

## ART EDUCATION AND CREATIVITY IN THE CLASSROOM.

### SUMMARY OF DISSERTATION.

Chapter one traces the involvement of creative education, from the post war years, exploring the changes that occurred out of necessity and desire within the educational system.

Chapter two attempts the definition of creativity and examination of its elusive qualities. A literary review of works by CW Taylor, Guildford Lowenfeld, the writings of Carl Rogers, the need for creativity in our lives. The process of creativity and our present day understanding of it. The psychological approach to creativity is also reviewed and its sequential development.

An exploration of the art elements is undertaken in chapter three. A full understanding of the elements in art are required in order for the successful teaching of art to take place, and subsequently the creative process.

Chapter four explores creativity in the classroom the need for creativity in art and the encouragement of it through the art mediums and the expression of the maker.

Chapter four also examines a class project, looking at the positive and negative issues involved in attempting creativity and expression in a class room situation. The project was evaluated as recommended in The Guidelines for Art Teachers.

NC 0021562 7



**COLAISTE NAISIUNTA EALAINÉ IS DEARTHÁ  
NATIONAL COLLEGE OF ART AND DESIGN  
FACULTY OF EDUCATION**

**ART EDUCATION AND CREATIVITY  
IN THE CLASSROOM**

**A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED TO THE  
FACULTY OF EDUCATION**

**IN**

**CANDIDACY FOR THE**

**DIPLOMA FOR ART AND DESIGN TEACHERS**

**BY**

**ANDREW BOWEN**

**JUNE 1997**







## TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF FIGURES.....	ii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....	iii
INTRODUCTION.....	iv
I     THE CREATIVE JOURNEY .....	1
A Short History of the	
Uses and Development of	
Creativity in the Art Room	
II    THE NATURE OF CREATIVITY .....	7
What is Creativity	
The Definition of Creativity	
The Creative Process	
III   CREATIVITY AND THE LANGUAGE	
OF ART AND DESIGN .....	17
IV    CREATIVITY IN THE CLASSROOM .....	21
The Need for Personal Expression	
Assessment and Results	
Overall Assessment	
V     CONCLUSION .....	37
SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY.....	38



## **LIST OF FIGURES**

- |    |  |                                      |
|----|--|--------------------------------------|
| 1. | Design Process<br>Papier Mâché Project       | Pencils, Paper                       |
| 2. | Design Process                               | Cardboard<br>Pencils Paper           |
| 3. | Preparitory Work                             | Papier Mâché Pulp                    |
| 4. | Development of Process                       | Papier Mâché Pulp                    |
| 5. | Development of Form                          | Papier Mâché PVA                     |
| 6. | Development of Form                          | Papier Mâché and PVA                 |
| 7. | Exploring Colour on Sculpture                | Papier Mâché and Water-colour Paints |
| 8. | Completed Project Based on<br>Pupils Designs | Papier Mâché Water-colours, PVA      |





## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Special thanks to Eileen Doyle for advice and guidance in the writing of this dissertation.





## INTRODUCTION

Art is a universal language which can provide a sound means of communication between people from all over the world, and to a large extent between people of different periods of time. Freedom in which to do this communication is essential to our well being, art offers us areas in which we can develop personally at all ages and this is evident in the work we produce. Art and creativity is a reflection on how we relate to living in our environment and on how our environment affect us.

It is acknowledged that education makes a fundamental contribution to the quality and well-being of the educated person. Art education has been increasingly concerned with the development of the individual, through the exploration of art elements and the cultural education of the individual which effects the behaviour of individuals as members of our society.

Education is therefore not only concerned with the personal growth of each child but also with helping them to become responsive members of their groups and community. Art, Craft, Design is significant in both these aspects, for it deals with the forming and expression of ideas, thoughts and feelings through the reality of materials and in so doing creates a connection between the individual and the environment around them.

It is essential to understand fully our own approach to art education and the creative process in order to guide young people through the same process successfully. Creativity occurs as a result of many influential factors some of which I intend to explore in these chapters.

In the interest of convenience and clarity this dissertation is structured in four chapters.







The first is a brief examination of the involvement within the teaching of art craft and design over the past number of decades. The second chapter attempts to define the nature of creativity, its structure and basis. The third chapter examines the principles of art craft and design, elements. A fuller understanding of these elements is essential to the development of creativity and personal expression.

The final chapter examines the need for and encouragement of creativity and expression in the art room and carries on evaluation of a project conducted with a group of fifth year students in a class room setting.





## CHAPTER ONE

### THE CREATIVE JOURNEY

It was not until after the Second World War that the possibilities of using art and art education for its humanising potential was considered, in order to make the world a safer place. By this time psychologists and art educators had come to believe that the human needs for creativity and expression was innate, and that the suppression of the inner being may be damaging to the community and society at large.

Art educators believed that the intellectual, emotional, physical and creative processes, involved in the production of art would help in the development of a well rounded personality.

One of the areas to dominate art education at this time was creativity and the expression of the self through a chosen medium in art. However, during the 1950s with the space race between Russia and America the desire to produce scientists and engineers with a capacity to create and invent took hold of the educational system so that the Americans would be the first to explore space and land on the moon.

Art educators began to realise that the art curriculum was weakening its position by remaining passive to the changes that were taking place within the educational system in the US.

Creativity became the key word. Artists and art educators published writings and ideas on the uses of art in education, not just as a means of personal expression and as therapy, but as a means of creative thinking with ones own lifestyle and improving ones own environment by creative art methods.

Nurturing the creative spirit within the arts became the focus of art educators in the mid 1950's and early 1960's. Interestingly enough, around this time the shift to

academic achievement and excellence in the sciences and mathematics and the race for points in schools and colleges had a knock on effect on the arts curriculum.

In the mid 1960's educators began to look at the academic status of art in the US. In the search for arts academic status, it became necessary to redefine its role within the school curriculum. This revaluation was defined as art being a body of knowledge, and as a developmental activity, combining skill, creativity, personal expression, history and appreciation.

The art teacher who prepares the students enriching their language in art with signs shapes and symbols and promoting new searching and discovery, does so in a similar process in the way in which the teacher builds up the child's vocabulary and fluency in speech so that they may express themselves verbally.

