the genesis of this dissertation up until the present time, to be a most helpful, interesting and competent individual. Access, on my part, was freely granted by Mr. Drury to firstly give an in depth guided tour of the premises, secondly access was also granted by Mr. Drury to me in regard to files and reports, including 'The development plan (1992), and thirdly, I was permitted to sit in and observe the ALPHA programme as a case study.

My first major interview which I conducted was with Iseult McCarthy, (Head of the Department of Education, N.C.A.D). I asked her about the educational value of *The Ark* and indeed about primary school education concerning the arts for young people. My pre-interview preparation involved consulting, reading and collecting data on both *The Ark* and the primary school curriculum. Most of this information was of a secondary nature.I referred to cutting files in N.C.A.D and public libraries and made a number of enquiries with primary school teachers I know when composing my questions for Ms. McCarthy. The importance of note-taking and recording equipment usage is also a major factor.

The interview may be perfect but if the batteries run out, or even your pen if you are taking notes, a potential unprofessional disaster could arise.

In preparing my questions, I remembered something a friend of mine who studied journalism once said, that was to stick to the basic questions and everything else would fall into place. They were - who, when, why, where, how, what. These questions insured that I gathered the facts that I needed for a solid foundation for this thesis.

It is probable to say or as far as one can tell, "there is a fundamental limit to human knowledge, except, perhaps, that we can never be absolutely certain of anything" (Dwortzsky,1994,p.29). In other words, one needs opinions as well as facts to come to a logical conclusion. Readers aren't really interested in the opinions of amateur journalists, people are only concerned with the opinions of specialists, celebrities and journalists who have made themselves well established in print by the high quality of their work".

Iseult McCarthy, Martin Drury, Simon Spain, these are all professionals with proficient, interesting opinions and rightly so, and it is my job as the amateur to objectively present these opinions with accompanying facts to the readers of this dissertation.

Although as claimed, objectivity may itself be partially biased and unbalanced, as long as neutrality, balance, impartiality and truthfulness are used in researching, recording and writing information ethics remain intact.

My case study on ALPHA the programme run by *The Ark* in co-operation with artist Simon Spain was perhaps my biggest and most important clue to the success of *The Ark*. This was a study carried out by me, an independent observer in order to measure the success rate of the institution and indeed that particular programme. An abundance of factors had to be taken into consideration when conducting the case study. In a case study it is the norm for researchers "to report or analyse the behaviour, emotions, beliefs or life history of a single individual or (individuals)in depth". (J.P.Dwortzsky,1994,p.27). One can also define a case study as "an intensive study of a single case, with available data, test results and opinions about that individual (or individuals) (J.P.Dwortzsky,1994,p.27). However although case studies provide valuable data, no single case can stand alone as the basis for a solid conclusion and it is in keeping with this, that it was necessary for me to return to *The Ark* on several occasions and observe artist Simon Spain and the rest of the staff and the children to come to a more general conclusion about the programmes effectiveness.

It is important to remember when carrying out case studies that there are many variables and many problems that can arise to affect a solid conclusion - my case study was no different. Two very important terms to remember when researching or gathering data for your case study are 'observer bias' and 'subject bias'.

Observer bias is when an error in observation occurs caused by the expectations of the observer, that is , myself. It is therefore a necessity that I ask myself had I any pre-conceived ideas or pre-conceptions of what I was going to see and hear and did I allow these, if they existed, to cloud my objectivity conclusion? It is true to say, perhaps, I went in to look for faults, because I felt there had to be some as I hadn't heard any mentioned before, but as one can see in my case study, I found quite the opposite. Any bad points which were few and far between, where easily out-weighed by the good.

Subject bias is defined as "unwanted changes in a subject behaviour owing to her knowledge about the experiment or awareness of being observed".(J.P.Dwortzsky 1994,p.22). In other words, did Simon Spain act differently because he knew he was being observed?, did he act differently because he knew that particular results were being expected from him?. One way to overcome this of course is through a double-blind controlled experiment.

This is "a research technique in which neither the subjects nor the observers know which subjects have been exposed to the independent variable. It is used for controlling biases that may be introduced by either the subjects or the observers. (J.P.Dwortzsky,1994,p.22). This of course wasn't an option while conducting my case study as I was an obvious external observer, to Mr. Spain. However, from the children's point of view, I was just another member of staff. Soon after this, they became familiar with my presence and acted the same as they would have done anyway with or without my observing. Mr. Spain didn't acknowledge my existence as it stood, so I felt subject bias didn't apply here anyway.

As time went on, during the ongoing researching and writing of this dissertation, I found myself becoming quite at ease and comfortable, not to mention more and more competent in utilising all of the afore mentioned research methods and techniques. This was as big a part of my thesis as indeed the writing of it, as unlike a lot of dissertations, mine was highly occupied by primary sources and information rather than secondary, although secondary information played a major vote as the basis for background information on my primary sources. Conclusively a vast amount was learned and utilised.

LIST OF SCHOOLS SURVEYED

Yellow Furse N.School Beauparc,
Navan,
Co.Meath

St,Josephs N.School
Carrickmacross,
Co.Monaghan.

Scoile Mhuire na Trocaire
Ardee,
Co.Louth.

De La Salle P.School
Kildare Town,
Co.Kildare.

St.Peters N.School
Bolton Street,
Drogheda,
Co.Louth.

St.Oliver Plunkett
Loughmourne,
Castleblaney,
Co.Monaghan.

St,Mary's P.School
Raharney,
Mullingar,
Co.Westmeath.

Ughtynail N.School
Moynalty,
Kells,
Co.Meath.

Howth Road N.School
Clontarf,
Dublin 3.

RESULTS OF SURVEY

In researching for this dissertation I found it necessary to conduct, two surveys in order to have an objective conclusion regarding primary school art education and the viability of *The Ark*. I carried out my research among ten different schools within a sixty mile radius of *The Ark*. The List of questions were as follows:

1. What is the average amount of time your school gives over to art activity per week?
2 Do you believe that this amount of time is adequate?
3 Do you believe that the syllabus regarding art education needs to be updated?
4. Have you heard of *The Ark*?
5. Has your school ever visited *The Ark*?
6. Do you believe *The Ark* is a valuable institution?

CONCLUSION

From the ten schools I surveyed four of them hadn't heard of *The Ark*. 90% of the schools only give over the minimal amount of time as suggested by the syllabus to art activity per week. Only two schools actually visited *The Ark* and that was the Howth Road national school, Clontarf and the Multi-Denominational school, Rathfarnham.

They found their visit to *The Ark* extremely beneficial and are planning a return trip in the near future. The general consensus was that many more schools would like to visit if it was advertised better.

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CREDITS

Martin Drury
Simon Spain
Shane O'Toole
Iseult McCarthy
Texaco
IMMA
National Art Gallery
Educate Together
Rathfarnham Multi Denominational School
Davidson & Associates
Temple Bar Properties
Department of Education
The Ark Staff