



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

THE USE OF MUSEUMS AND GALLERIES AS AN EDUCATIONAL RESOURCE

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INTRODUCTION

This dissertation discusses an important function of a museum or art gallery, that is, the educational role of these institutions. Essentially it addresses the use of the museum or art gallery as an educational resource in the practical art class at Junior Certificate level. Presently in schools, the educational resource of the museum or the art gallery is not being utilised to the fullest potential, especially at junior cycle level. Throughout this dissertation, the question of the lack of use of the museum or art gallery as an educational resource at Junior Certificate level is asked and possible solutions to overcoming the reasons, which are hindering teachers in utilising these abundant resources, are given.

In Chapter One, the term 'museum' is defined. In doing so, it was necessary to breakdown the history of museums as this highlights the definition of what a museum exactly is. In this chapter, I have also included a brief history of two Irish museums and galleries; two which underline the transient period of museum development between the nineteenth and twentieth century. Within this chapter, the functions of the museum are highlighted and briefly discussed.

Chapter Two focuses primarily on the educational function of a museum. Clarification of the term 'museum and gallery education' is

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required and this, alongside the philosophies of museum education, are discussed in this chapter. Within this chapter, the importance of visually seeing an object is highlighted and this is discussed here in detail.

Chapter Three documents the analysis of the Junior Certificate Syllabus. This involves the breakdown of the three main areas of concern: breadth, relevance and quality. These principles are simplified and one factor is determined to be universal in achieving the aims stipulated in the syllabus – a visit to a museum. Within this chapter, the results of a questionnaire, which was circulated to art teachers in the Dublin region, are assessed. The questionnaire aimed to obtain the level of inclusion of Junior Certificate students in museum visits. The results are quite surprising when broken down.

Chapter Four is concerned with the practical planning of a museum visit. Within this chapter I discuss the planning and preparation which is involved, on both the teacher's and students behalf, in organising a successful museum visit. This chapter highlights the importance of active liaison with the museum educational officers and the teacher's previous knowledge of the exhibit being visited.

Chapter Five documents the practical scheme of work that was carried out in the classroom. Within this chapter I discuss the inclusion of a

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museum visit in a practical scheme of work and evaluate the benefits of the visit in relation to the quality of the work produced and the motivation of the students. Also the methodology and the performance of the teacher is evaluated, giving examples of the work produced and support studies used.

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CHAPTER ONE

THE MUSEUM: ITS HISTORY AND FUNCTIONS

Museum: a definition.

Before one can begin to discuss the educational role of a museum, it is necessary to come to some understanding about what a museum actually is. Most people's image of a museum or a gallery is, probably, of a building which has large, open rooms with polished wooden floors, a hushed atmosphere, and glass cases containing objects or great paintings in huge frames hanging on the walls. This stereotypical notion is one that must be dispensed with as it acts as a barrier.

It has only been since the late eighteenth century that the word museum has come to mean a place whose functions range from collecting artefacts, caring for the collection, displaying and interpretation to education, social and economic functions. The original meaning of the word *museum* was " a place of contemplation, a philosophical institution, or a temple of the Muses." (1) Museums are a way of satisfying one's curiosity about other times, places and cultures. They are a method of communication, transmitting from one generation to the next. According to Graeme K. Talboys, a definition for a museum is

...A museum is an organic institution or dedicated space open to all wherein a genuine artefact or a collection of genuine artefacts of aesthetic, archaeological, cultural, historical,



social, or spiritual importance and interest from any place or time is preserved, conserved and displayed in a manner in keeping with it's intrinsic and endured worth. As such, it is an informative means of storing national, cultural and collective memories, where people can explore, interact, contemplate, be inspired by, learn about and enjoy their own and others' cultural heritage. (2)

It is fairly obvious from this definition that a museum is much more than a building containing a collection of objects in glass cases. An important fact to mention is that Graeme K. Talboys is referring to the art galleries also, in his above definition.

The Historical Perspective.

Over the last two hundred years the educational role of museums has undergone a remarkable shift in emphasis. The opening of the Louvre, in 1792, saw the birth of the public museum. This museum formed an integral part of a newly democratic state, an essential element in governmental efforts to educate the French people as citizens. The museum became a place to learn, to browse, to meet friends, to talk, to paint and to enjoy exhibitions. This approach continued into the nineteenth century, where one of the founding objectives for museums was to educate and inform. During the nineteenth century, museums were fundamentally understood as educational institutions. They were also given the task of unifying society: they were seen as suitable places where all classes of people could meet on common ground. Therefore museums were seen as ideal institutions that offered radical potential for social equality, achieved through learning.

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The 1920's did not uphold the educational role of museums so firmly. The main communicative role of museums was no longer considered. This was a result of new interests coming to the fore. Collecting was seen much more as an end in itself and the completion and care of collections became a major professional concern for curators. Curators largely withdrew from relationships with the public, relying on exhibitions as their main form of communication. Museum education became a separate sub- specialisation, with different categories of staff, and different objectives from the rest of the institution.

It was not until the 1960's that this outlook of museum education changed. During the period from 1920 till now, many museums were content to fill cases with objects, giving little thought to the understanding of these exhibits by the public. During the 1960's display methods became the focus of research and development. This new approach which took place at the end of the twentieth century is one which continues today. Presently, over the last twenty years, in particular the last eight, the communicative roles of the museums are being explored. The new developments in museum communication have been carried out equally by education and by curatorial staff.

By the early 1990's, there is once more a strong emphasis on the educational role of museums, as attention shifts from the accumulation of objects to the use of existing collections. New approaches to display techniques based on new technology are being explored; interactive exhibits are used to involve visitors in active



participation in exhibitions and educational programmes are designed to suit explored; interactive exhibits are used to involve visitors in active participation in exhibitions and educational programmes are designed to suit many different audiences.

At the beginning of the nineteenth century, the emphasis was on selfeducation through museums and galleries. Now, at the end of the twentieth century, the museum plays both an educational and entertainment role in the quest for life long learning after formal schooling.

The History of Irish Museums and Galleries.

As I have been discussing the historical perspective of museums and the reasons for their establishment, I feel that it would be both interesting and appropriate to investigate the establishment of the Irish museums and galleries which are located in the capital city of Dublin. With this purpose in mind, I have decided to focus on the two museums which illustrate the different types of museum concepts from the nineteenth and twentieth centuries:

- The National Gallery of Ireland, Merrion Square West, Dublin 2,
- 2. The Hugh Lane Gallery, Parnell Square, Dublin



The National Gallery.

In the year 1853, the idea of establishing a permanent public collection of Old Master paintings became a reality. The Irish Industrial Exhibition, which was held on the grounds of Leinster Lawn, Dublin, was the sole encouraging factor which lead to the establishment of the National Gallery. This Industrial Exhibition was funded by William Dargan (1799-1867), the railway tycoon. As a result of the exhibition's success and to commemorate Dargan's generosity, a committee was established which worked in alliance with the Irish Institution. The sole aim of this alliance was the founding of an Irish National Gallery.

Established in 1854 by an Act of Parliament, the National Gallery of Ireland opened its doors to the public ten years later. When the National Gallery was opened the collection was housed in a new building, designed by the Irish architect Francis Fowke. The building was both modern and revolutionary for its time, boasting top-lit galleries illuminated by gas burners in the winter months and floors that were built of iron and concrete – the use of materials that anticipated the introduction of twentieth century pre-stressed, re-inforced concrete. When the National Gallery of Ireland first opened its doors, it housed a collection that consisted of over 125 works of art.

Through gifts, donations and a wise purchasing policy, this collection has gradually grown. This resulted in the extension of the original

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building in 1903. Thomas Newenham Deane designed the new wing. However, it was necessary to further extend the building in 1968, using a design by Frank du Berry of the Office of Public Works. Today the Gallery houses in the range of thirteen thousand works of art, ranging from paintings and drawings to sculpture and *objets d'art*, dating from the fourteenth century to the twentieth century. With the size of the collection to date, the National Gallery of Ireland is once again expanding, with a new wing proposed to be built in the year 2000.

The paintings in the National Gallery belong to the Irish nation. As it is stated in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (Article 27), " Everyone has the right freely to participate in the cultural life of the community; to enjoy the arts, and to share in scientific advancement and its benefits."(3) The National Gallery is state funded, but it has also received many gifts from notable benefactors such as Sir Hugh Lane, Alfred Chester Beatty and the Countess of Milltown. Recent benefactors include the Irish Jesuit Community, Maire MacNeill Sweeney and Sir Alfred and Lady Beit.

After discussing the historical perspectives of the museums, it is clear that the National Gallery fits snugly in the typical nineteenth century criteria for the establishment of museums or galleries. The museum was a place to learn, to browse, to meet friends, to talk, to paint and to enjoy exhibitions and events. Education was of paramount importance. All of these factors remain unchanged today. The National Gallery of Ireland encourages the use of museums and



galleries to help develop the creative and expressive abilities of young people; a policy which has earned the support of the Department of Education.