It is through creative work that the student explores ways of expressing feelings thinking and imagining and it is precisely because it is to do with their ideas their own sensitivity and perception that it cannot be standardized.

It seems likely that many children who feel unable to achieve satisfaction for themselves in art and crafts, may not have had the opportunity to discover either the materials or the pace that suits them best.

Overemphasis on the finished product can limit the young person's image making narrow the range of opportunity open to them and place the teacher in the position of judge rather than advisor and inspirer.

Lowenfeld and Brittain write:

“Restrictions in areas of self expression and creative productions are legalized pressures for conformity. No innovations are allowed, different is wrong”. (1)

It is essential that teachers of art craft and design should have a full understanding of the approach to the creative process before they themselves can begin to teach the process. The creative process can be made to unfold, if the art teacher concerns him/herself with the student revealing art education as an exploration of the environment and an expression of oneself in relation to that environment. It is necessary to develop the students awareness of the potential for artistic creations through a broad understanding of how much art involves itself in our everyday lives and society in general. It is through the exploration of contemporary artists and art history that this broader appreciation of our artistic heritage is aroused.

The arts by there very nature stimulate imaginative thinking and knowing, imagination frees the mind and allows the conception of alternatives and possibilities to take place.

C.R. Rogers writes on creativity:

“From the very nature of the inner conditions of creativity it is clear that it cannot be forced but must be permitted to emerge. This permissiveness gives the individual complete freedom to think, to feel to be whatever is most inward with-in the self, creativity is fostered. It fosters the openness the playful and the spontaneous, the juggling of precepts, concepts and meanings which is a part of creativity” (2)

Through the observation of the environment we learn to appreciate what we see, and by interpreting this we may reveal it through artistic mediums. Art is therefore a sensory experience about observation and learning to see things as they really are. This requires an opening up of all our senses that is, to feel, taste, hear and smell. It also concerns itself with the education of awareness and perception.

As individuals we appear to possess an internalized pattern of understanding from which personal ideas come. In the young this pattern grows spontaneously through the senses in direct interplay with the immediate surroundings. The teacher must therefore have confidence to aim first and foremost to enrich the content and quality of the







students experience. Central to this task is the teachers sensitising students to the quality of material they use and the images and interpretations they create.

Diarmuid Larkin writes about teaching art through the senses:

“A greater understanding and depth of awareness can be brought about by helping the child to recall his experiences, and by drawing his/her attention to what they already know. This can be done by asking questions that will help the child to recall in vivid detail thoughts, perceptions, and feelings derived from his experience. e.g. if the experience was an emotional experience he would be asked how he felt how excited he was when he was going on holiday. How sad he was when his dog was run over. How happy he was on his birthday. How angry when his bike was stolen” (3)

It is only through the senses that learning can take place. The involvement of ourselves in projects of physical sensory behaviour is disappearing quite quickly. Preplanned precut projects have made art sterile. Art to young people should be a language of thought and the creation of art and expression of art changing as they themselves change and develop.

The senses demand the active participation of the individual. Touching, seeing, hearing, smelling and tasting. Even young people need to be encouraged to do these things. Interestingly enough it is thought that more affluent a society becomes the less stimulation and interaction with the environment takes place.

Victor Lowenfeld speaks of the environment in which we are now living:

“Mass production, mass education, mass seeing and experiencing have suppressed the sensitive relationship of the individual. Art education has the special mission of developing within the individual those creative sensitivities that make life satisfying and meaningful”. (4)

Art education is one of the few subjects that investigates and concentrates on developing the sensory experiences. Art is filled with the richness of textures, the excitement of shapes and forms the wealth of colour and it is the duty of the art







teacher to stimulate the student into an exploration and appreciation of these experiences.

Cultivation of the senses should be an essential part of the art experience. The enhancement of sensory learning is important to our lives. Individual expression and creativity is just as important to a young student as the artistic creation is to the adult.

The teacher of art should recognise that his or her own learning experience is of little use to the student unless they are allowed to explore and experience materials and ideas for themselves. By their very nature young people are constantly changing and in a state of flux, with views and ideas, perceptions interpretations of the environment in which they find themselves evolving as they grow older. Art can assist the growing individual and help in expressing personal views and ideas on his/her environment. The works that we produce in art should be a creation of ourselves our feelings and thoughts. In his book the study of education and art Dick Field quotes Herbert Read,

“Art education must as a first principle initiate people into what it feels like to live in music, move over and about in painting, travel round and in between the masses of sculpture. Dwell in a poem . . . . These paradigm experiences are the basis of an illumination of much that is beyond themselves. Aesthetic insight, feeling from the inside what art is. This is the central starting and expanding point for everything else”.(5)





**FOOTNOTES CHAPTER 1**

1. Victor Lowenfeld and W Lambert Brittain, Creative and Mental Growth (Macmillan publishing Co. Ltd., New York 1964) p. 16
2. Carl Rogers "Towards a Theory of Creativity" in Creativity, ed. P.E. Vernon (Middlesex England : Penguin Books Ltd 1970) pp. 147. 148.
3. Diarmuid Larkin Art Teaching Art Learning. (Wolfe Hound Press, Portmarnock, Dublin 1981) p. 13.
4. Lowenfeld and Brittain, Creative and Mental Growth, p. 14.
5. Dick Field and John Newick The Study of Education and Art (Routledge and Keegan Paul Ltd. London, 1973) p 148.



## CHAPTER TWO

### THE NATURE OF CREATIVITY

#### What is Creativity

“Few psychological constructs have proved more elusive to define”(6) Quite often, creativity is defined in terms of products what has been made and the quality of the product made. Much research has taken place in this area of what creativity is and how it might be defined. However, my interest lies in the analysis of creativity as it may affect the artist and how the artist uses creativity as a means of personal expression. Also, creativity in the classroom, as an art teacher I feel its imperative to come to terms with an understanding of creativity as it effects young pupils in a classroom situation.

In his book *The Nature of Creativity* C.W. Taylor offers some definitions of creativity. The first class of definitions he labels as ‘Gestalt’ or “perception”. This area of creativity is defined as a re-evaluation of ideas, combining known forms and restructuring them to create a new form or idea.

