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PROMOTING THE DEVELOPMENT OF VISUAL AWARENESS
IN THE ART CLASS

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INTRODUCTION

Just as every student has a readiness to know and create art, every student has the ability to develop his/her visual awareness. This dissertation has attempted to explain the psychological process of perception and its link with visual awareness.

Chapter 1 looks at perception to help define visual awareness itself.

In Chapter 2 the value of developing visual awareness is explored through discussion of the general appreciation section of the Leaving Certificate.

Chapter 3 discusses means by which visual awareness can be developed.

The methodology I used within the classroom to promote visual awareness was outlined in Chapter 4

CHAPTER 1

TOWARDS A DEFINITION OF VISUAL AWARENESS

Following a brief definition of the process of perception, I will focus specifically on Visual Perception and selectivity. The detrimental aspect of the selective structure and its effects on the potential learning and growth of Visual Perception in relation to the creation of Visual Awareness as a solution will be explored.

Through this exploration a definition of the process of Visual Awareness will be obtained.

PERCEPTION - THE PSYCHOLOGICAL PROCESS

The world around us is made up of various kinds and levels of physical energy. Every individual's knowledge and awareness of the world comes through our sense organs, which react to these energies. For example, our eyes are stimulated by certain wavelengths of electromagnetic energy; our ears sense certain mechanical vibrations in the air; while our noses and tongues are sensitive to certain chemical stimuli.

Similarly, sense organs in our skin respond to pressure, temperature changes and various stimuli related to pain. Sense organs in our joints, tendons and muscles are sensitive to body movement and position.

The sense organs change the various environmental energies into nervous impulses and these impulses then go to the brain. Through the psychological process of perception, the patterns of energies become known as objects, events, people and other aspects of the world (1).

The actual process of perception does not reveal objects and events of the world. We may "see" light and colour but there is no light or colour in the electromagnetic waves that stimulate the eyes - rather, the brain is organised and interprets nervous impulses from the eyes as light and colour. By working in tandem, the sense organs and the brain together transform physical energy from environmental stimuli into information about the events around us.

Visual Perception is a process during which we obtain 'input' from the environment in the form of retinal stimulation and, biologically speaking, its functional role is to provide us with information about that environment. (2)

PERCEPTION AS INFORMATION PROCESSING

As well as being considered an aspect of biological adaptation, perception can also be considered as a type of information processing procedure, in which sense data are used to form internal representations of the outer world which then assist in directing behaviour (3). Perception perhaps can then be compared to the data processing of computer technology. Similarities may be drawn between this thinking and R.L. Gregory's definition of perception.

A dynamic searching for the best interpretation of
the available data. (4)

Using this metaphor, the body is the equivalent of a computer's hardware, determining capabilities, the specific kinds of information that can be handled and the general operations which can be performed - in short, the ways in which data can be processed, stored and displayed. In the same way, the sensory/motor systems can be compared to input/output devices. In a computer these are connected to a CPU (central processing unit) which in the case of the body is, of course, the brain.

Nonetheless, not even the most sophisticated computer hardware can even approach the complexity of a human being. One key difference is that

computers do not change the way they process information with use while in the case of humans experience actually alters the physical structure of the living brain.

At least four processes shape perception:

1. Mental functions that affect how we give meaning to stimuli.
2. The effects of words on perceived meaning.
3. The interplay between perception and behaviour.
4. The framing of both perception and behaviour by social and cultural context.

SELECTIVITY IN PERCEPTION

We can easily accept the fact that a natural object itself may be quite differently perceived by different people depending on their background, their occupation and their varying needs. In looking at a tree, a forest ranger may see one thing, a timber merchant another (5). The mind cannot give equal attention to every stimulus that impinges on the senses.

Conscious perception is selective because the mind “pretends” that some things do not exist and every thing in the world is not experienced as being equally meaningful. In fact, when the mind finds itself trying to pay attention to too many meaningful perceptions at once, it experiences overload (6).

The selective aspect of perception is apparent from the first day of life. New-born babies prefer looking at patterned cards as opposed to plain ones. Infants also find complex patterns more interesting than simple ones and they direct their gaze toward spheres more often than flat circles. Even as adults, we instantly see things where they do not exist.

So from its earliest moments, the human visual system is involved in scanning the environment and selecting certain stimuli as being more meaningful than others. Those things which an individual finds uninteresting are usually not even perceived. It is important that teachers are aware of this perceptive selectivity.

CULTURE AND PERCEPTION

Culture is the most prominent non-genetic influence on human perception. (7)

Studies in evolution suggest that humans are basically social beings, having throughout history lived in groups. We learn our perceptions from other individuals to a much greater extent than is the case with other animals.

Through interaction with others we learn how to respond to our perceptions. We learn the culturally acceptable ways of attributing meaning to our personal experience (Socialisation).

Children always acquire the language perceptions, thought patterns and behaviours appropriate to the culture in which they are reared.

DEFINING VISUAL AWARENESS

“Young people everywhere must learn the forgotten art of seeing life with their own eyes”

(Oscar Kokoschka)

There is no literary definition of Visual Awareness. As we swiftly approach the 21st century I wonder just how many people today are actually ‘seeing’ what is happening in the world around them. ‘Seeing’ is an integral part of being “Visually Aware”, I think that it is fair to say that people who are visually aware look but see and notice what is happening around them. I don’t just mean on a world wide scale, but We learn through our senses. The ability to see, feel, hear, smell and taste provide the contact between ourselves and our environment. One of the basic ingredients of a creative art experience is the relationship

between the artist and his/her environment. The interaction of children with environment provides the means for the development of thinking.