Hugh Lane Gallery.

Born in Ireland, the fourth child of Frances Adelaide and the Reverend James William Lane, Hugh Percy Lane was born on 9th November 1875. The discerning personality of Hugh Lane who, with persistence, generosity and resourcefulness, brought about a collection of modern art for Dublin. The character of Hugh Lane is summarised in <u>Le Figaro</u> where it says,

.....To create a museum with a few million, that's a wonderful thing. Anyone could succeed at that....(and moreI..), but to create, without any money, without any support whatsoever and armed solely with a tenacious will and a passionate love of the beautiful, an entire museum rich in beautiful works, a museum envied by the most prosperous states and the proudest cities and then to give this treasure, gathered with so much effort and care, to a town that one loves – that is the ultimate gesture of this ingenious man.(4)

Although born in Ireland, Hugh Lane never resided permanently in the country. Due to ill health and family circumstances, he did not receive a formal education, but had always shown an interest in the fine arts. In 1896, he became what was known as a gentleman dealer. He was a trained restorer which resulted in his forte for spotting unknown masterpieces in neglected condition. A visit to Coole in 1901 was Lane's first real introduction to Irish society and among his



fellow guests were W.B. Yeats, Douglas Hyde and Edward Martyn. But Lane's first involvement in Irish artistic affairs was in 1902. The Royal Hibernian Academy was suffering ailing finances and in an attempt to redress this problem. Lane set about organising an exhibition of Old Master paintings from private collections around Ireland. This action encountered much opposition as many were suspicious of Lane, whose own trade was dealing in such pictures, believed that he was only doing this for his own profit. Lane overcame these objections and in the winter of 1902 a superb exhibition of old masterpieces was staged at the Royal Hibernian Academy in Lower Abbey Street in Dublin. The exhibition proved to be a great success. Sir Thomas Drew, President of the Academy, proclaimed to the media that Dublin required a cultural centre where there would be facilities for exhibiting the works of living artists' and a permanent gallery of modern art. This was the first itimation of the project which Hugh Lane was to dedicate the greater part of his life.

From the year 1902, Lane set about his search for a venue where a comprehensive exhibition of Irish art could be publicly displayed, the greater part of which was already promised to the Gallery of Modern Art and included gifts from Roderic O' Conor and J.B. Yeats. Lane also purchased some major works by Walter Osbourne, William Orpen and Nathaniel Hone. For the next six years , Lane continued to purchased works of fine art, with his collection spanning into



continental work with paintings by Degas, Manet and Renoir becoming prime acquisitions. In 1908, the Municipal Gallery of Modern Art first opened it's doors to the public. Number 17, Harcourt Street, known as Clonmell House, was to become Dublin's temporary home for Lane's Municipal collection of modern art. Presently the Hugh Lane Municipal Gallery is situated on the north side of Parnell Square and as with the National Gallery, there are plans for extension in the near future. This will enable the public to view some of the Hugh Lane collection which has not been seen since 1975.

Lane believed that a "gallery of Irish and modern art in Dublin would create a standard of taste, and a feeling of the relative importance of painters."(5) The difference between the establishment of the National Gallery of Ireland and the Hugh Lane Gallery was the reasons behind their existence. Whereas the National Gallery underscored the importance of education from it's outset, Hugh Lane fitted the transient move that occurred during the beginning of the twentieth century. However with regards to the two institutions and the growing number of both public and private museums and galleries which have grown their roots in our capital city, the emphasis lies strongly in education.


The Functions of the Museum.

In 1928 the Miers Report emerged in which Sir Henry Miers stated,

The time is ripe for a movement that will sweep away the conventional attitudes towards museums and arouse widespread enthusiasm for them. To put it bluntly most people in this country do not care for museums or believe in them: they have not hitherto played a sufficiently important part in the life of the community to make ordinary people realise what they can do. (6)

If one assesses the list of functions or purposes, devised by Graeme K. Talboy, which are served by the existence of museums, one can conclude that exactly what Miers had discussed in his statement was addressed. Talboy concludes that "as with many other institutions (like schools and churches), museums do not have a single function."(7) Rather they consist in a set of closely related functions that derive from a core purpose. Graeme K. Talboy has developed thirteen precise functions, which he believes, are "products of twentieth century thinking." (8) It is these thirteen functions which aided him in the devising of his definition of a museum.

Firstly he places emphasis on collecting as a function of a museum, an obvious but nonetheless an important one. Talboy believes that,

... a museum must be a genuine artefact or a collection of genuine artefacts of aesthetic, archaeological, cultural, historical, social, or spiritual importance and interest within a dedicated space. The Actual subject matter or content is irrelevant except that it be original. (9)



Following from this <u>care of the collection</u> is another aspect of the museum. Whether an artefact goes into a reserve collection or on display, it must be cared for. However some artefacts may required more than simple care, which leads one to <u>conservation</u>. Badly damaged or decaying artefacts require active conservation to prevent further deterioration.

According to Talboy, and one would not disagree that, it is not solely sufficient to house the artefacts, it is necessary to <u>research</u> their importance. Talboy explains this perfectly when he states, "they are, after all, collected partly with the intention of improving understanding about them and their history." (10) In stating this one is lead directly to the important factor, that is, museums are for the public. Therefore the <u>displaying</u> and <u>interpretation</u> of the artefacts are vital functions of any museum or gallery. Museums and galleries should inform but this information needs to be sensitive to popular and academic needs.

As mentioned, museums should inform, therefore the museum has an <u>educational</u> function. Museums are educational resources of great importance regarding both formal and life long education. "Learning and education are inherent in their existence" (11) Alongside their educational function lies their <u>social</u> function. Museums are part of a community, a place that offers an opportunity for solace and contemplation.

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One can not dismiss the <u>economic</u> function of a museum, a place of employment, in areas such as <u>preservation</u>, <u>storage</u> and <u>administration</u>, and attract visitors to the vicinity of the museum. The museum also offers an open door to the public, where the <u>public</u> can <u>access</u> the exhibits at their will and in their own time - another important function of the museum. Finally, Talboy sees the <u>custodianship of heritage</u> as an active role that museums can play beyond their own four walls in that they, having the expertise, can help in making decisions about what is worth preserving and how to go about it.

Therefore it can be clearly seen from Graeme K. Talboy's breakdown of the functions of a museum that the role of a museum goes far beyond the mere housing of artefacts. It can be seen from this that the museum has endless applications in education, entertainment and enlightenment, and it is this educational role that I hope to deal with in the following chapters.



CHAPTER TWO

MUSEUM EDUCATION

What do we mean by 'museum and gallery education'?

When one refers to museum and gallery education, there is an immediate conflict of meaning from person to person. On one hand, all activities that museums and galleries undertake have an educational purpose. Included in this would be the collection of material (paintings, geological specimens, historical artefacts, etc.), the planning and production of exhibitions, and the arrangement of special events and teaching sessions. On the other hand, the term 'museum and gallery education' now refers to teaching sessions and events for adults and children. In chapter one, by reviewing the development of museums, one has seen how the understanding of 'museum education' has adapted throughout the centuries. By the 1960's, museum and gallery education was understood to mean work with schools. Approaching this topic from the teaching aspect, it is this understanding of the term that will be focused upon.

Museum and gallery education is now recognised as an area of specialised work, requiring specific training in addition to general educational training. Museum education straddles the world of museums and the world of education. Museum educationalists work to create relationships between the museum and the public. The emphasis today is on the active use of collections, and on making

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available as many different forms of learning and enjoyment as possible with the resources available. Currently there is a great deal of consideration being given to the development of methods of making museums both more accessible to and more enjoyable for the visitor, and more relevant to the potential visitor. As Hooper- Greenhill states, "museum and gallery education is now acknowledged in the museum world as a vital and integral part of all well- managed museums, and in the educational field as an essential aspect of enlightened state provision." (12) The days when *'museum education'* meant parties of school children being dragged around display cases are long gone. 'Museum education' is an infinitely more complex aspect of museum work, which is fast becoming one of the most necessary.

The Philosophy of Museum Education.

In the past, too many museums - and art galleries - have been content to put objects on display in a way that encourages appreciation of them from a purely aesthetic point of view. The message for the future has to be that this isn't good enough. Too often galleries have been planned by curators and designers who fail to see the need for communication. If 'education' in it's broadest sense was considered, it was as an afterthought, frequently too late to alter the planning or design. Planning an education policy should help with that, but what is really needed is recognition that education is key component of every museum's raison d'etre. (13)

These words by Nigel Pittman marked the recognition that education should step out of the background and into the limelight of museum policies. Museum education is centrally concerned with teaching from and learning with objects and specimens. One of the first



objectives of teaching in museums and galleries is making a relationship between the collections of the museum and the needs and interests of the museum visitor. Ideally this relationship needs to be active, dynamic and flexible, however each individual will have a different set of interests and needs. Most museum educators do not want to recreate a traditional classroom atmosphere on the grounds that museum education should be a different experience from the normal learning experience. This approach is one which I personally favour.