Similarly he quotes Duhrrsens (1957) notion that it is “the translation of knowledge and ideas into new forms” Harmon (1955) prefers to speak of it as “any process by which something new is produced an idea or an object including a new form or arrangement of old elements”. (7)

Yet another form of creativity according to Taylor is characterized as ‘Aesthetic’ or ‘Expressive’. Emphasis here is placed on self expressions. The principle idea behind this area of creativity is the need for people to express something within themselves, which is unique to them. This then can be defined as creative expression. Here Taylor quotes Lees definition (from 1957)







“The creative process can be defined as ability to think in uncharted waters without influence from conventions set up by past practices. Lange (1957) defines it as “the creative process is God, the Creator working through his creation man”.(8)

Guildford (1959) on the other hand defines creativity in terms of a very large number of factors. The most important of these factors are the discovery factors and the divergent thinking factors. The discovery factors are defined as the

“ability to develop information out of what is given by stimulation. The latter is ones ability to go off in different directions when one is faced with a problem”. (9)

Lowenfeld (1957) speaks of it as the result of our subjective relationship with man and environment. Read 1955 feeling is the “quality of the mind which allows the individual to juggle scraps of knowledge until they fall into new and more useful patterns”.(10)

To summarise these definitions within the context of creativity in the arts one might say:

Creativity consists of finding and combining previously unrelated mental elements in a new and useful fashion. In order to do this an artist should be aware of a broad range of skills and elements taken from diverse areas of interest.

In order to be successful the creative act requires, motivation, persistence and an intelligence suitable to the creative act. Creativity requires in general, personality traits, rather than isolated learning or cognitive abilities.

It is generally accepted that creative people need to possess a certain set of traits, as has been pointed out, with-in their personality to carry on creating. They should have a high motivational level, high level of self confidence, ambition, and perseverance and an awareness of skills necessary to do so.





If we accept that the creative act is the ability to combine already known elements then we should accept that this is the nature of the creative act in art. The fact is that the process for creating in science and say poetry remains the same. For example a poet uses a combinations of words which he or she has learned, they are not words that they have invented. In the same way as a composer puts together musical tones in new ways, creating new melodies.

### The Need for Creativity

Boredom may well be creeping through our modern lifestyle. Machines continue to take the place of manual work and at an alarming rate technology is taken the place of our mental decision making.

Education must prepare people, young people in particular for a rapid and complex world of change. Unfortunately it appears that alot of these young people may be starting life under conditions of environments, calculated to stifle their native artistic sensibility. Some grow up with eyes accustomed to machine made articles produced cheaply and speedily, by manufacturers whose main aim is to sell and make profit.

C.R. Rogers argues that we are entering a period of transition, a time of great knowledge, destructive and constructive. On a voyage to a fantastic atomic age. yet even so conformity appears to be the rule of thumb.

C.R. Rogers criticises our inability to come to terms with the creative life. He points to our education system, he criticises

- (1) We tend to turn out conformists stereotyped individuals - rather than freely creative and original thinkers.
- (2) In leisure time activity passive entertainment surfices.
- (3) In industry creativity is reserved for the few, whole sections of the community are devoid of creative endeavour.



- (4) "In individual and family life the same picture hold true in the clothes we wear, the food we eat, the books we read and the ideas we hold, there is a strong tendency towards conformity towards stereotypy to be original or different is felt to be dangerous". (11)

According to Rogers creativity exist in every individual and awaits only the correct time or conditions to be expressed.

Why should we be concerned. We should be able to decide on what we choose, what we want to do. How we entertain ourselves. According to Rogers in order for us to cope with the massive changes that are taking place in this atomic electronic age of ours we need to be cautious he claims:

"Unless individuals, groups and nations can imagine, construct, and creatively revise new ways of relating to these complex changes the lights will go out. Unless man can make new and original adaptations to his environment as rapidly as his science can change the environment, our culture will perish". (12)

Dark words indeed the whole idea of our very culture shrinking and dissolving due to our own lack of interest in our environments, our passive viewing, and inertia, unless we begin to live our lives in a more creative way. Rogers sees the relationship between material and the individual as an indication of creative act taken place, revealing a certain uniqueness within the individual.

He defines part of the creative process as

"That it is the emergence in action of a novel relational product, growing out of the uniqueness of the individual on the one hand, and the materials, events, people or circumstances of his life on the other".(13)





### The Creative Process

One way of defining creativity is through exploring the creative process.

There must be something that exists something that can be viewed, observed. A product a creation. An observable product might be something that is symbolized in words translated into a work of art or fashioned into an invention. There is generally a strong indication of the relationship of the individual to the material and the creative art that has taken place. Revealing a certain uniqueness with-in the individual

The White Paper on Education and the Arts states

“A good arts education develops the imagination as a central source of human creativity and fosters important kinds of thinking and problem solving, as well as offering opportunities to symbolise, to play, and to celebrate. The development of critical judgement encourages a sense of personal responsibility in the young person”. (14)

It is by developing the students native taste by bringing out their sense of beauty and delight in colour, and more important still by making them utilize their work in every possible way that they will begin to realize the relationship of good design and of art to everyday life.

In art as in all other manifestations of the human spirit, our mind grows steadily more conscious. In this enlightened sense, it becomes more critical in its use of traditional material, more analytical for the sake of fuller understanding. A knowledge of form and knowledge of technical equipment are some of the first requisites for any work in the arts. Add to this the understanding of the origin and meaning of form and technique and the way is clear for true creativeness.





Creativity is not necessarily restricted to a particular field or specialisation. That it does not only exist in the arts alone, but may and can be used throughout all professions and in all walks of life and areas of human endeavours.

Hugh Lytton writes of imagination as central to the creative act in his book "creativity and education" within the creative process. Lytton argues there lies a creative moment and creative impulse.

He points out that this is the most intensely personal experience an individual is capable of, he claims:

"There is no scientific testable theory capable of measuring this instinctive momentary creative impulse" (15)

To this date Graham Wallas's analysis of the creative process is still in use. Although largely based on the findings of scientific or mathematical novel thought in the 1940's. Wallas suggests that the process for creative thinking and problem solving may be divided into four stages.