"It is only through our senses that learning can take place" may sound like an obvious statement but its implications seem to be lost in our educational system. It may be that education merely reflects the change in our society, for people seem to be relying less and less on actual sensory contact with their environment. They are becoming 'passive viewers' of their own culture rather than active makers of it. Touching, seeing, hearing, smelling, and tasks involving the active participation of the individual are all vital to keep us involved in our environment. We should not be aiming for life in a bubble; we should be living a very real existence.

If we look at the syllabus structure for the Junior Certificate, it includes a section on drawing. It states that emphasis be on visual enquiry - to increase perception and observational awareness (through the first-hand experience of the art elements and the principles of design). Learning to 'see', observe (active purpose learning) record, emulate, explore, investigate, analyse through the medium of drawing to develop a visual vocabulary.

We see that the areas of 'perception', observation, analysing, is very central to the Junior Certificate course. But why? I have already mentioned 'seeing' and what it may entail as opposed to looking. Well

drawing and seeing are said to be closely related - our seeing sharpens our drawing and visa-versa.

Drawing does indeed help to develop our visual awareness. Perhaps people who think they cannot draw do not realise just how little attention they are paying to things they are looking at. Seeing includes creative and inquisitive looking. People who see creatively look for the emotion-provoking qualities in things, and they are aware of the sensory feelings they could get if he/she touched what they saw. Why do we need to learn to see? Most of the words we use to communicate come from things seen, felt or heard. If our perceptions are wrong to begin with, then all our words will be wrong.

People miss many things that are beautiful, intriguing and exciting in their environment simply by failing to see. It is not just a matter of eyesight. Sometimes people with limited eyesight can see better than people with good eyes. People who pay little attention to visual display details can pass ugliness until it is so bad that many are forced to look at it. Another reason is that in-order to understand our environment we need to see how the parts are alike and different, how systems work, or what is wrong that they do not work. Drawing can also be seen as the vehicle for seeing new patterns and relationships, for thinking creatively in both art and science. As new ideas come to people, they can quickly record a design or pattern so they don't lose the idea.

Few teachers believe that in order to get along in our society we need to develop visual skills as well as verbal and writing skills. Many teachers assume that all a person has to be to see is open their eyes, that learning is merely a motor skill, and so has lower priority than mental skills, but the fundamental part of drawing is the ability to see and think in detail, in terms of three dimensional space, to see the relationships between details, and to co-ordinate what we see with the images we draw. Observational and detailed drawings are a more precise method of recording our visual experience than any detailed written description. We learn about the natural and the man-made environment through observation. Art historians can learn so much about life in a bygone era by analysing drawing and paintings of the time - a visual record lives and their values.

FOOTNOTES - CHAPTER 1

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2. Fred Dretske,
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(Cambridge, M.A : MIT Press, 1981)
3. Carolyn M. Bloomer,
Principles of Visual Perception,
(London : The Herbert Press, 1990) p.23
4. R.L. Gregory,
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5. Irving Kaufman,
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(New York : The Macmillan Company, 1966)
6. Carolyn M. Bloomer
Principles of Visual Perception,
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7. Carolyn M. Bloomer
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8. An Roinn Oideachas,
The Junior Certificate Art,Craft,Design Syllabus,1987.

CHAPTER 2

THE VALUE OF DEVELOPING VISUAL AWARENESS

Visual awareness is the basic and beginning ingredient of the artistic and creative process [1]

GENERAL APPRECIATION

Section three of the leaving certificate history and appreciation of art paper is entitled general appreciation. it is my belief that a student who does not have a heightened sense of visual awareness would find it very difficult to adequately answer a question from this particular section.

The questions contained in this section obviously vary from year to year but there are a number of topics covered within these questions that are certain to be presented every year.

The areas usually covered in appreciation section are:

1. Graphic design-(e.g.)packaging,signs,posters,album covers.
2. Environmental design(e.g.)a park,a piece of architecture.
3. Industrial design (e.g.)furniture.
4. An art exhibition you have attended.
5. A film or a play you have seen.

Having a good sense of visual awareness would be the key to answering a question on any of the above areas. It is clear that the two main areas focussed on in this general appreciation section are design and the students environment.

DESIGN EDUCATION IN ART

Everyday, even without been aware of it, we are affected by the area of design, the houses we live in, the chairs we sit in, the clothes we wear, the tools we use and the vehicles which carry us around. A design is a plan to make something. Firstly the plan is drawn on paper. The method by which the product will be made and the materials to be used form part of the design or plan. If the design is accepted then the product will be assembled or manufactured. This is the general procedure whether one is designing a car, a camera or a book. There are certain points to consider when appreciating the design of an object such as:

- a) Function - its use - was yhe intended design of the object and does it fulfil its use?
- b) Discuss the development of the object to date.
- c) Age group - people have different at different ages which must be considered.
- d) Appearance - colour which is used to attract areas, shape which is used to hold grasp or store size which is used to pack to use or to

place, and texture which is important to grip and to identify areas for blind people.

e) Durability - Materials and Qualities

f) Glass: breakable /unbreakable/clear. Stone: hard/durable/easy to maintain. Wood: durable/sandable/carvable. Metal:

g) hard/durable/cold. Plastic: durable/cold/variety of colours.

Cardboard: light/corrigated. Cloth: soft/durable/cotton/fur/nylon.

h) Maintenance - It must be easy to clean and suitable in material and colour to take the wear and tear that its function will demand.

There are also headings to consider when designing a poster , book cover, stamp etc.

(a) Image-should be unforgettable - surprise / shock, arouse curiosity.

(b) Mood - should be funny, sad or thought provoking according to theme.

(c) Information - should be clear and concise/communicative

(d) Function - should be to display. A glance should mark and record vital headings and images.

Educators have so often studied and documented information about how children learn to read words, but they seem to have neglected how they learn to see things. They have emphasised what children learn through words, but have forgotten the visual information they get from their environment.