During the seventeenth century, philosophers and educationalists emphasised 'solid philosophy'(14), that is, the direct study of nature and "the rejection of all knowledge that could not be demonstrated through the study of objects." (15) Basically the philosophers and educationalists believed that learning should follow the course of nature; what is actually seen is learnt faster and remains longer in the memory than information that is verbally described over and over again. From practical experience in the classroom, this approach is one that is still very appropriate in todays educational situation. This idea was simply explained when Calkins said, "the first education should be of the perceptions, then of the memory, then of the understanding, then of the judgement." (16)

As previously stated the museum educator's role is not to recreate the classroom environment within the museum situation. After all the museum is a place of learning but it is not a school. Museums are places which are primarily concerned with the collection,

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preservation and the display of artefacts of aesthetic, archaeological, cultural, historical, social, or spiritual importance. People go to museums to learn, to tap into their cultural background. Schools are different places of learning with very different aims. The main aim of the schools is to educate which is structured from start to finish. Museums are not structured in the same way, so when groups from schools visit the museums, special skills not normally or usually used in their schools are required to ensure that the students do learn. People learn in a museum in a different manner from how they learn in a school. This is a direct result of the learning base. In a school environment they are faced with the written word, while in the museum they are presented with the object. Being exposed to the actual object results in a psychological impact. This impact is one that can resonate into other areas of work, or if improperly focused upon can simply remain as a memory of a nice day trip. Therefore it is the role of the museum educator to create an interesting impact on the visitor. Hence it is fair to state that teaching in the museum environment requires an entirely different set of skills to classroom teaching.

Museum visits occur primarily as a result of the enthusiasm and expertise of the individual teacher. The success of a museum visit lies ultimately with the pupils and the class, but the imput placed by the teacher in the preparation of worksheets and choosing an appropriate exhibition, undoubtedly reflects in the success of the visit. After reading the old eastern proverb which says, "Hear, and you forget. See, and you remember. Do, and you understand," (17), it became

clear that if one approaches the educating experience in the museum in the correct manner, the learner will achieve not only a knowledge of the subject but also skills in areas of discipline, cross- curriculum, background in culture, among other things.

The impact of the visual has become evidently important from the above discussion; therefore learning and teaching with objects starts with the visual. Working from the visual, the remaining senses accumulate as much information as possible, encouraging the use of analytical skills. It is through these deductions and comparisons of others perceptions - that is the way fellow class mates have observed the object, that positive and active learning occurs. Some objects stimulate the learners through practical activity, perhaps through drawing, writing, or photography. Some objects stimulate interest through their oddness or attractiveness, leading to questions relating to the production, design, function, history - to name but a few, of the object. The following diagram illustrates the many ways in which objects cross - relate to many areas of the curriculum:





Figure 1: Demonstration of this Scope which can be achieved from one object (18)



CHAPTER THREE

THE JUNIOR CERTIFICATE SYLLABUS

The Aims and Principles of the Syllabus.

In 1987, the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (N.C.C.A) drew up a document that offered a broad and exciting approach to Art, Craft and Design at Junior Certificate level. This document is now known as the Junior Certificate Syllabus. In this document, there is an emphasise on the need for cultural and aesthetic developments of the students. The Junior Certificate Syllabus states that students should be able to "draw on the aesthetic and creative, the ethical, the linguistic, the mathematical, the physical..."(19)

After reading the Junior Certificate syllabus, the first factor which became evidently clear is the importance of the three <u>inter -</u> <u>dependant</u> disciples, namely Art, Craft and Design. The syllabus framework emphasises the provision of the education of the 'whole person' through the above disciplines. It is believed that through Art, Craft and Design education, the student develops not only skills in the art field, but also numerous skills which will be beneficial in society, qualities and skills which can extend into everyday life. This approach reflects the general aim of education which reads,

...to contribute towards the development of all aspects of the individual, including aesthetic, creative, critical, cultural, emotional, intellectual, moral, physical, political, social and spiritual development, for personal and family life, for working life, for living in the community and for leisure.(20)

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However, the main question remains - how is the educator to achieve these aims?

The syllabus for the Junior Certificate may be divided into three main areas of concern:

- Breadth and Balance,
- Relevance,
- Quality.

By the first principle, *breadth and balance*, the programme encourages the participation of the student in a wide range of educational experiences. The student should encounter these educational experiences within a supportive and formative environment. This environment should draw on the aesthetic and creative. It is very simple to document the need for such experiences but as the old saying goes, this is easier said than done.

Parallel to these experiences, there is an emphasis placed on <u>relevance</u>. The curriculum must provide learning experiences which address the immediate and prospective needs of the student, regarding the cultural and social environment. The introduction of support studies are particularly relevant to mention at this stage of the discussion as this element of the curriculum is one which must be relevant to the student, not simply shown as a result of the teacher's personal interest or fear of teaching work from more contemporary artists. The student must benefit from the exposure to other artists' work and by no means

should he/she feel dejected upon viewing these works. This area of support studies will be discussed in greater detail later in this chapter.

The third principle relates to *quality*. This principle is referring to the standard of work produced by the student. Simply, the syllabus stresses that each student should strive for the highest standard of work which is possible within the varying levels of aptitudes and abilities of each student or each student should aim to achieve the best quality of work that he/she is capable of producing. Again this sounds quite simple when written on paper, but in the classroom environment, this can be very difficult to achieve depending on the ability and interest of the students. It would be unfair to assume that the standard of work produced by a group of students' reflected the level of enthusiasm by the teacher, although sadly in some cases, this is reality. Rather, the quality of the work produced tends to reflect the level of motivation of both the teacher and student and the inter – active relationship which is present within the classroom environment.

Reflecting upon my personal teaching experiences while engaged in teaching practice, this search for quality of work is one with which I am familiar. As I have experienced teaching a cross section of students with varying socio-economic backgrounds, I have encountered groups of students that would have held discipline in very low regard, compared with students that held art in very high esteem and had no obvious disregard for discipline. As a result of such diversities, the learning environment is extremely different but



there is one common factor which affects the quality of work produced in all learning environments. This one common denominator which is essential to these environments, ultimately lies in the level of <u>motivation</u>.

By breaking down the Junior Certificate programme into the three main principles, there is one factor which is particularly relevant and which would achieve many of the learning objectives of the syllabus. It is one that would undoubtedly motivate the students, thus aiding in the quest for high standards; it is certainly an educational experience from which the students are learning aesthetic, creative, cultural, historical and social skills; one which encourages the personal development of the student and strengthens the relationship between student and teacher/ educator. Simply, this factor is a *visit to a museum*.

Why take Students to a Museum?

With the introduction of the new Junior Certificate syllabus over four years ago, teachers have found that it is necessary to devise new schemes of work and learn new skills. It is quite possible to teach students for the entirety of their school career without ever leaving the classroom, but in doing so would this not be impeding the effectiveness and relevance of the subject matter. Therefore it is certainly a tangible prospect to take a group of students out of their classroom environment and make greater use of the vast educational resource of the museum or gallery. In doing so, the educator is



exposing the students to the educational environment and experiences proclaimed in the Junior Certificate syllabus.

Why are teachers so reluctant to avail of the educational resource of the museum? Firstly, many teachers are unaware of what the local museums are exhibiting and as a direct result, do not realise the potential for it's use within the classroom. Secondly, teachers may lack the confidence in taking a group outside the confines of the classroom walls. This may be a result of never being trained in the organisation of such a visit. However, within teacher training of art teachers there is now an active incentive to ensure that trainee teachers experience the visit to a museum, active liaison with the education officer of the museums and galleries and familiarity with the necessary steps within the school environment, ending in a successful museum visit.

In 1995, a round table discussion involving the museums curators and the Faculty of Education from the National College of Art and Design was held in the Irish Museum of Modern Art. During this discussion, the plans of a module devised by teaching practice tutors was disclosed, which involved the inclusion of using the museum or gallery as a resource in art education. The aim of this discussion was to identify the wealth of resources available to teachers/students within our museums/galleries/heritage centres. As a result the inclusion of a module entitled 'museum education' was included in the time table for third year students of the Faculty of Education in the autumn of 1995.



The aim of this module was to introduce student teachers to the museum as an exciting resource within teaching practice. Stage one of the module introduced the students to the curators and exhibition programmes of four very different museums within the city of Dublin, namely the National Gallery of Ireland, the Irish Museum of Modern Art, the National Museum and the Hugh Lane Gallery. The direct contact between museum education officers and student teachers leads to the extension of knowledge in ways to stimulate and enhance the teaching of Art, Craft and Design within post – primary schools. Resulting from these meetings, students are required to devise a suitable scheme of work which will be implemented in the classroom. Due consideration must be given to appropriate visual aids, support studies and the designing of a focused worksheet. Stage two of the module is the practical implementation of the devised scheme of work in the classroom. Third year students can implement their scheme solely in the classroom with references to work from the chosen museum related in slides or visuals. However fourth year students are required to arrange and bring a group on a visit to the related museum.