- |           |   |
|-----------|---|
| Stage One | Is preparation: the stage in which the problem is investigated from all directions and this includes the whole process of intellectual education with its training in experimental and logical procedures, as well as the process of acquainting oneself with background facts and knowledge. |
| Stage Two | Is incubation: This is the stage in which the individual is not consciously thinking about the problem when it is simmering in him although he may seek relaxation from conscious effort.   |



Stage Three                      Illumination. This stage is not confined to the flash of insight, but includes the psychological, events that immediately precede and accompany its appearance.

Stage Four                      Verification: The stage in which the validity of the concepts is tested and the ideas reduced to exact form.

The preparation stage is often regarded as the beginning of the idea for the creation it may be immediately followed by a period of research regarding the problem encountered. yet still remaining in the same stage.

The period of incubation when the idea or the creation for the idea is allowed to enter the subconscious and incubate with-in the mind, until flashes of possible solutions are allowed to emerge to the conscious mind. Wallas writes of "a moment when our fringe-consciousness of an association train is in the state of rising consciousness which indicates that the fully conscious flash of success is coming". (16)

In his book "The Art of Creation" Koestler, whose conceptions owe a great deal to the school of analytic thought speaks of this stage as

"In these 'games' the mind combines apparently incompatible ideas turns up hidden analogies between cabbages and kings and once again possess the fluidity of the primitive consciousness of the child for whom the world and 'I' are one". (17)

The other stages follow on from this, illuminating the idea and process.



### **The psychological approach to creativity**

Creativity involves cognition. But it also involves the individual, and the personality as a whole. Included in this is the motivational, attitudinal, and personalogical traits. All of these should be considered to understand creativity. Within this precept its generally regarded that psychologists concentrate on the individuals concepts or trait concepts. Traits are what make us different. Each of us have our own distinguishable traits. For psychologists behavioural traits are of the utmost interests in assessing creative response to a given situation. It is the trait variable with in each of us which distinguishes one individual from another. Traits also reveal functioning quality about the individual and are indicators of how each of us fulfil our ideas and general operations in everyday life.

In general the creative idea is marked by three attributes

- (1) It must be original
- (2) It must be useful or appropriate for the situation in which it occurs.
- (3) It must actually be put to some use

Creative ideas are always new combinations of old ideas. For example a poet uses a combination of words which he or she has learned or been given, they are not words that they have invented. in the same way as a composer puts together musical tones in new ways, creating new melodies. Ultimately all creative products have this quality. Old ideas or elements are combined in new ways.

This is the case of all domains of creativity. If we accept that the creative act is the ability to combine already known elements. Then we must accept that this is the nature of the creative act in art. The fact is that the process for creating in science and say poetry remains the same.

If it is necessary to combine elements that are already known to man in order to create, it should be then, that to know different or as many combinations as possible would increase a persons chance of creating.

Poincarre said that of creativity

“Remote associations are most likely to give rise to the creative act or idea. This points to the danger of specialization at too young an age in education which can lead to a stifling of creativity”. (18)

Tests also show that intelligence and creativity are not necessarily linked. People with high IQ are not generally more creative because of their IQ. But tests have shown that people with a minimal IQ may be limited in the range of creative acts that they can perform. That is people of average IQ may not be able to solve mathematical problems, or scientific equations but may well be able to solve practical problems related to another area effectively. Interestingly Picasso was regarded as a poor academic student.

One of the necessary conditions for creativity in art would be an awareness of skill and an ability to use those skills in the area one has chosen to work. That is if a person wished to create metal sculpture by welding it would be necessary to have welding skills in the first place.

To summarise,

Therefore, in order for one to be successful the creative act requires motivation, persistence, and an intelligence suitable to the creative act. In general, creativity requires personality traits rather than isolated learning or certain cognitive abilities.

## **FOOTNOTES CHAPTER 2**

5. Robert J Sternberg  
The Nature of Creativity (The Press Syndicate University of Cambridge (1988)  
p 126.
7. C.W. Taylor The Nature of Creativity  
ed. Sternberg p. 118
8. Ibid., p. 118.
9. Ibid., p. 119.
10. Ibid., p. 119
11. Carl Rogers towards a theory of creativity in Creativity ed. P.E. Vernon  
(Penguin Books (TD Middlesex England, 1970) p. 137.
12. Ibid., p. 138.
13. Ibid., p. 139
14. White Paper on Education  
Department of Education Government Publication 1992) p. 21.
15. Hugh Lytton, Creativity and Education (Published Students Library London  
1981) p. 10.
16. Ibid., p.12.
17. Ibid., p. 14.
18. Colin Martindell The Handbook of Creativity ed. John A Glover Royce R  
Ronning and Cecil R. Reynolds. (Plenum Press, New York, 1989) p. 212.



## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **CREATIVITY AND THE LANGUAGE OF ART AND DESIGN.**

Structure in art is one of the most important characteristics. All art forms are made up of parts and put together to complete the image or idea the maker wishes to convey or express through his/her creativity.

The language in art and design which make up this structure, may be broken down into individual elements, expressed in line, shape, colour, texture, pattern and form.

In order to begin to understand the underlying structure in any art form, we must first understand these elements. The compilation of these elements depends on individual artistic taste and vision, and that which the artist wishes to express. However, throughout the history of art over many centuries these elements have been developed into recognisable practice, which has become known as the principles of art and design.

Many artists have devised methods or alternatives to explore and express ideas and by developing their own techniques with the art and design principles.

So in order to read the language of art we must first be able to understand its elements. Once we are able to do this we can begin to understand more fully the message the artist wishes to convey through the composition.

Line is the key element in art. A point or dot has sometimes being described as a very short line. Infact there are many different types of lines, straight, vertical, horizontal and diagonal. Thick, thin, curved and so on. Line has the ability to describe shape. By grouping a series of lines together we can describe a shape or give an outline to a form. In many cases, it is not necessary for the lines to be connected to suggest shape.