The guidelines of the Leaving Certificate syllabus state that:

Under the heading general appreciation it is intended to afford candidates an opportunity to discuss topics based on everyday visual experience in their own environment.[2]

So in this section we see the importance of students being able to evaluate and discuss their own visual experience. A student who is visually aware has a great advantage here.

THE STUDENTS ENVIRONMENT AND VISUAL AWARENESS

It is important to establish what is meant by the students environment. Our environment can be described as all that surrounds us other than ourselves - not only nature and man made objects, but films, and television, sounds and smells, magazines and advertisements, in fact all that is received by our senses. According to the world book dictionary our environment is all of the surrounding things, conditions , and influences affecting the growth or development of living things.

Many of us pass through our environment everyday without giving specific notice to the many things around us that affect our experience. This lack of notice given to our environment is detrimental to our experience of life in general. Why should we walk around with our eyes only half open? Why should we ignore how things grow and are made, and how objects change in light and space? Most of us do notice certain things that catch our eye but may not take the opportunity to explore their special nature or why we like or dislike them [4]

The art teacher should have an understanding of the kinds of environments in which their students live. Many children grow up with only rare excursions from their surrounding area. In order for a child from an urban setting to fully appreciate a rural setting, he/she must have first hand experience with such and vice versa. His/her level of

visual awareness may dramatically improve on a trip to such a place. Perhaps if a person is removed from their familiar surroundings and placed somewhere new they will notice more. We tend to take things for granted in life that are common place for us. Diarmuid Larkin in his book 'Art learning and teaching', states that :

Environmental and aesthetic education can be started at a very early age in the child's life. The most important environment for him is his home, his neighbourhood, and his journey to and from school. These situations provide many starting points for motivating the child to develop a greater perception of the natural and man made things in his surroundings.[5]

VISUAL AWARENESS - A CRITICAL SKILL

We must assume responsibility for educating children visually from an early age - children need to be taught and encouraged to be more visually aware in their day to day living. Perhaps being visually aware gives us a better insight into life - we see more, we receive and take in more information than others. We need to teach children to see the aesthetic relationships in art forms that man has created (painting, sculpture, architecture, design] as well as in natural forms. Through creative art teaching students can be made more aware of their role in our ever changing society

FOOTNOTES - CHAPTER 2

1. Rudolf Arnheim,
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2. An Roinn Oideachais,
The Leaving Certificate Syllabus. 1972
3. McFee, Deege
Art Culture and Environment,
[USA: Kendall Publishing Co., 1980] p.189.
4. Ibid., p.190.
5. Diarmuid Larkin,
Art Learning and Teaching,
[Dublin: Wolfhound Press, 1981] p.16.

CHAPTER 3

Developing visual awareness

VISUAL AWARENESS AND SUPPORT STUDIES

My main objective in this chapter is to investigate how visual awareness can be taught through the practical application of support studies within the classroom. What are support studies and what role do they play within the Junior Certificate art examinations?

Many of us were familiar with the Intermediate Certificate art exam, the Junior Cert's predecessor. It only gave students a limited opportunity to perform and was structured in the same way as all other Intermediate exams. There were no support studies of any kind, and thus no art history element, although this would later play an important part in the Leaving Certificate exam. The Intermediate Certificate was abolished in 1989 and the Junior Certificate course has been in operation since.

Both the Curriculum and the Examination board (CEB) and the National Council for Curriculum Assessment (NCCA) were commissioned by the Department of Education to propose certain recommendations on Curriculum and Assessment which were subsequently implemented as the new Junior Certificate.

This Junior Certificate outlined the implementation of the use of support studies as a practical back up to all areas of Art, Craft and

Design. In general the Junior Certificate has acknowledged and realized the full potential of students capabilities and abilities while at the same time challenging them

The exam takes the form of a project, where a list of project titles are given to students in January of the year of the examination. This procedure contrasts sharply with the Intermediate Certificate where students had to produce their art works on one day. In the Junior Cert they are given sufficient time to work and to produce a competent submission.

Point seven of the Junior Certificate guidelines for teachers states that a successful project is the best motivational device for undertaking new learning objectives.[1] In other words, students learn better when they take an active interest in what they are doing.

BACKGROUND TO SUPPORT STUDIES

Art, Craft and Design provide a unique part of the education of the whole person, through heart head and hand, enabling the person to shape his or her world with discernment and to understand and appreciate the work of others .[2]

This extract from 1.2 of the Junior Certificate syllabus introduction clearly states that the appreciation of the work of others plays a key role in the shaping of the person. The appreciation should be shown in

reference to the work of artists - both historically and in a contemporary sense, - through the use of support studies.

Support studies must be submitted as an integral part of the project.

The support studies referred to in the syllabus can take the form of the materials and tools used during the course of the project and their correct use, the techniques involved and very importantly art historical references. Any artists or art movements whose work was explored during the course of the project is relevant to the student's work. They should be all recorded and written about briefly to describe how they were used and why.

Support Studies in the Junior Certificate are defined as follows:

History of Art, Craft and Design should be introduced in relation to the learning experience, with examples from past and present, worldwide as well as local Irish or European work, so as to acquaint the student with adult and child art, craft and design from many cultures. Critical appraisal and evaluation skills should be developed, so as to lead to an understanding and appreciation as well as enjoyment, of their own work and that of others.

The Junior Certificate examination also requires that on the completion of any practical work there should be a collection of materials, studies and art historical references that will support the work which are relevant to the practical work completed.

How relevant are these requirements to the course objectives of the Junior Cert Art, Craft and Design syllabus?

They were well thought out and planned as they do in fact promote the use of an appropriate working vocabulary (3). Without doubt they help to sustain projects from conception to realisation (4), to mention but a few. Through the use of support studies the student's ability to give a personal response to an idea, experience or other stimulus [5] is also displayed and developed. As support studies fulfill many of the course objectives it is essential that teachers of Art, Craft and Design recognise their importance and promote their use both in the class and at home.