As an education student, I have experienced this module and can not explain the benefits which I have gained from this aspect of the course. The experience of liaison with the educational officer of the selected museum, the designing of a specific and focused worksheet, the arranging and experiencing of the visit to a museum or gallery and the incorporation of the museum into a practical scheme of work, will undoubtedly benefit my teaching. The inclusion of the museum



education module by the Faculty of Education has been a very positive step in the progression of the use of museums and galleries as a resource in art education.

The value to be had from visiting museums does not simply relate to the overt gathering of knowledge which occurs during the visit. Rather, it is a direct experience encountered by the student which should be organized and carefully selected by the teacher so as to ensure the provision of a strong, visually orientated motivation. The exposure to the museum experience opens the doorway to more stimulated support studies which may have come to the fore while in the museum; support studies which steer away from the regenerated examples which are used year in year out.

As discussed in the last chapter, the potential of working with the object rather than the written word is exceedingly important. Although throughout a museum visit worksheets and labels must be read, it is the artefact that dominates - it is what we see. The following table demonstrates how we learn, be it oral, aural or visual. As the table demonstrates 30% of what is seen is remembered and understood. Likewise a staggering 90% of what is said and done is remembered and understood. If one was to use this table as reference, the assumption which could be reached is that if students were exposed to an actual exhibit in the museum environment and active conservation and discussion ensued, the student would have the tendency to remember and understand almost 75% or more.



We tend to remember			
and understand:	When: Involv	Involvement:	
		F	
10% of what we read	Reading	A	
20% of what we hear	Listening	S	
30% of what we see	Looking at Pictures	S	
	Watching a Film	I	
	Viewing an exhibition	۷	
	Watching a demonstration	1 E	
70% of what we say	Taking part in a discussion	n A	
	Giving a Talk	C	
		Т	
90% of what we say and do	Giving a Dramatic	I	
	Presentation	v	
	Simulating a real Experien	ice E	
	Doing the Real Thing		

Figure 2: Relation of Memory and Comprehension to Involvement (21)



Junior Certificate Students Involvement in Museum Visits

The inclusion of a museum or gallery visit in a practical scheme of work at Junior Certificate level has, as I have clearly shown, unquestionable benefits. The experiencing of a museum visit would increase the level of motivation within the group of students, would result in active learning taking place and would benefit the quality or standard of work produced as a result of this increased motivation. However it came to my attention during the period of teaching practice, that schools are unwilling to allow students at Junior Certificate level to experience the visit to a museum or gallery. As a result, I devised a questionnaire (see appendix one) which posed this question to art teachers regarding the inclusion of Junior Certificate students on museum visits.

I randomly circulated twenty questionnaires to a variety of schools in the Dublin region. The chosen schools were a combination of co- education and single sex at second level. The aim of the questionnaire was to establish art teachers attitudes towards museum visits, especially with regard to Junior Certificate level. Of the twenty questionnaires distributed, I received twelve replies and the findings are quite interesting.

When asked the question whether the teacher would be inclined to bring a junior cycle or senior cycle class on a museum visit, 100% of teachers replied in favour of a senior group. With all schools participating in a museum or gallery visit, each questionnaire replied


in terms of senior cycle students. The table chart below illustrates the percentage of museum visits within one academic in the schools which participated in the questionnaire:



Figure 3: Breakdown of School Visits to a Museum in an Academic Year.

The largest percentage of visits per academic year ranged from three to four times. Upon seeing these results one would feel quite positive that teachers are using museums and galleries as an educational resource, even if Junior Certificate students do not participate in such visits.

However as the following chart shows, only a small percentage of these visits are utilised in a practical art lesson. The larger percentage of visits were used as a support study visit to art history classes where the students would be familiarised with artefacts or paintings which they have studied for their art history and appreciation exam paper. in terms of senior cycle students. The table chart below illustrates the percentage of museum visits within one academic in the schools which participated in the questionnaire:



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Figure 4: Breakdown of Senior Cycle Museum Visits.

As the chart demonstrates only 17% of classes who are taken on a museum visit are incorporated with a practical scheme of work. When the question was posed regarding the use of a visit as an introduction or a backdrop to a scheme of the work, there was a strong emphasis on the use of the visit as a backdrop as the following chart demonstrates:



Figure 5: Breakdown of the Use of Museum Visits.



Figure 4: Breakdown of Senior Cycle Museum Visits.

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Figure 5: Breakdown of the Use of Museum Visits.

29,

When asked to elaborate on their reasons on using the museum visit as a backdrop for a scheme, the overall feeling was that teachers preferred when the students had some related knowledge prior to seeing the exhibition. Teachers believed that when the students arrived with some basic knowledge, the time spent at the exhibition was used to greater benefit and had justified the trip.

Findings.

After assessing the Junior Certificate syllabus and determining that the necessity for exposing the students to new and exciting learning environments, the case for the inclusion of a museum or gallery visit at this level would be strongly voiced. However as the above charts demonstrates this inclusion of a museum visit is not being translated into practice in the classroom. Teachers are still more comfortable with allowing senior cycle students to experience the visit to a museum or gallery. The majority of the teachers who partook in the questionnaire discussed the difficulty in the accessibility of the museum had more appropriate parking facilities that many teachers would become more encouraged to bring junior cycle students on museum trips. Across the board it was determined that a second year group would be more appropriate as it can be very difficult to take Junior Certificate students out of time tabled classes during the exam year.



CHAPTER FOUR

1

ASPECTS INVOLVED IN THE PLANNING OF A MUSEUM VISIT

Importance of Knowledge and Liaison

As we have seen in the previous chapters, the impact of the visual is extremely important in aiding active learning. The Junior Certificate stresses the use of new environments and experiences as learning devices. However, it is not a case of simply bringing a school group to an exhibition and allowing the students to roam aimlessly around the museum or gallery for a specified length of time. In order for active and worthwhile learning to be achieved, the museum visit must be planned with good insight into exactly what the students are intended to learn.

The success or otherwise of a museum visit depends to a large extent on the <u>planning</u> and <u>preparation</u>. A well planned visit for which everyone is well prepared is far more likely to be a success than one that is ill conceived and hastily organised. For the purpose of this chapter, I will discuss the planning and preparation which is involved in the organising of a museum visit in terms of my personal experience which I encountered while organising my own class visit to the museum.

As I have stated in previous chapters, the museum educationalists have a extremely more active role in today's society, within the museum

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and gallery establishment. But it is not sufficient that the teacher relies solely on the educational officers in the museum or gallery to organise the level of learning for the students. In fact, it is the teacher, or more correctly, it <u>should</u> be the teacher who determines what the students observe and learn from a museum or gallery visit. The museum educational officers should liase and facilitate the requirements of the teacher. As Bourdieu's research has revealed that most people associate "museums most closely with churches" (22) or what Berger terms as "holy relics" (23), it is the responsibility of both the teacher and the educational officer to dismiss this notion of the museum environment.

One element, which is evidently clear from this discussion, is the importance of the teachers level of knowledge of the exhibit and the amount of time carried out liaisoning with the museum educational officer. However after distributing a questionnaire (see appendix one) to a selection of art teachers in the Dublin region, which were randomly chosen, it became clear that both the level of knowledge of the exhibit and the importance of liaison with the museum educational officers was not of paramount concern in the teachers minds. Amazingly only 20% of the art teachers who completed the questionnaire would make a conscious effort to visit the exhibit to which they were going to bring their class. A further 13% admitted that they would only visit an exhibition prior to a class visit on occasions, whenever the time permitted. The time factor is very understandable especially with the added pressures of the practical demands of the syllabus. But the success of a museum visit relies



heavily on the teachers knowledge of the exhibit and with 57% of teachers carrying out a class visit to a museum with no previous knowledge of the exhibit, some questions have to be raised. Regarding the level of liaison which is carried out between the teachers and the museum and gallery educational officers, the chart below demonstrates the findings of the questionnaire:



Figure 6: Breakdown of Liaison with Museum/ Gallery Educational Officers.

As the above chart demonstrates, the relationship between the schools and the museums and galleries is not being utilized to its maximum potential. Presently in the art teacher training courses, there is a strong emphasis placed on the potential of the museums and galleries as an educational resource. Within teacher training, there is a deliberate move in promoting a strong link between student teachers and museum and gallery educational officers. The National College of heavily on the teachers knowledge of the exhibit and with57% of teachers carrying out a class visit to a museum with no previous knowledge of the exhibit, some questions have to be raised. Regarding the level of liaison which is carried out between the teachers and the museum and gallery educational officers, the chart below demonstrates the findings of the questionnaire:

> Breakdown of Level of Liaison with Museum /Gallery Educational Officers.

D Liaise with Educational Officer - Yes D Liaise with Educational Officer -No

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Preparation for a Visit to a Museum or Gallery – The Teacher.