Our eyes naturally follow line which creates a sense of movement in the space. This is important from an artists point of view. It is within this movement or the direction of the line that is creating the movement that feelings, ideas, maybe aroused in the viewer as is intended by the artist. Almost all works of art contain this line element as a basis for its structure. Line has the ability to make us, feel sad, make us feel happy, the ability to make us feel tired or energetic, even free and confined. Take for examples the use of line in Gothic Cathedrals. Within these cathedrals line is used to resurrect the congregation, up lifting them into the heavens, by means of vertical lines in the stain glass windows, lines in the building supporting columns. The vertical sculpture and ornamentation all conveying a communication with our God.

As previously stated shape maybe created by line, part of what defines shape is edge in order of separate it from what lies around it. Everything in our environment is made up of shape and or line. Whether natural or humanmade, keeping in mind negative and positive shape. The varieties of shape are limitless, some large, some small, some abstract others geometric some hard, some soft. Lines and shapes even without the other visual elements have the ability to create in us feelings and ideas and therefore can serve as meaningful carrying devices in works of art and design.

Shape also confines sculpture and buildings of mass structure are defined by there shape. Shape can also convey movement through its line. By modelling or shading a shape which creates roundness, the illusion of depth may be achieved or by arranging the shape in a certain way or perspective. Alot of contemporary artists work on a flat surface, ignoring many of the rules of and techniques of perspective conveying movement and action in a two dimensional way.

The element of value is another ingredient in the language of art. Which refers to the light or darkness within a piece of art and its low and high value. This may be in colour or in the case of pencil and pen drawings and black and white photographs and other art medium's value refers to greys, whites and blacks.





Value plays an important role when dealing with contrasts in art. That is the lightness of one area of say a painting to the darkness of an adjacent area in the same painting. Dramatic qualities maybe achieved in drawings by using this technique of contrast. One shape beside another or even one line beside another.

Colour is the most arresting of all the art elements colour plays a huge part in our environment and in the way that we live and the way that we feel. We associate with the warm feeling of yellow and reds and the darker moods of blue and purple. We are constantly manipulated by advertisements and its use of colour. Colour adds depth, excitement and a richness to the visual arts for enjoyment and for conveying messages and ideas. Black contains all colours. White reflects all colours. The primary colours in art are red, yellow, blue and other colours come from these colours. Hue is the term used to describe the colour such as yellow, blue, green. Value of colour as was previously mentioned describes the lightness and or darkness within that colour. The term intensity is used to distinguish the strength or brightness of a colour.

As with the other elements in art colour plays a role in conveying ideas and feelings. Often referred to as warm or cool in temperature, which also gives the illusion of advancing or receding. We associate meanings to particular colours such as red for danger, yellow for cowardice.

Texture refers to the surface quality of an object everything that can be touched has some surface quality. We can also get a sense of surface quality by observing that surface. Its easy for us to recognise a surface that is smooth and one that is rough, and perhaps in between. All forms of art maybe described as having some form of texture ranging from rough to smooth. One of the qualities of attempting to co-ordinate a textured surface against a smooth surface might be a difficulty that faces architects.

As with all the elements texture conveys its own feelings and meanings. In painting it can be used to convey roughness or even ugly quality to a surface. It is







possible to create a sense of texture through photography by photographic means alone.

Form is connected to shape. Form describes shape as in sculpture. Form is three dimensional you can walk around it and it may be viewed from all sides. There are lots of natural forms in nature. form occupies space.

Pattern may provide unity and contrast by creating a given response with in a space of a picture or sculpture.

Pattern has the power to hold art mediums together as well as force them apart. The more dramatic and exciting the meaning in the work the greater the pattern and contrast of pattern.

Contrast can convey feelings by unity in contrast. The more contrast in the work the more drama, the less contrast, the less drama the more peacefulness.

A checkerboard is a perfect example of unity in pattern and contrast. However it is not very interesting to have on a wall for viewing daily. To remove the monotony of this pattern or design we can attempt to rearrange it in more pleasing and exciting ways.

A large proportion of art contains one or more of the art elements in order to convey or project the message the artist wishes to state. Thus by rearranging the art piece in a different way, by changing line, shape, value, colour, texture, pattern form, the artist comes up with a personal idea or expression of idea in a unified pattern in his or her chosen mediums.

## **CHAPTER FOUR**

### **CREATIVITY IN THE CLASSROOM**

The lack of feeling and inspiration in so much of the art work done in schools and indeed in many other places, is due to the fact that the most important reason for doing it, that of expressing and creating something is often stifled and forgotten, in favour of our consideration on technique.

It is through the process of art that art itself unfolds. To focus on the art product is to be concerned primarily with the making of beautiful objects, rather than the object that making has on pupils, which is in the main about creative expression.

Schools should try to encourage all young adults to identify with their own experiences and help them to go as far as they can in developing concepts that express their feelings and emotions and their own sensitivities.

As recommended in the Art Craft Design Guidelines for teachers:

... "it must be emphasised that the teacher is not teaching printing with line, painting with powder colour, or constructing with card, per-se, but is introducing the learner to these and other media as possible means for personal expression. In the media used, the student may discover himself/herself and develop a satisfying means of communication which can be further developed. Media and techniques should be regarded as vehicles for expression - not content". (20)

John Dewey an American philosopher and educator, articulated a view of education that was revolutionary for its time (early 20th century) in Dewey's view children should be treated as active learners whose creative energies centre on themselves and their world. According to Dewey "active inquiry, sharing of effort and experience in decision making were natural and effective means to nurture learning". (21)

Educators began to recognise that the young person's self expression in art had its own kind of integrity. It had an authenticity that did not depend on traditional notions of







skillful representation. Self expression was not only the natural mode of behaviour for children but was considered fundamental to their ultimate maturity.

A child expresses thoughts, feelings interests and knowledge of the environment through creative expression. Expression grows out of and is a reflection of the total individual child whatever the level of development.

For young people art is primarily a means of expression, in that, no two children are alike and infact a child is not static but constantly changing with increasing perception, understanding and interpretation of the environment.

the art process itself can provide a means of social growth. Expressing oneself through an art medium means one has to view that expression and explanation. This view and looking at ones own work and ones ideas can be a first step in communicating thoughts to others.