Students should be given access to both the school and the art department library as a source for support studies and this use should be encouraged.

The support studies used in the project work of the Junior Certificate should not, however, be divorced from the practical work. They should be used as a spawning bed from which the students' own ideas and creation will occur. As the project progresses and develops so too should the use of support studies in order to reinforce the learning process.

SUPPORT STUDIES AND THE PROMOTION OF VISUAL AWARENESS

How do support studies promote visual awareness, if at all? Visual awareness is primarily concerned with observation and the use of support studies promotes visual enquiry into the work of various artists (art historical references) and an enquiry into various art processes relating to Art, Craft and Design.

Students, when compiling support studies, must closely observe their own work and must seek new ideas and inspirations. The inclusion of support studies promotes students' sensitivity to their immediate environment, something which might normally be neglected.

Previously during an art lesson with a first year class, I asked the students to make variously scribbles using pencil and they resisted out of fear. It was only when I compared the scribble and the doddle to works of great artists that they relaxed and began to unblock and so to learn

In returning to the basics of human learning by giving permission to initiate and abstract, the teacher frees up the student to use these skills and therefore to progress. The student can use what is seen as a platform for something completely new and original. By exploring with the art elements the teacher can encourage students to communicate in another medium, the results of which are pleasing to both the producer and the consumer.

Through an active encouragement on the part of the teacher students use the reference to other artists' work as encouragement and an affirmation of their own work.

All children have a capacity for perceiving and this is apparent from their art work. Children have a capacity for reaching to art, but this must be developed. As teachers of art we must make provisions to allow the child to react to art in his/her learning apart from his/her own personal involvement in making. Support studies allows the student to do just that.

While studying and appreciating works of art visual awareness is promoted and a student must examine and study a certain painting to see if its an apt source or reference point for his/her own work.

An appreciation for actual works of art is developed through the students being visually aware. Who is to decide if an art work is good or bad? Each individual has their own opinion. There are no absolute laws that govern the reading of a piece of art. It is therefore each student's perception of what he sees in an art piece that must serve as the fundamental source for establishing an appreciative response.

The student ,during an art appreciation class has to be made to shoulder the learning and perceiving responsibilities of the experience. [6]

He/she must form their own opinions. A student who is visually aware will observe the painting and make a decision on it. The response may take the form of some element of their own work and it does not necessarily have to be a written one. The support studies used do not of course have to be paintings, sculptor, archectiture, photography, film etc. can all be used with equal effectiveness. These art historical references are noted for whatever reason - only the individual concerned knows. The information is taken on board by them and given meaning and as a result an achieved response ensues.

FOOTNOTES - CHAPTER 3

1. An Roinn Oideachais
The Junior Certificate Art Craft and Design (1992),
2. Ibid., p.7.
3. Ibid., p.3
4. Ibid., p.3.
5. Ibid., p.3.
6. Irving Kaufman,
ART AND EDUCATION IN CONTEMPORARY CULTURE
(New York: Macmillan, 1966) p. 454

CHAPTER 4

VISUAL AWARENESS IN THE CLASSROOM METHODOLOGY

BACKGROUND TO METHODOLOGY

I am currently completing my teaching practice in Sancta Maria College, Ballyroan. The school has a population of approximately 960 pupils (all girls). Within the school art is held in high regard. In contrast to other schools I have visited there is a great awareness, interest and appreciation of the work taking place in the art room.

Each year many Leaving Certificate students from the art department submit portfolios to the various art colleges in the country and have success in their applications.

The scheme I have chosen to use for my practical application, to promote visual awareness in the classrooms, was a scheme focusing on observational drawing from the natural environment and its application within the design and the making of a creative embroidery.

The scheme ran for eleven weeks. Its aim was to develop an awareness

of texture through the making of a creative embroidery based on the theme "nature". Each student produced a final piece which was appropriately mounted upon completion.

PRACTICAL APPLICATION

This was the first scheme to be completed by the first year class. I could see that many of the students were overwhelmed by the size and unfamiliarity of the secondary school organisation. An art lesson once a week, separate and unrelated to any other lesson (in contrast to the primary school experience), was particularly strange to them. The working methods they encounter may be unknown. The desire to do the right thing and satisfy the teachers demands in the art class can sometimes be overpowering. The students were very eager to learn and explore new art methods and techniques. I was very aware that many attitudes to art and art education are fixed in these first lessons and consequently will affect the pupils' thinking and performance long afterwards.

The scheme used was based on a sensory exploration of the surrounding natural environment. Each student kept a support studies notebook throughout the duration of the scheme which was used both to record and expand new elements discovered and new processes

practised. Keeping the notebook was promoted as a home activity to reinforce learning which took place in class.

As we have already seen the Junior Certificate implements the use of support studies as a practical backup to all areas of Art, Craft and Design. It makes good sense that first year students are introduced to this concept at this stage in the Junior Certificate programme. The notebook was evaluated at the start of each class and its importance stressed. They became very personalised and by the end of the scheme contained a comprehensive collection of studies related to class work.

The first class was concerned with introducing the theme of "nature" and included a brainstorming session to introduce texture. The students were encouraged to create a vocabulary of words which described various textures by playing a game which promoted a sensitivity to qualities of objects that would normally escape their attention. They used the sense of touch to explore these textures. In order to put this new discovery of varying textures into practice the students took rubbings from both the built and the natural environment of the school.(fig 4.1) These exercises encouraged the students to look objectively at their immediate environment, searching for appropriate external surfaces. Support studies for this class included collecting unusual textures from magazines, encouraging the students to look at them from an angle perhaps never explored before.

The next class introduced the students to line and observational drawing. This was an area that few students had engaged in before. I emphasised to the students the importance of carefully recording through drawing the lines and shapes present in chosen objects.