The educational use of museums and galleries is potentially vast, but what steps are needed to be taken to ensure that active learning takes place in the museum environment? As I have pointed out, this success lies in the planning and preparation of the visit and this responsibility lies on the shoulders of the teacher. Perhaps one of the most important aspects to the planning of a museum or gallery visit is <u>time</u>. Even the best planning and preparation will not assist a person if things are left to the last minute. Organisation does not happen over night and it is important to allot an adequate amount of time to the planning of a museum or gallery visit.

In the planning of a museum or gallery visit, it is essential that the teacher surveys the exhibition in advance. However as I have shown, this is an element of visits which is not been practised by many in the school situation. This preceding visit by the teacher not only allows an insight into the contents of the exhibition but also allows the teacher to familiarise oneself with the location of the museum, the layout of the museum, the location of the exhibit, the location of restrooms, the eating facilities in the museum, coach parking facilities – the list is endless. All of the above may sound quite logical, but by simply knowing what is available, this could pinpoint any unexpected



disasters that could result in the failure of the museum visit.

Once the teacher has completed the preliminary visit to the exhibition, he/she can now honestly assess whether the visit is necessary. Although throughout this dissertation I stress the potential use of museum and galleries as educational resources, a visit to one of these institutions must be relevant and have an integral role to play in the scheme of work being carried out in the classroom. No museum or gallery visit should be carried out in isolation as this would result in a futile trip: an excursion that allowed the students to be excused from a number of classes. This approach would simply result in no learning whatsoever taking place.

When the teacher has committed him/her self to a museum or gallery visit, it is now necessary to devise a set of aims and objectives that will allow the teacher to plan a visit that is focused and pre-determined. Upon setting these criteria, evaluation of the visit will be more attainable as there are particular elements, which will judge whether the visit was successful, or not. By success of the visit, I am referring to the learning that takes place in the museum environment, not solely whether the visit ran smoothly. As an example, when I was exploring the use of the National Museum for the purpose of my class visit, I focused solely on the Ancient Egyptian exhibition which is presently being housed in the museum. As the area of Ancient Egypt is potentially vast, I devised my aims and objectives of the visit to focus predominantly on the use of symbols and colour. Upon deciding on these criteria, this enabled me to determine exactly what I intended



the students to actively learn when they were exposed to the museum environment. The determining of criteria for the aims and objectives was aided by the active liaison carried out between myself and Felicity Devlin, the educational officer of the National Museum.

The determining of set criteria in the form of aims and objectives are not solely sufficient however. The first important step is the teacher being focused. However the students need to be focused also. Therefore it is necessary to inform the students of the determined aims and objectives prior to the museum or gallery visit. This procedure can be carried out using numerous methods. If the teacher has devised the museum visit as an integral element of a classroom scheme, then the students will be aware of the elements that they are focusing upon through the practical classroom work. However upon the day of the museum or gallery visit, the introduction of a worksheet will prove very beneficial. The preparation of a well-devised worksheet that focuses the students' attention to the elements of the exhibition, which are relevant to the classroom application will result in focused active learning. Hooper – Greenhill defines a good worksheet as:

.....carefully planned, tried and tested in relation to specific objectives, are age – related, encourage deductive thinking, are theme or person based, are limited to a few key objects, often use drawings and illustrations in imaginative ways, enable follow – up discussion either at school or at the museum, and may enable modifications by the teacher.(24)

An example of a devised worksheet which is applicable to my own class trip to the Ancient Egyptian exhibition in the National Museum can be seen as appendix two. Again the devising of a focused



worksheet is the sole responsibility of the teacher. Although the museums and galleries do compile a set of standard worksheets, which are aimed at varying age groups, the teacher should not rely upon these examples to contain focused questions that relate to their project. In doing so, the teacher is compromising the level of knowledge learnt and could possibly be hindering the success of the practical scheme being carried out in the classroom. With reference to the questionnaire which was circulated to a variety of schools in the Dublin region, it is clearly proven that teachers' recognise the importance of the use of a focused worksheet in conjunction with a museum or gallery visit, with 87% of teachers' admitting that they will always devise a worksheet prior to a museum visit.

As we can see from the above descriptions, the level of background work that the teacher should complete while arranging a museum or gallery visit is understandably time consuming. However, the planning and preparation does not finish here. Due consideration must be given to the practical planning involved in taking a group to a museum or gallery regarding the school policies and requirements when taking groups off school premises. The teacher must liase with the school principal in seeking permission to allow the students out of timetabled classes and possible insurance difficulties must be discussed. Alongside these steps, the teacher must inform the school of the number of students being brought on the trip, the names of these students and the date of the trip. Students in turn must be issued with a permission form which must be signed by their parents or guardians. An example of such a form can be seen in appendix four.



Furthermore the teacher is responsible for the organisation of transport to and from the destination, devise the cost of the trip and is responsible for the well being of all the students under his/her care for the duration of the museum or gallery visit.

Preparation for a Visit to a Museum or Gallery - The Student.

With reference to the students' ability to use the museum or gallery environment, Renee Marcouse states

.....The requirement, that 'they look carefully', is not only the most important, but is also the most difficult to achieve. In our experience this is done best by sketching; the children are required to choose from among the objects related to their theme any that they prefer, and to make notes about them in the form of pencil sketches......The aim is to give them an opportunity to stand and stare, to become aware of forms and colours of which otherwise they are but dimly conscious...(25)

Pupils also need to be prepared for a visit to a museum or gallery. The teacher cannot and should not automatically assume that the students will maximise the museum or gallery visit to the fullest potential. As I have already stated, most students and even adults find the museum or gallery environment both daunting and intimidating. As Taylor explains the deliberate incorporation of architectural features which are reminiscent of churches and classical buildings was the direct result of an aim which was to arouse a sense of awe in the visitor. Unfortunately, the splendour of many of the museums or galleries simply stifles the immediate emotions of participation and



enjoyment.(26) Students should enjoy the <u>whole</u> experience of a museum visit and students who enjoy the experience will automatically be more forthcoming in participating in the devised activities. Preparing students for a museum or gallery visit must, therefore, be much more than brief orientations exercise.

Firstly, as with the teacher's preparation, there is an element of school policy that must be adhered too when the students are taken outside the school environment. The students must be aware and have a clear understanding of the <u>code of conduct</u>, which must be adhered too rigidly. Additionally, the students must be may aware of the ramifications that will result if the code of conduct is breached. Students need to be given details of the necessary materials that are required for the completion of work in the museum or gallery, and likewise, it needs to be stressed that certain items such as personal stereos, breakable bottles and other such items should not be brought on the excursion. Although statements like this appear logical, as a teacher nothing should be assumed and it is necessary to ensure that the students are aware of these steps. Likewise it is necessary to clarify whether the students are required to wear the school uniform for the duration of the trip to the museum or gallery.

Secondly, the students need to be prepared for the learning, which the teacher intends to take place within the museum or gallery



environment. Preliminary preparation, which is carried out in the classroom, will prepare the students so that maximum value can be gained from the actual museum or gallery visit. The museum or gallery visit acts "to motivate, stimulate, provide a physical experience, and consolidate learning" (27), and therefore can be successful when incorporated near the beginning of a scheme or towards the completion of a scheme of work. Regardless of the position of the visit within a scheme of work, the students should have a clear understanding of exactly what they are required to observe and record for the duration of the visit. As Marcouse refers to the requirement of looking carefully and difficulty in achieving this skill, the preparation that is achieved in the classroom will undisputedly reflect in the level of learning attained from the museum or gallery visit. The teacher is required to expose the students to the learning aims and objectives that are devised for the success of the scheme of work, within the classroom environment. As a method of highlighting the importance of these aims and objectives, the students are introduced to the specifically focused worksheet that has been designed for the purpose of the visit. The teacher must ensure that the students understand the requirements of the worksheet and if the worksheet is focused to the scheme of work being carried out in the classroom, then the students will record information that is relevant to their theme or project. From the questionnaire circulated, 93% of teachers said that they would only use a visit to the museum when directly related to the



scheme of work being carried out in the class. As Rod Taylor points out, "where students make such constructive use of the gallery, having come with related prior knowledge, the combination invariably leads to follow – up work in the classroom as well." (28)

As can be seen from this chapter, the planning of a museum or gallery visit is by no means a simple task. There are many aspects to the planning of such a visit, which require great thought and enthusiasm from the teacher. In order to reap the full potential from a museum or gallery visit, the full preparation by and the full participation of both teacher and student are essential. The importance of a specific exhibition relating to a specific classroom scheme of work has only been re - iterated by the results of the questionnaire.



CHAPTER FIVE

USING A MUSEUM OR GALLERY AS AN EDUCATIONAL RESOURCE WITHIN A SCHEME OF WORK

School Profile

During my final year in the National College of Art and Design, I was extremely fortunate with the school in which I conducted my teaching practice. Located in north side suburb of Dublin 15, Coolmine Community School has a catchment area that encompasses Blanchardstown, Clonsilla, Castleknock and Dunboyne, Co. Meath. This extensive cachement area results in quite a large selection of students who come from varying backgrounds. Generally the students are relatively motivated, with a strong academic ethos in the school.