How the artist sees and what he feels depends on his individual experience and personality. His vision is personal and reflective, and it is in this respect that it is self expressive. To produce a painting he must use his intellect as well as his eyes. He must be intensely attached to the idea throughout. Always he is trying to express what he sees and how it feels to him and put down its true character in some concrete unmistakable way.

The same should hold true for teaching art in schools. There seems no reason that a young person properly equipped in the right atmosphere should not work as an artist works. The teachers position then calls for great subtlety. They must do all in their power to create an atmosphere of spontaneity and freedom so necessary for creative and expressive work. The student having first adopted a skills based process of learning should be free to communicate his/her ideas as they so desire.



Self expression should never be confused with or misunderstood as an act of undisciplined or as senseless exploration. We are all individuals and every individual has a particular potential for development which can be fulfilled through art.

Most of us acquire technique but this in itself is not enough for more important is the search for our own personal ideas and our own creative experience.

Just as the artist can transform an aesthetic awareness or felt experience from one form into another, as when he transforms his spiritual reactions to nature into a work of art namely into sound, musical form or into dance. So to young students must learn the connection between how they feel and the methods of expressing their feelings through art.

It is not unusual for teenagers to come into the art class having done no imaginative drawings possibly since infant school days.

many students have this problem. The desire is still there, the imagination still vivid if only it can be brought out. The difficulty for a teacher would be in helping students restore confidence.

The prime role of the teacher during this period is to provide guidance and encouragement so that this expression can take on a meaningful form.

As their creative urge strengthens and then ideas develop so instinctively will their feeling for development of intuition the comprehension of the feeling, and the feeling of the thought, is possible. Intuition has the capability of making us conscious of what might be possible it makes the feeling and the thought one, and thus the way open to the inner world. Art as a means of self expression provides freedom and when it is skillfully employed by the teacher it can provide the students with a means of escape from fear or uncertainty.

It must be stressed that it is all very well to feel rhythm, harmony, growth, but feeling will carry the artist only a certain distance. These instincts are shared in some degree by every living thing. Without knowledge of the principles ruling these instincts, it is impossible to reach the fullest degree of creativeness.



Having first laid the foundation through exploring the principles of art by means of the art elements that is line, shape, colour, value, texture, pattern and form. The teacher in some instances may choose to allow a number of periods of free time so that the pupils may begin expressing themselves and exploring different mediums. Encouragement of experimentation and stimulation by the teacher frees the pupils from inhibitions in creative ideas, allowing them to explore possibilities more freely.

Creative art expression requires creative teaching. Teachers need to have some idea on how to teach, when to correct and when to remain silent. The process of creativity may take some time to evolve. It is essential that the teacher be aware of what individual students are capable of. In many cases this may take a period of months. The purpose is of course to explore individual personality by allowing the pupils to create through imagination, within each pupils unique thinking.

One of the first things to consider is the selection of materials, which are crucial in the early development stage. In this sense the art teachers position is to create the right atmosphere and to find materials which are suitable with which the young students can best express their idea.