[Observational Drawing] Through this close observation and really studying and looking, a line drawing was obtained.(fig 4.2) This class encouraged the students to see every last detail of the object they were recording and was important in promoting and increasing the students' visual awareness. Again for their support studies students identified and recorded various lines using words to code and describe them in their notebooks.

In the following class we were again concerned with making line observational drawings of natural objects. Some drawings were done in the natural environment while others were completed in the classroom. We were recording information about the shape of the objects through careful observation. Concentration levels were higher here during the second week of close scrutiny as the students understood the concept better. At home the students continued to gather information and visuals relevant to the class learning in their support studies notebooks.(fig.4.3).

The next few weeks were concerned with the following stages of the design process. The process was explained to the class and together we

identified the next step, which was to obtain a suitable design for the creative embroidery.(fig 4.4) A viewfinder was used over the line drawings and the area selected. This process of selecting an area encouraged the students to examine their drawings closely and to make a choice. Each student produced a design from which a paper pattern was made.

The next seven lessons saw a linking-in and a return to the area of texture introduced in the first class. The aim was to develop an appreciation and understanding of creative embroidery through researching designing and making an embroidery based on the theme nature.

Students made competent attempts to recreate and interpret the textures they identified in their immediate environment. (fig 4.5.-4.6). Through examining the final pieces completed by each student, it can be seen that a thorough exploration of various qualities of their environment was made.(see fig.4.7 - 4.11) They began to notice and see these qualities that perhaps before now would have escaped their attention. This was evident when I pointed out an interesting texture in the class which they had never noticed before.

Art education is concerned with the development of the immediate sensuousness as our way of 'receiving' our words, and the process we use to symbolise, externalise, understand, order, express, communicate and solve problems. It is located in the belief that visual and tactile ways of knowing thinking and feeling are most important ways of receiving, organising, understanding and transmitting impulses, feelings and ideas. It is essentially affective and concerned with the development of visual and tactile values as a means of developing perception.[1]

ART HISTORICAL REFERENCES

In this particular school the corridors and walls are lined with prints and reproductions of the works of well known artists, so the students have at least been exposed to such works. When asked to describe any of these paintings very few students were able to do so. They had seen that the walls held pictures but as to what they were about was beyond them. So during the scheme I attempted to bring some of the prints from the school environment into the class, and where appropriate to use in conjunction with other art historical references.(4.12 - 4.13) The students had never had the chance to discuss art works previously so I tried to give them a vocabulary with which to do so.

This is not to say that I handed them a list of words that could be used to describe a painting. We held active discussions about art historical references used during the lessons. When the students became familiar with art works they began to realise that the artist is expressing emotions, ideas, and experiences similar to their own.

Assisting the child to discuss the art forms of adult artists gives encouragement to his own creative efforts and develops his verbal skills in expressing opinions about his own art work and the art work of others in his class group. [2]

Through the use of visual aids I supported the points and discussion which occurred during the course of the class in relation to the surrounding environment.(fig 4.14 - 4.16) Works by various textile artists were used to display how 'real' artists put the techniques the students were exploring into use.(4.17).Through the constant use of support studies in the form of art historical references ,and the promotion of careful observation the students visual awareness was developed.

FOOTNOTES- CHAPTER 4

1. Robert Witkin,
The Intellegence of Feeling
(London: Heinemann, 1974).
2. Diarmuid Larkin,
Art Learning and Teaching

CONCLUSION

During my research and preparation of this dissertation I have become acutely aware of the importance and pivotal role which Visual Awareness plays in the teaching of Art, Craft and Design.

Normally we do not look very closely at the things around us. We accept them and our eyes are used to show us only the general and most obvious aspects of our surroundings. But this is not really sufficient if we are to appreciate fully the wealth of images which make up our environment. We must look for the excitement created by relationships between surfaces and forms and the spaces in which they exist. We need to make ourselves aware of the stimulating contrasts and juxtapositions which surround us, to notice the variations of colour and the changing qualities of light. In order to enjoy and understand the world in which we live we must look beyond the superficial appearance, we must learn to see.

.....You've seen the world

The beauty and the wonder and the power. The shapes of things, their colours, lights and shades. Changes, surprises.

what's it all about?

To be passed over, despised or dwelt upon, wondered at? oh, the last of course! - you say.

From Fra Lippo Lippi by Robert Browning)

COLAISTE NAISIUNTA EALAINÉ IS DEARTHA - NATIONAL COLLEGE OF ART AND DESIGN - FACULTY OF EDUCATION
LAYOUT FOR SCHEME OF WORK

STUDENT NAME: AIDIE WALSH

THEME: 'NATURE'

AIM OF SEQUENCE: TO DEVELOP AN APPRECIATION AND UNDERSTANDING OF CREATIVE EMBROIDERY THROUGH DESIGNING AND MAKING AN EMBROIDERY BASED ON THEME 'NATURE'.