Coolmine Community School has approximately 895 students, and has a teaching staff of 42, exclusive of administration staff. The school is managed in an extremely diligent manner with both the principal and vice principal taking an active involvement in the everyday occurrences of the school. There is a notably positive student – teacher relationship evident within the school, and this positive factor is noticeable in the inter – relationship between cross circular staff members. Each department in the school appears to be remarkably well organised and there is no doubt that the experience, gained over the last 25 years in which the school has been opened, has been used to its maximum potential. However, this is merely a personal



observation as I can only truly comment on the art department, as it was here that I gained most of my school orientation naturally.

Upon entering the school, one is immediately exposed to art work as nearly all the wall space on the corridors are crammed with various art projects from all of the art classes studying over the six years. This is a very positive aspect to the school and any visitor to the school would realise the high regard that art holds within the school, as many of the teaching practice supervisors from N.C.A.D. have mentioned to me personally. The physical structures of the art rooms lend themselves aptly to any exercise, ranging from clay to observational drawing. The three art rooms are spacious, well equipped and are bombarded with natural light; ideal art room conditions. All three art rooms are used to the fullest capacity with a large percentage of Junior Certificate students choosing art as a subject for the Leaving Certificate.

The group that I have worked with, incorporating a museum or gallery visit into a practical scheme of work, were a second year group. This group would have been described as the higher stream class, with a slightly larger ratio of girls than boys. After deciding upon this group who had very strong drawing skills, I wanted to select an exhibition which was exciting and interesting, one which would not necessarily be an exhibition which the students would be exposed too in their own time. For this reason, I opted to use the Ancient Egyptian exhibition, which was housed at the National Museum, Kildare Street, rather than the more popular Andy Warhol exhibition.

After visiting the exhibition personally, I felt that the entire layout and lighting of the exhibit was intriguing and expelled a sense of mystery: an atmosphere that I felt the students would appreciate and enjoy.

Once I had decided upon the exhibition, it was necessary to devise a scheme that would explore the art elements in an exciting fashion and one where a visit to the museum would be relevant. The following paragraphs document the scheme that I devised and carried out with the group of second years for the duration of seven weeks.

Description of Practical Scheme

As I have said the scheme was devised with the intention of using the Ancient Egyptian exhibition and I had hoped that the scheme would be completed in duration of seven weeks. The aim of the scheme reads:

...To explore the art elements of line, shape and colour, with a view to designing and creating a fabric manipulation panel using observational drawing as a starting point and Ancient Egypt as a theme.

As I have explained in chapter four, it is important for any teacher while preparing a scheme which involves a museum visit to devise a set of objectives which will enable a more focused and specific approach to the entire scheme. For the purpose of this scheme I have



decided to focus on the art elements of line, shape and colour. As a method of exploring these elements, I made the conscious decision to expose the students to the symbols used in Ancient Egyptian art, mainly in the form of the Ancient Egyptian gods and goddesses and the form of writing known as hieroglyphics. The set of objectives, which I devised for the overall scheme, reads as follows:

- To introduce and expand the students knowledge of the mythology associated with Ancient Egyptian culture,
- To explore the art elements of line, shape and colour through the observational drawing of images and symbols related to Ancient Egypt,
- To introduce the students to the museum environment and the methods to use this educational resource to the fullest of its potential,
- To introduce the students and allow them to become confident in a variety of skills required to create and complete a fabric manipulation panel, for example, the techniques of quilting, layering, gluing, cutting, and many more.
- To develop the students understanding of the design process and the logical steps which need to be approach during any practical activity.

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WEEK ONE & TWO:

1.

As these were the first lessons of the scheme, the students were introduced to the aims and objectives, which are listed above. However, this introduction was carried out in a relatively conversational manner with the first five minutes of the first lesson used as an exploration of the students' knowledge on Ancient Egyptian culture. During the introduction I began to introduce the students to basic information about the culture, setting the scene in a manner of words. With exposure to varying support studies of Egyptian gods, goddesses and hieroglyphics and their use in Ancient Egyptian art, the students made a series of observational drawings using secondary source material. The main learning objective of the lessons was to explore the elements of line, shape and colour through the exploration of the gods, goddesses and hieroglyphics.

Throughout the lessons, the students were exposed to fragments of information, which they may have found interesting. These fragments of information were carefully chosen on my behalf as they were directly linked to the pending museum visit and to the artefacts on exhibit. For example, the students were introduced to the *stela*, the funerary plaques of the Ancient Egyptian culture. Rather than myself, as the teacher simply telling the students the explanation behind these artefacts, I tried to encourage the students to ascertain the meaning or function of the object. This course of action encourages creative thinking and proved successful as the students quite correctly, determined that the stela was a type of gravestone, similar in function to the contemporary headstone found on graves.





Illustration 1: Example of Observational Drawing Completed in Lesson One.





Illustration 2: Example of Students' completing Observational Drawing in Lesson Two.



WEEK THREE:

Although the students were interested in the project and had some strong ideas for the composition of their fabric panels, a personal observation of the group felt that the ideas were rigidly fixed on the various support studies, which were discussed and used as secondary source material. During this lesson, the students were introduced to the museum environment. The main learning objectives of the lesson was to explore the use of the art elements line, shape, and colour through the use of the gods, goddesses and hieroglyphics found on the Egyptian artefacts on exhibit or the primary source material.

Perhaps at this stage it is extremely relevant to clarify that the school was not very forthcoming in allowing a Junior Certificate group to participate in this visit to the museum. There were a number of obstacles placed in my path while I was planning the museum visit. The major obstacle that blocked my path was the school's policy that Junior Certificate students <u>do not</u> normally participate in excursions during school hours. When questioned, the school authorities simply replied that the school was more comfortable with allowing Senior Cycle students to participate in trips. However, with some convincing and the individual help of the art teachers, a compromise was permitted which allowed the group to visit the exhibit.

As the sole organiser of the trip, I followed the steps documented in chapter four and can not highlight enough the importance of knowing the exhibit prior to the visit, the devising of a focused worksheet and active liaison with the educational officer of the museum.





Illustration 3: Cover of the Museum Brochure from Exhibit.





Illustration 4: Example of the Use of Gods and Hieroglyphics in Ancient Egyptian Artwork.



WEEK FOUR:

During lesson four I re-introduced the visual aid of the fabric panel which I had shown during lesson one. The purpose in doing so was to discuss the elements involved in the composition of a fabric panel. Therefore, the main learning objectives to explore the elements such as balance, spacing, colour and possible techniques that could be used in the creating of the student's individual panels. A variety of support studies were shown demonstrating the compositions of panels completed by artists both male and female.

Using their detailed observational drawings taken from the first two classes of the scheme, combined with the information and drawings gathered in their sketch pads and worksheet during the time spent in the Ancient Egyptian exhibition, the students create a suitable composition for their fabric panel. One factor, which I deliberately instructed of the students when composing their panel, was the inclusion of the figure of either a god or goddess. This was a simple method in which each panel will relate to each other and therefore will easily combine as a group banner for presentation purposes.

During the task of this week's lesson I could see the real result of the museum visit. As a teacher I can honestly state that the level of motivation of the students and the fresh and vibrant ideas which have been the direct result of the visit, speak for themselves. The result of the museum visit will be evaluated in greater detail further into this chapter. The following two pages highlight the quality of the fabric panel compositions designed during this week's lesson.





Illustration 5: Example of a Composition of a Fabric Manipulation Panel.





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Illustration 6: Example of a Composition of a Fabric Manipulation Panel.



WEEK FIVE & SIX:

During these two lessons the students were involved in the making of their panels. Therefore the lessons were relatively practical based. The students were involved in using techniques such as tracing, quilting, layering, cutting and gluing to name some of these techniques. Throughout these lessons the students were exposed to support studies of artists who worked with these techniques. Among these artists were works by Alice Kettle, Nancy N. Erickson, Margaret Swales, Jan Beany, Clemence Gilder and Louise Ellis. The works by these artists were used to demonstrate how contemporary artists are working with the techniques that the students are working with in the classroom. Again the students were exposed and working with related Egyptian images and artworks. An example of one of the support studies used in the classroom is demonstrated over the page.

Throughout the practical making of the panel, the importance of a design process was underscored. The students were encouraged to constantly refer to their already completed colour plan as reference. The students had to be very selective in their choice of materials used in the panel and were encouraged to utilise the resources available in the classroom to their maximum potential. Students were instructed to continue the creating of their panels as homework over the number of weeks.





Illustration 7: Support Study of an Artist who used Fabric Manipulation Techniques – 'Creation' (1991) by Alice Kettle.