Fig. 1 THE DESIGN PROCESS



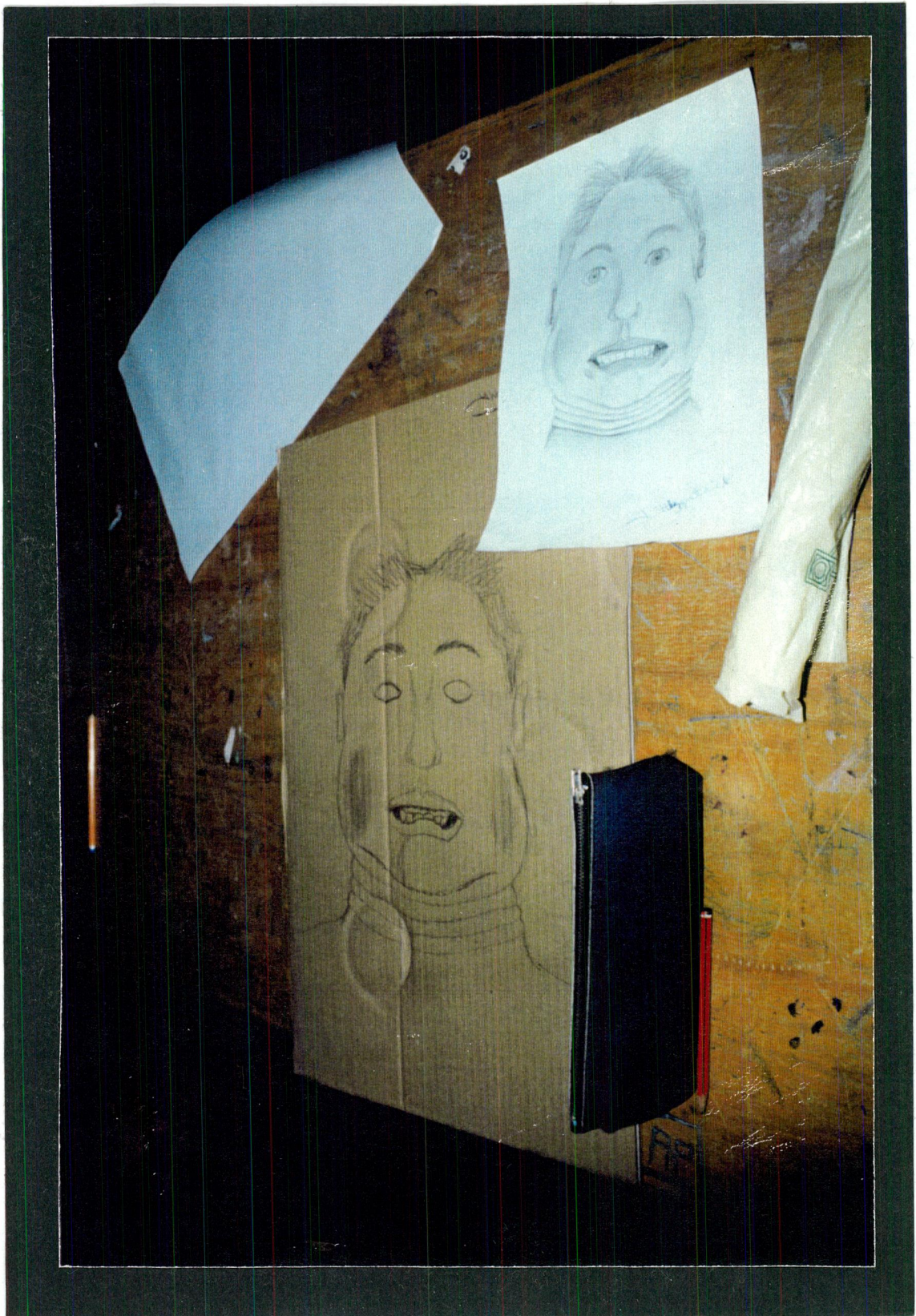


Fig. 2 IMAGINATIVE DEVELOPMENT OF DESIGN DRAWINGS





Fig. 3 EXPLORATION OF PAPIER MACHE MATERIAL



### **PROJECT OBJECTIVE**

The objective of the project was to explore the creative and expressive use of papier mache in the form of a relief sculpture, based on self portrait drawings. Because this project exercises the imaginative facility of the students, I suggested that they think of a mood or emotion to aid them and help them focus on a specific kind of expression.

**Class Ability :** Mixed

**Duration :** Double

The overall aim of the sequence was to;

- Complete a series of self portrait drawings exploring expressions within the face.
- To design and make a papier mache relief sculpture that reflected this expressive symbolic quality, using Edward Munch's painting 'The Scream' as the main support study for the project.

Although demonstration's of proportions of the face were shown and the making and execution of papier mache, the exact design and preference for same was left to the individual student. By way of introduction I discussed the use of symbolism in art to convey a message, belief or feeling as in the work of Edward Munch the "Scream" and other work by the same artist. Supports also included Picasso's work and symbolic African heads and masks.

It was evident at the drawing stage the different levels of ability with the class group. Even at this stage some of the less capable pupils had difficulty relating imaginative drawings in their research studies. Other pupils had little difficulty and came up with some interesting drawings Fig. 1-2. The weekly evaluation of the pupils work played







an important part in the overall assessment. It evaluated what had been achieved on a weekly basis and what the next phase of the process should be.

The assessment of projects related to creativity and expression, lends itself to certain difficulties, unless a clear objective of what is required by the exploration of the material in question is understood.

The principles of self assessment were used in this case. Each pupil was given an opportunity to discuss his/her work during the class period on a one to one basis. These discussions lasted for about five minutes and totalled at least three throughout the eight week period, it took the project to be completed. Self assessment plays an important and valuable role in the education of art I believe. Students were also encouraged to monitor their own progress throughout the whole process, and development of ideas were requested to from part of that self assessment.

As is pointed out in Art Craft Design Guidelines for teachers

“Evaluation is necessary and vital, and should be regarded as an important and essential diagnostic procedure to improve what is taught and learned. Procedures in this area will be primarily concerned with determining the following.

- The degree to which the learning objective has been fulfilled.
- Level of individual response
- Level of class group response.

The primary purpose is to secure and record information. That will enable the teacher to improve the educational process, and therefore evaluation should be perceived as an educational device through which the teachers professional expertise can be exercised on behalf of the students whom the syllabus is designed to serve”. (22)

With a fifth year senior group such as these I found myself allowing them a lot more space to experiment as they wished. The discipline that I would normally have in place for a junior group changed for the older more mature students.

Some of the students were quite capable of exploring images and ideas and designs and also capable of carrying out these designs in papier mache while other students who were quite weak at the design stage, were able to manipulate the material reasonably well and after some experimentation completed the task with some success. Fig. 3, 4, & 5.

The need for fuller understanding of the elements involved in the art craft and design process is paramount to mixed groups such as these. I felt it proved the need for a more sequential, structured, project development, before embarking on an experimental and creative project such as this.

However, through the exploration of drawing and the use of form building with papier mache I felt personally that they had gained a better understanding of the creative and expressive use of materials through group evaluation of the more accomplished students. I feel that the weaker students learned more through these evaluations.

In these short few weeks (seven) the students had developed skills such as drawing, design, form building, painting and project completion. The creative and expressive objective in which the project was based was attempted by all and accomplished by all to a greater or lesser extent. Fig. 7.8

In hindsight, the need for close contact with the students concerned before embarking on such an assignment, was evident. However, all the students appeared to enjoy the creative, imaginative process of the project, and for the first time art project for the students as well as myself, I believe it to have been a successful endeavour.







Fig. 4 DEVELOPMENT OF SCULPTURAL RELIEF FORM





Fig. 5 FROM DESIGN DRAWING IN FIG 1.









Fig. 6 COMPLETING DEVELOPMENT OF FORM.