Week & Date	Class Group & Time	Introduction Motivation	Demo./ Visual Aids	Source	Art Element	Task	Skill	Materials	Support Studies	Home/ Activity	Cross - Disp. Connection
WEEK ① 18-9-97	FIRST YEAR 10.30-11.50	Introduce theme Introduce texture What's a rubbing?	Rubbings done already Textural objects.	- Natural objects + room environment	TEXTURE	Brainstorm theme - objects in bag - name texture Take rubbing of texture.	Developing a vocabulary of textures - recording rubbings.	Natural objects cones, leaves, etc. Crayons, newspaper, textured surfaces.	Nature Collage Max Ersh Whiplashes Rubbings.	Begin to collect fabrics List of words to describe texture	
WEEK ② 25-9-97	FIRST YEAR 10.30-11.50	Introduce line + shape When does line become shape?	Show how to use viewfinder. SLICES of line in nature	Slides, magazines, objects.	LINE + Shape	Use viewfinder to locate various lines in magazines + objects + record.	Identifying lines in environment + describing them. Selecting, recording.	A4 paper, pencils SLICES + PROJECTOR. Viewfinder	Picasso - 3 Dancers Daniel Hockney Henry with Cigar.	Take lines from magazines to do with nature.	Science - Use microscope to see lines in lichens, mosses, etc.
WEEK ③ 2-10-97	FIRST YEAR 10.30-11.50	Recap on line + shape Intro line drawing. Obs. Drawing	Demonstrate how to do an observation line drawing of object using wool.	Objects, leaves, flowers.	LINE + SHAPE	Using the wool as your line draw the shape of the object.	Observational Drawing Intro. using wool.	Leaves Flowers Shells Cones Glue plants, paper.	Leonardo Da Vinci - LILY (line drawing)	Collect fabric + bring in.	
WEEK ④ 9-10-97	FIRST YEAR 10.30-11.50	Recap on line + shape again doing observational drawing	Recap on observing Close up the object. Line + shape as	Objects Same type as last week.	LINE + SHAPE	Do a line drawing of natural object using pencil, from diff angles.	Observation drawing Focusing on line + shape	Paper, pencils Objects.	Louise Le Broquay Therrian	Collect fabric. Make a line drawing.	

STUDENT NAME: ADOPE WALSH

THEME: 'NATURE'

AIM OF SEQUENCE: To develop an appreciation and understanding of Creative embroidery through designing and making an embroidery based on theme 'nature'.

Week & Date	Class Group & Time	Introduction Motivation	Demo./ Visual Aids	Source	Art Element	Task	Skill	Materials	Support Studies	Home/ Activity	Cross - Disp. Connection
WEEK (5) 23-10-97	FIRST YEAR 10:30-11:50	Recap on line drawing done. - will have to be put on fabric	my own line drawing with area selected & enlarged	observational drawings done.	Line Shape	use new folder to select area & enlarge to A4 size. Transfer to fabric	observing, choosing, enlarging.	paper pencils ruler/compass Carbon Paper	Ellsworth Kelly 'Red White'	Support Studies Notebook	
WEEK 30-10-97	FIRST YEAR 10:30-11:50	(NO	SCHOOL)								
WEEK (6) 6-11-97	FIRST YEAR 10:30-11:50	Recap on design so far.	my own fabric piece at this stage.	enlarged Drawing.	Line Shape	pin fabric base onto frame. cut out shapes which are numbered.	cutting, pinning.	Tacks Frames. Cutting Scissors & Pencils.	Naomi Michaels	Record process learned	
WEEK (7) 13-11-97	FIRST YEAR 10:30-11:50	Recap on work done so far. Recap on Texture	my own ex. of work done. Show how to manipulate fabric	- objects working directly from them.	Texture line	working from the primary source again look for its textural qualities. - i.e. work into fabric	observing & recording info through fabric manipulation	material needles thread scissors	Michelle Byron	Notebook support work.	
WEEK (8) 20-11-97	FIRST YEAR 10:30-11:50	STITCHES - must learn next as part of the design	my own example of stitches - show how make the stitches	nature - handout with stitches	LINE	Follow the sheet and copy the stitches	SEWING-STITCHES	needles thread material paper scissors	Helen Daniel	Notebook	



STUDENT NAME: AOIFE WALSH

THEME: 'NATURE'

AIM OF SEQUENCE: TO DEVELOP AN APPRECIATION AND UNDERSTANDING OF CREATIVE EMBROIDERY THROUGH DESIGNING AND MAKING AN EMBROIDERY BASED ON THEME NATURE.

Week & Date	Class Group & Time	Introduction Motivation	Demo./ Visual Aids	Source	Art Element	Task	Skill	Materials	Support Studies	Home/ Activity	Cross - Disp. Connection
WEEK 8	1 st YEAR 10:30-11:50	Recap on Design so far.	Show how to pin template to fabric and cut without cutting too small.	Design prepared in last class	LINE SHAPE	PIN PAPER TEMPLATE TO FABRIC AND CUT OUT SECTIONS.	CUTTING + PINNING + selecting fabric.	SCISSORS FABRIC PINS	Jackson Pollack Jack B years.	notebook	
WEEK 9 NOV 27 th	1 st YEAR 10:30-11:50	SHOW EXAMPLE OF ROUGH SECTIONS SEWN DOWN.	SHOW HOW TO ATTACH FABRIC TO BACKING FABRIC.	Design Sheet.	SHAPE	ATTACH BY LOOSE TACKING the sections to the backing fabric.	tacking sections using needle + thread	WOOL. THREAD NEEDLES.	Helen Daniel	record technique - as learned	
WEEK 10 Dec 4 th	1 st YEAR 10:30-11:50	Recap on Stitches used.	OF Stitches and padding, etc.	Stitches done + fabric manipulation	TEXTURE SHAPE	BEGIN TO work each section up. According to the plan.	STITCHING Cutting	WOOL. FABRIC THREAD NEEDLES.	Crompton Caprara	notebook	
WEEK 11 Dec 11 th	1 st YEAR 10:30-11:50	creating new textures	again recap on textures + stitches	fabric manipulation sheet	TEXTURE	use fabric and stitches to recreate texture	fabric manipulation	Wool needles wool netting	Rose West	Support Copy	
Week 12 Dec 18 th	1 st YR 10:30-11:50	recap on work to date	Show new ways of creating textures	last weeks embroidery	Texture Shape	fabric and stitching manipulation	Sketching fabric manipulation	wool Wound materials fabric	Michael Hughes Jackson Pollock	Continue work to completion	