WEEK SEVEN:

During this final lesson, the students were involved in the completing of their panel and as a class, both the students and myself as the teacher, were involved in the evaluating and presentation of the panels. The evaluation of the scheme was a vital aspect of the scheme as it highlighted the level of learning that had taken place for the duration of the practical scheme. Throughout the evaluation, students were encouraged to speak openly about their panels; in terms of their designs, the colour plans, the choice of materials used in the making of the panel and the presentation of the completed panel. An example of a student's completed panel can be seen on the following page.

Materials used throughout the Scheme:

- 2B/8B pencils, colouring pencils, markers, A2 cartridge paper, A4 cartridge paper, tracing paper.
- A4 size sheet of calico, permanent marker, selection of material of varying colours, wire, card, heavy duty glue, thread, needles, wadding, tin foil, variety of coloured paper, poster paints, pastels, selection of found objects which were suitable for use on the panels.





Illustration 8: Example of a Student's Completed Fabric Panel.



Evaluation of Practical Scheme

As a means of evaluating the scheme of work, it is necessary to highlight the criteria in which the evaluation is been approached. When devising this scheme of work, I aimed to introduce the students to an area that they had up till this opportunity not been exposed to the area of fabric manipulation. Therefore the students were introduced to various fabric manipulation techniques, with the view to translating the demonstrated techniques into the student's individual panels. The use of these techniques and the standard of work evident in the fabric panel would be an important area of the scheme to evaluate. However it is not the sole aim of the scheme and hence is not the sole area of evaluation.

The inclusion of the museum visit was a key element within the scheme and was vital to evaluate its effect on the students' designs for their panel. Therefore a lengthy evaluation session occurred after the museum visit. The conclusions that were reached consequentially were very positive. The majority of students altered their original plans for their panel. Students had observed various borders and symbols which they wished to include in their designs. As a direct result of the museum visit, the designs and colour plans of the fabric panels were more vibrant, richer in detail and a clearer understanding of the colours used in the Ancient Egyptian art forms was translated into the panel designs. This was undoubtedly aided by the use of a focused worksheet, which aimed to concentrate the students observations in terms of colours and symbols that were evident in the exhibit. Students also gained the experience of the museum



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environment, which heightened the inter-relationship between the group and myself. This was evident in the practical making of the panel as students readily versed their ideas, with constant reference to the exhibit, as a means of explanation of their thoughts. This was, in my opinion, a very positive response to the museum visit. There was no question about the increased level of motivation that occurred in the group as a direct result of the museum visit.

Self-Evaluation.

Reflecting back upon the scheme, the inclusion of the museum visit was crucial to the success of the scheme. The decision to incorporate the visit into the scheme at the third lesson was again a correct decision, in my opinion. As one has seen from previous chapters, the importance of the students having a little prior knowledge relating to the subject of the museum visit is crucial. This is a factor which is resounded in the school environment and one which I seen in practise. Due to the fact that the students knew exactly what the aim of the museum visit was and the devising of a focused worksheet, the time spent in the museum was utilised to its fullest potential. As a result, I feel that my effort in designing a worksheet, which was specific and focused, reflected in the success of the visit.

One area that I would revise, if devising this scheme again, was the time factor. Both in the museum and in the classroom, I under



estimated the amount of time required. After returning to the classroom the students stated that they felt that the time in the museum was very short and they believed that the level of information gathered could have been increased if time had allowed. Likewise, in the classroom, the students felt that the time allotted for the practical making of the panel was slightly too short.

Even in saying this, it is my personal opinion that the scheme was logical and well thought out. All problems were underpinned and overcome in the early stages of the scheme. The students had a clear understanding of the aims and objectives from the outset of the scheme; this became evidently clear in the design process that the students undertook. Overall the scheme was successful, particularly in terms of the inclusion of a museum visit in the practical scheme.

Findings

From the described scheme, it is evidently clear that the inclusion of a museum visit in a Junior Certificate practical art class can result in a successful conclusion. The increased level of motivation, which resulted from the museum visit, was staggering. However, the success of such a visit requires a large amount of preparation, both on behalf of the teacher and the students. Focusing the students' concentration in the exhibit can only be achieved by designing a focused worksheet.



CONCLUSION

A simple definition of a museum or an art gallery is "a place where works of art or items of other interest are collected, cared for, researched, interpreted and displayed for everyone to visit and enjoy."(29) Public museums are relevant to today's society because they are storehouses of knowledge where everyone can learn to interpret the past, relate it to the present and create for the future. But as one has seen, Junior Certificate students are not given the opportunity to experience the educational resources that the museum or art galleries have to offer.

As one has seen from Hooper – Greenhill's breakdown of the scope which can be achieved from one object, and the recognition by Talboy that a person learns and understands more by seeing and discussing the object, the reality still remains that schools are reluctant to allow Junior Certificate students to experience the museum or art gallery environment. Although the ever-present practical difficulties of organising a visit are valid, with insurance problems being one of the greatest stumbling blocks, why are schools so hesitant in bringing Junior cycle students on a museum trip?

The result from a questionnaire, circulated in the Dublin region, found that art teachers did not as a rule bring a Junior cycle group of



students on a museum or gallery visit. Explanations for the preference of Senior cycle groups lay in a number of reasons. Primarily museum or gallery visits were used as a support study trip for the art history course rather than for a practical class. Secondly, teachers found that with a senior cycle group, transport was easier to arrange as public transport could be used. This is not the case with Junior cycle students as most parents or guardians held strong reservations towards the use of public transport. The provision of transport, in most places, was not the major deterrent. Rather the major obstacle was the provision of access to the city centre museums or galleries. The majority of teachers admitted that if the museums situated in the heart of the city provided parking facilities, they would be more enthusiastic about involving Junior cycle students on museum or gallery visits.

The Junior Certificate syllabus boasts of new learning experiences and exposing the students to new learning environments, but is this being reflected in the classroom. In the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment Guidelines for Teachers, it is clearly stated that "critical appraisal, history and appreciation of art, craft and design, and related studies should be organised to form an integral part of the learning experience."(30) An easy way for teachers to fulfil the above is to utilise the educational resources offered by a visit to a museum or gallery. The educational officers of the museums are there to facilitate


teachers in any way that they can; a service that at present is not been used to its full extent.

As can be seen from chapter five, where the museum visit was incorporated in a Junior cycle practical scheme of work, the benefits of the visit were quite substantial. Building on what I feel was a well conducted visit to a relevant exhibit, the increased motivation and greater insight that the students obtained led to a highly satisfactory finished product. Personally I feel that the visit had longer lasting repercussions than just the class session immediately after the visit. In my opinion the visit gave the students a visual reference point from which their scheme work flourished.

In conclusion, the visit to a museum or gallery is the ideal avenue in which to incorporate breadth, relevance and quality, the principles of the Junior Certificate syllabus, through the medium of effective visual stimuli into the practical art class. and the rest of the second second second start of the second second second second

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Appendix 3:	Example of a Student's Completed Worksheet.	72
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Questionnaire.

Teacher Name: School:

- 1. How often, in an academic year, would you bring a class on a museum or gallery visit?
- 2. Of these visits would you be more inclined to bring a junior cycle class or a senior cycle class?
- 3. In relation to junior cycle visits which year, first, second or third would you prefer to bring on a museum or gallery excursion and why?

- 4. When senior cycle classes are involved, would they be Art or Art History groups?
- 5. Do you prefer to use the visit as an introduction to your scheme or as a backdrop to a scheme already in progress?
- 6. When initiating a visit would you prepare and discuss a worksheet with the class before going on the visit?



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7. Which of Dublin's main museums and galleries would you most likely use for visits and why?

- 8. When deciding upon the exhibit would you visit the exhibition personally to assess its suitability for the scheme?
- 9. Would you liaise with the educational officer of your chosen museum or gallery?
- 10. Did you find them helpful and willing to adjust to suit your scheme and what you wished to discuss with your class?

11. Did you find that your visit to the museum or gallery was successful in motivating your students in relation to your scheme?

12. Do you feel that your students enjoyed their visit and did it enhance their performance throughout the practical scheme?

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2nd Years.

During our visit to the Egyptian exhibition at the National Museum of Ireland, you will be able to see examples of the art work created by the ancient Egyptians.

museum

National Museum of Ireland

Use your sketch pads to record the answers and drawings that you are asked to do.



Did you know.....

The ancient Egyptians did not bury their dead as we would today. Instead they used a process called **mummification**. This is where the internal organs such as the heart and lungs, were removed. The body was then anointed, stuffed and wrapped in linen. The body was then placed in a decorated coffin along with objects such as food and ornaments.

Coffin of Diefiawet.

Look closely at the symbols used to decorate the actual coffin. Suggest what this form of decoration could be.

What could this decoration be saying? remember it's a coffin!

Take time out to record a section of the coffin in your sketch pads, looking closely at both the motif and colour used.

* Don't forget to look underneath the lid of the coffin!

What is a Motif?

Remember when we were working on our patterns, the motif was the unit which we used to repeat.



Look at the two other examples of coffins within the room,

The Mummy of Tentdinebu and Painted Wooden Coffin of the Lady Djedeseuiuefankh.