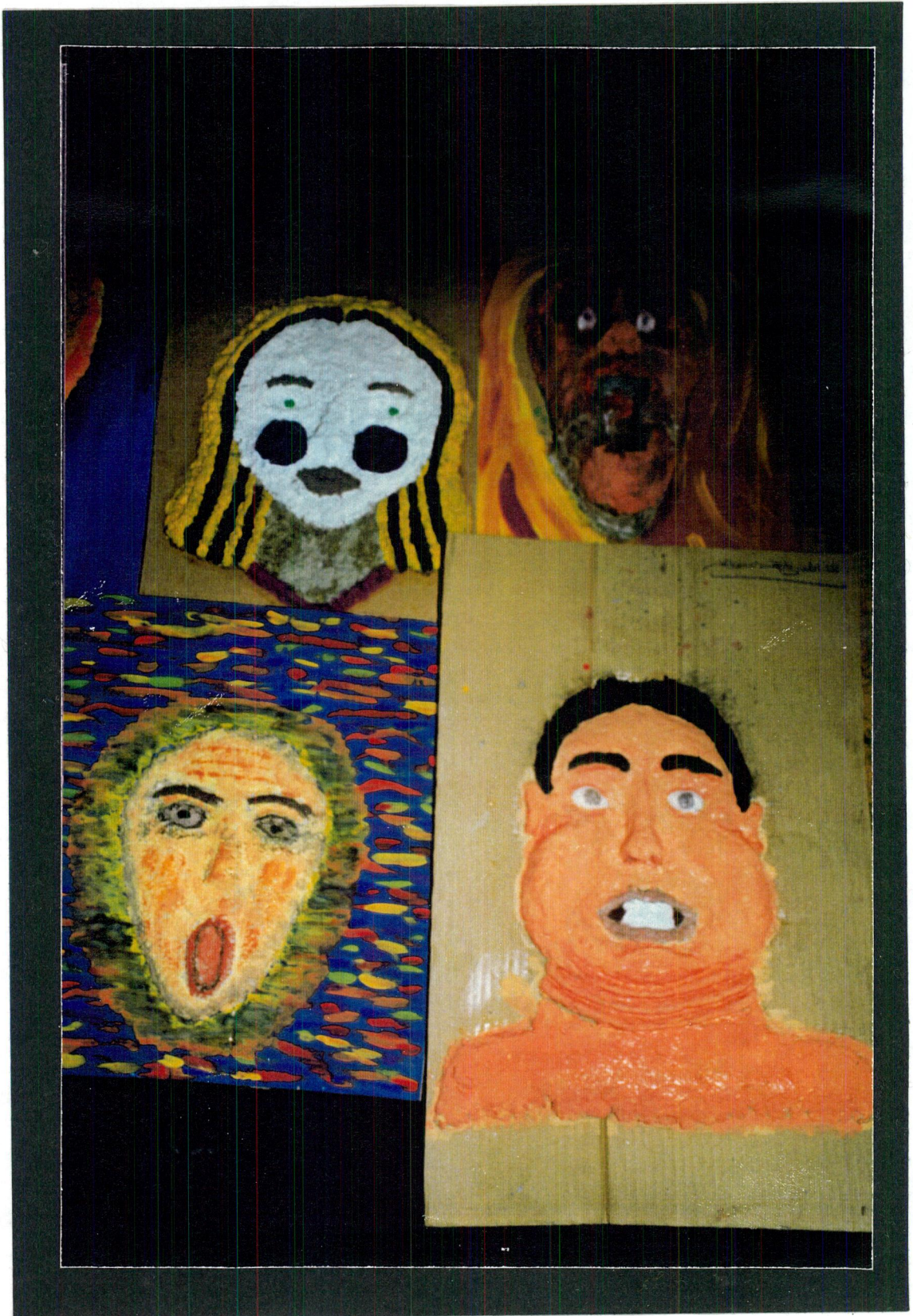


Fig. 7 EXPLORING COLOUR. - DESIGN DRAWING AS SHOWN IN FIG. 2





Fig. 8 APPLYING COLOUR TO COMPLETE TASK



**FOOTNOTES CHAPTER 4**

- 20 An Roinn Oideachais The Junior Certificate - Art Craft Design Guidelines for Teachers (Department of Education Government Publication) p. 5.
21. John Dewy, Approaches to Art in Education, ed Laura H Chapman (Harcourt Brace, Jovanovich, inc. 1978) p. 11.
- 22 An Roinn Oideachais The Junor Certificate - Art Craft and Design Guidelines for Teachers. (Department of Education Government Publication). pp 6-7.

## CONCLUSION

Art should play a meaningful role in the development of students. It can provide the opportunity for emotional growth and the extent to which this is accomplished is in direct relation to the intensity with which the creator identifies with the work. The very act of creating can provide new insights and new knowledge for further action. Probably the best preparation for creating is the act of creation itself.

One of the important factors to keep in mind is that creative work must be understood individually. We can only appreciate the significance of creative work by understanding the child and seeing his/her picture as part of his/her life.

In this way it is not the content that becomes the important consideration in the young persons art whether drawing, painting, or three dimensional, but the way in which young people portray this content.

In this content the role of the teacher seems to be that of providing materials, developing tasks that will be executed by the pupil in mastering certain artistic skills and motivating the pupil so that the drawing and painting activities continue, in an expressive and creative environment.

I found from my teaching training experience that there is a need for a fuller understanding of art elements before the activity of creativity and expression can take place. I would recommend that before the creative expressive activity begins that a series of workshops based on the art elements in drawing, painting, and constructing should take place first. if greater meaning is to be imparted to the students learning any cognitive skills.

In conclusion I feel that if these practices are carried out, encouraged and developed in an effective sequence of lessons, pupils will be equipped to deal with their feelings. We are told that everyone is born with creative faculties. Getting satisfaction from one's own expression and creativity is a step towards a positive self concept.



## SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY

An Roinn Oideachais The Junior Certificate Art Craft Design Guidelines for Teachers. Government Publication.

An Roinn Oideachais, Charting our Education Future. White Paper on Education Government Publication Dublin 1995.

Benson Ciaran. The place for the Arts in Irish Education, Report of the Arts Council Working Party on the Art in Education. Dublin The Arts Council, 1979.

Biehler/Snowman Psychology Applied to Teaching 5th ed, Houghton Mifflin Company, Boston, 1986.

Brittain W, Lambert, Lowenfeld Victor. Creative and Mental Growth Macmillan Publishing Co. Ltd, New York 1964.

Chapman, Laura. H. Approaches to Art in Education Harcourt Brace Jovanovich Inc. 1978.

Field Dick and Newick John The Study of Education and Art Routledge and Keegan Paul Ltd. London 1973.

Glover. John. A R. R. Ronning C.R. Reynolds Handbook of Creativity Plenum Press New York 1989.

Larkin Diarmuid. Art Learning Art Teaching Wolf Hound Press, Portmarnock Dublin 1981.

Lytton Hugh. Creativity and Education. Published Students Library Education Routledge and Kegan Paul London 1981.

Ross Malcolm The Creative Arts Heinemann Educational Books Ltd. 48 Charles Street London 1978.

Sternberg Robert, The Nature of Creativity Published by the Press Syndicate University of Cambridge 1988

Vernon, P.E., Creativity Penguin Books Ltd Harmondsworth Middlesex 1970.