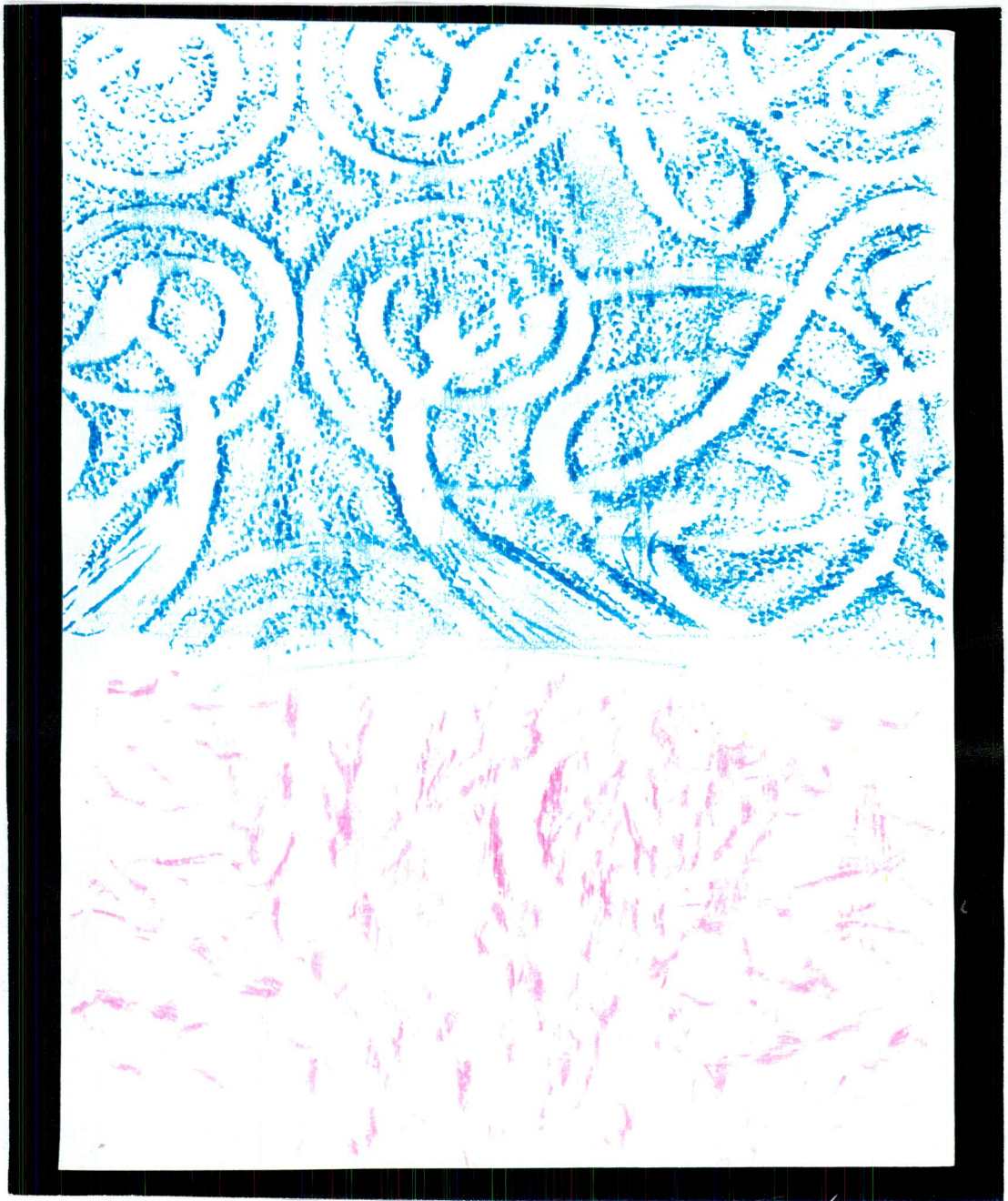


Fig 4.1 Example of student's work



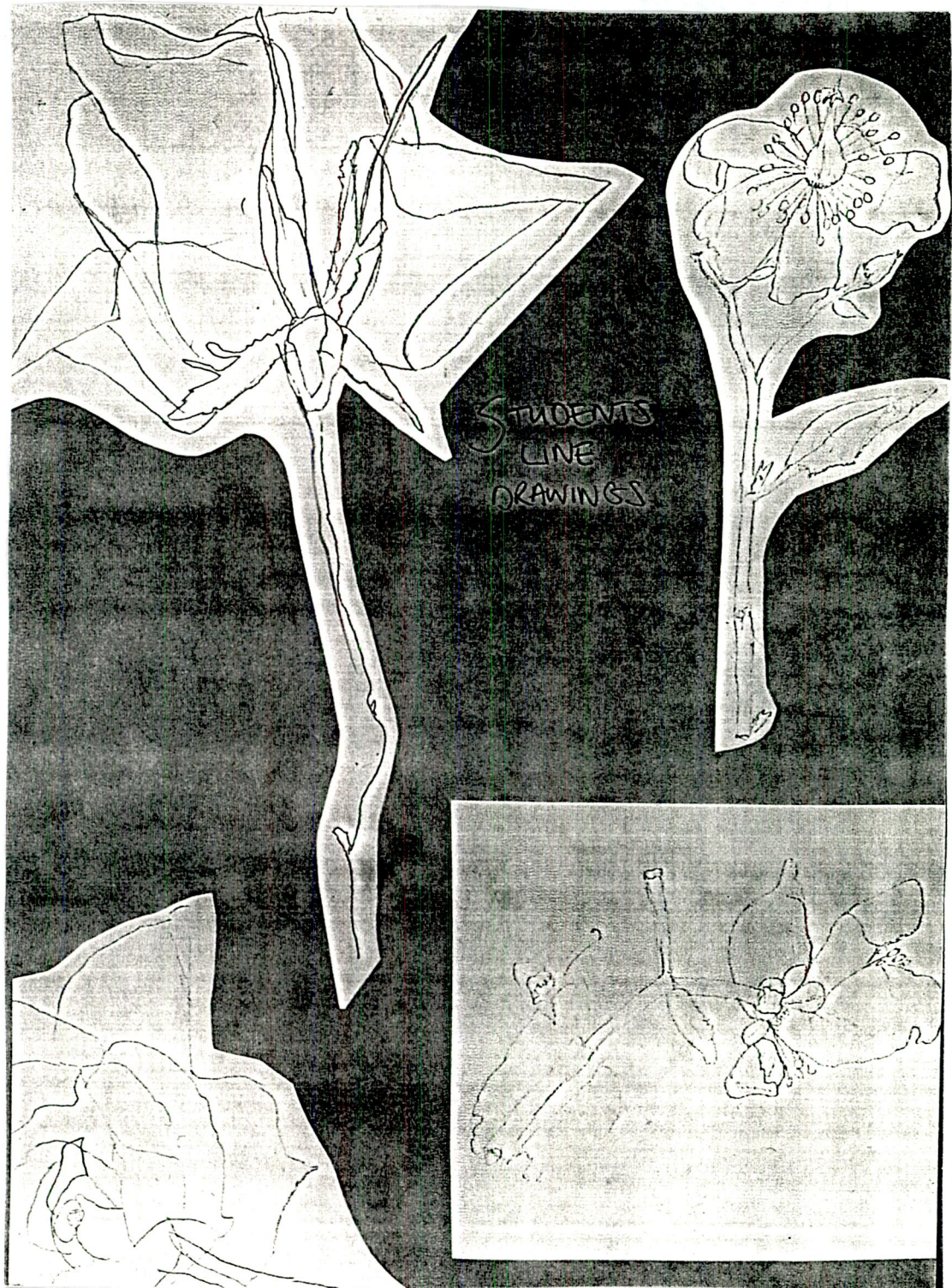


Fig. 4.2 Example of student's work