Can you find any connections between all three coffins? Look closely at the use of colour, shape, motifs and size!

Can you see any differences between the coffins?

In your sketch pads, record at least two different symbols which can be seen on these coffins.

Looking around the exhibit, where else is similar colour and decoration used?

Use the box below to record a detail of an example that illustrates the above.

Did you know..... The Great Pyramid has 2 1/2 million stones and took 20 years to build. The Egyptians built pyramids to be the final resting places for their kings. The Great pyramid is 450 feet high - almost twice as tall as the Statue of Liberty.





Have a close look at the dominant colours that the egyptians used within their art. Using the grid below, fill in examples of colours used throughout the exhibition.



* Look closely! Try to reproduce the exact colour that you see. We can see the use of blue, but what shade of blue is it - experiment with overlapping your colour pencils as a way of making these colours.

The 'Eye of Horas' is a dominant symbol used in Egyptian art. Find where this symbol is used and complete the below diagram in colour.



Did you know...... The Egyptians painted two eyes on the outside of coffins so dead people could 'look out'!

Did you know..... The pharaoh wore a gold cobra on his crown as a symbol of royalty and power. The snake Meret - Seger was the goddess of silence. Cats were considered sacred by

the Egyptians. They had a cat goddess named Bastet.

Look at the illuminations on the walls.

Can you find these symbols in the Egyptian art in the exhibition?

When you find an example, record it in colour in your sketch pad.





What is a Stela?

A stela is an Egyptian funerary plaque buried with the body. The stela told the story about the person who was being buried.

Look closely at the examples of stelas in the exhibition.

Can you think of an example of everyday stela used today?

Can you find a connection between the use of symbols and motifs used on the stelas and other objects already seen in the exhibition?



Did you know.....

Over 5000 years ago, the ancient Egyptians found a way to put their spoken language into writing. This type of writing or script is known as the hieroglyphic script. At first, they used pictures to record their words. But as their language grew, it was necessary to begin joining these pictures. hence, the hieroglyphics developed sounds

Look at the Painted Wooden Funerary Stela of the Lady Astemakhldt.

Look at the hieroglyphics, try to translate what is being said on the Stela.

Look at he painted figures on this stela, have you seen them before?

Pick another one of these figures - suggest a meaning for this and record accurately in your sketch pad.





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Look at he painted figures on this stela, have you seen them before?

Pick another one of these figures - suggest a meaning for this and record accurately in your sketch pad.





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The school authorities have sanctioned this field-trip form, the details of which are outlined below. This trip is undertaken with the intention of enhancing the pupil's learning in general, and to facilitate a greater appreciation of life at school with special regard to the organiser's particular interests/subject.

Teachers who undertake to organise such ventures require the **full commitment** of the pupil as well as the **total support** of the family. The school authorities wish to emphasise that pupils are required at all times to the spirit of courtesy, cooperation, and consideration inherent in the GUIDELINES FOR PARENTS & PUPILS, a copy of which was given to each pupil & parent

By authorising participation in a field-trip, parents and pupils alike, undertake to abide by the teacher's / school's direction and decisions in all dimensions thereof. You are asked to realise that, while supervising staff will take all reasonable care of the pupils under their charge, no responsibility can attach to the Board of Management or its officers for the outcome of the pupil's unwillingness to abide by the Guidelines for that particular trip or the general GUIDELINES FOR PARENTS & PUPILS.

In the case of involvement in such risk-sports as hurling, rugby, etc., parents allow their children to participate on an "own-risk basis". The Executive of the Parents Council have paid an insurance premium for each pupil enrolled at Coolmine. The coverage included may be viewed at the School's Reception or through contact with the Secretary of that Council.

This form must be completed by **Parent[s]** / **Guardian[s]** regardless of whether or not they will be away from home for the duration of the field-trip or portion thereof. The name of a responsible friend, relative, neighbour ought to be added in case of Parent's absence. Please answer the following questions.

Will you be at home for the duration of this trip ? Yes ... No ...

If 'NO', please give name / address / phone number of representative:

Is this person authorised to act on your behalf in case of emergency? Yes No The pupil's family is furthermore advised that where contact is not possible, in a case of emergency, the Fieldtrip supervisor will act in loco parentis. This may require medical attention / hospitalisation / or doctor's decision.

Please indicate any particular ailment / illness which might give rise to concern or need of treatment while participating in this trip.

Normally trip depart from and return to the school. Sometimes, it is convenient to permit a pupil to leave the group somewhat closer to home on the public transport system. This may be done by the Organiser without accepting responsibility for any ensuing misunderstanding or inconvenience caused.

	Class Home Phone
Work Phone	Purpose of trip
Destination	Date of departure. time Return date Time
Total cost	Amount of deposit Transport mode
Teacher[s] in cha	2e
Items to be broug	
PLEASE NOTE	HAT SUCH FREMS AS WALKMANS, SCREW-TOP BOTTLES, MAY NOT BE
BROUGHT BEI	CPIL PRINCIPAL'S SIGNATURE AND NO CLONCOLO
STATEMENTI	Y FAMILY: Our son / daughter has discussed this trip with me / us and [s]has agreed to act as outlin
	nt[s] / Guardian[s]' signature :

SCOIL PHOBAIL CHUIL MHIN <u>creideamh beo</u> COOLMINE COMMUNITY SCHOOL

Special Notice

Parents and Pupils are requested to read this section very carefully:

GUIDELINES for PARENTS/PUPILS addresses the

use / abuse of alcohol, drugs, solvents & dangerous substances while about school business or activity.

- Students possessing, consuming, passing, or promoting use of alcohol, drugs, solvents, aerosols or other such dangerous substances, in school premises or school property, or while participating in a school-organised event/outing/function or as a publicly identifiable pupil of Coolmine, render themselves liable to severe penalties including suspension or expulsion and reportage of offence to An Garda Siochana.
- Parents are also asked to note that should a teacher suspect a breach of regulations, [s]he has the right to ask the student to empty pockets/baggage/valises/items of apparel/, etc., to ascertain if illicit substances are present.

School Authorities reserve the right to implement these regulations and by signing this permission slip Parents accept this. In addition, the Parent[s] accept as a responsibility the obligation to ensure that their son/daughter is fully aware of the consequences should [s]he be found in breach of the above regulations.

To be signed in the presence of a School Staff member	[in the case of an overnight stay]
Signed by Parent	
Signed by Pupil	
Dateref.hd/fldtrp97	

FOOTNOTES

1. Graeme K. Talboy,

<u>Using Museums as an Educational</u> <u>Resource</u> (Aldershot, England: Arena, 1996) p. 9.

2. Ibid., p. 17.

3. Universal Declaration of Human Rights,

4. Barbara Dawson,

'Article 27' taken from <u>Exploring Art At The National</u> <u>Gallery</u> (Ireland: The National Gallery of Ireland, 1997) p. 2.

'Hugh Lane and The Origins of The Collection' taken from <u>Images and</u> <u>Insights</u> (Dublin: Hugh lane Museum of Modern Art, 1993) p.13.

5. Dawson,

'Hugh Lane and The Origins of The Collection' taken from <u>Images and</u> <u>Insights</u>, p.18.

6. Eilean Hooper- Greenhill,

Museum and Gallery Education (Great Britain: Leicester University Press, 1991) p. 37.



<u>Using Museums as an Educational</u> <u>Resource</u>, p. 7.

8. Ibid., p. 8.

9. Ibid., p. 16.

10. Ibid., p. 7.

11. Ibid., p. 8.

12. Hooper- Greenhill,

Museum and Gallery Education, p. 65.

13. Eilean Hooper- Greenhill,

<u>The Educational Role of the</u> <u>Museum</u> (London and New York: Routledge, 1994) p. 328.

14. Ibid., p. 231.

15. Ibid.

16. Ibid.

17. Talboy,

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Using Museums as an Educational Resource, p.xii.



18. Hooper- Greenhill,

19. N.C.C.A.,

20. N.C.C.A.,

21. Talboy,

22. Rod Taylor,

23. John Berger,

24. Hooper- Greenhill,

The Educational Role of the Museum, p. 235.

Junior Certificate Art, Craft and Design Guidelines for Teachers (Ireland: The Department of Education Publishers, 1992) p. 1.

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Using Museums as an Educational Resource, p. 21.

Educating for Art (London: Longman Group Ltd., 1986) p. 135.

taken from Rod Taylor's <u>Educating</u> for Art (London: Longman Group Ltd., 1986) p. 135.

Museum and Gallery Education, p. 126.

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25. Renee Marcouse,

27. Hooper- Greenhill,

taken from Rod Taylor's <u>Educating</u> for Art (London: Longman Group Ltd., 1986) p. 137.

Educating for Art, p. 135.

Museum and Gallery Education, p. 120.

28. Taylor,

26. Taylor,

29. Marie Bourke,

30. N.C.C.A.,

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Educating for Art, p. 139.

Exploring Art At The National Gallery (Dublin: The National Gallery of Ireland, 1997) p. 5.

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