Fig. 4.3 Example of student's support studies



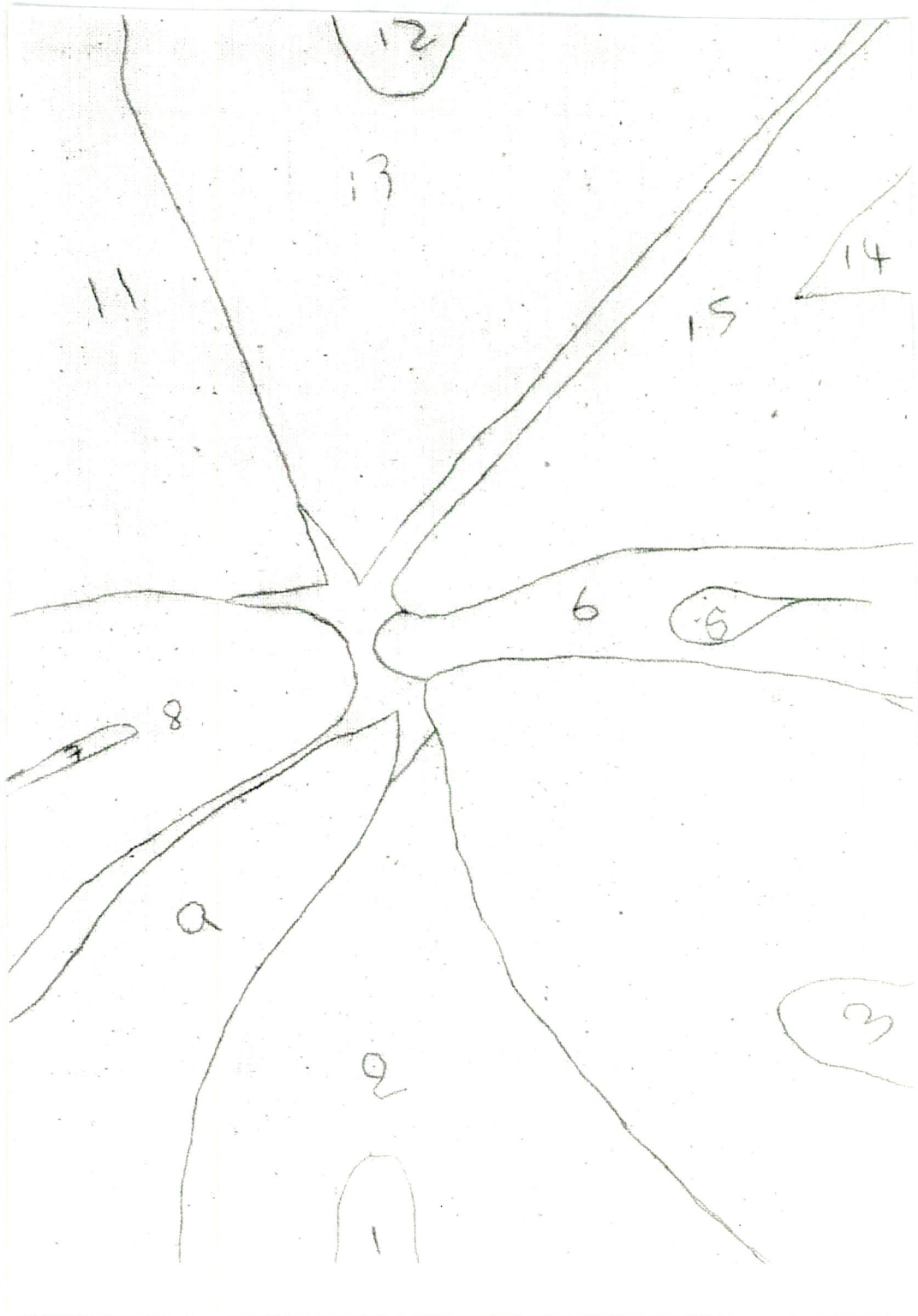


Fig. 4.4 Example of student's design





Fig. 4.5 Student's at work





Fig. 4.6 Student's at work



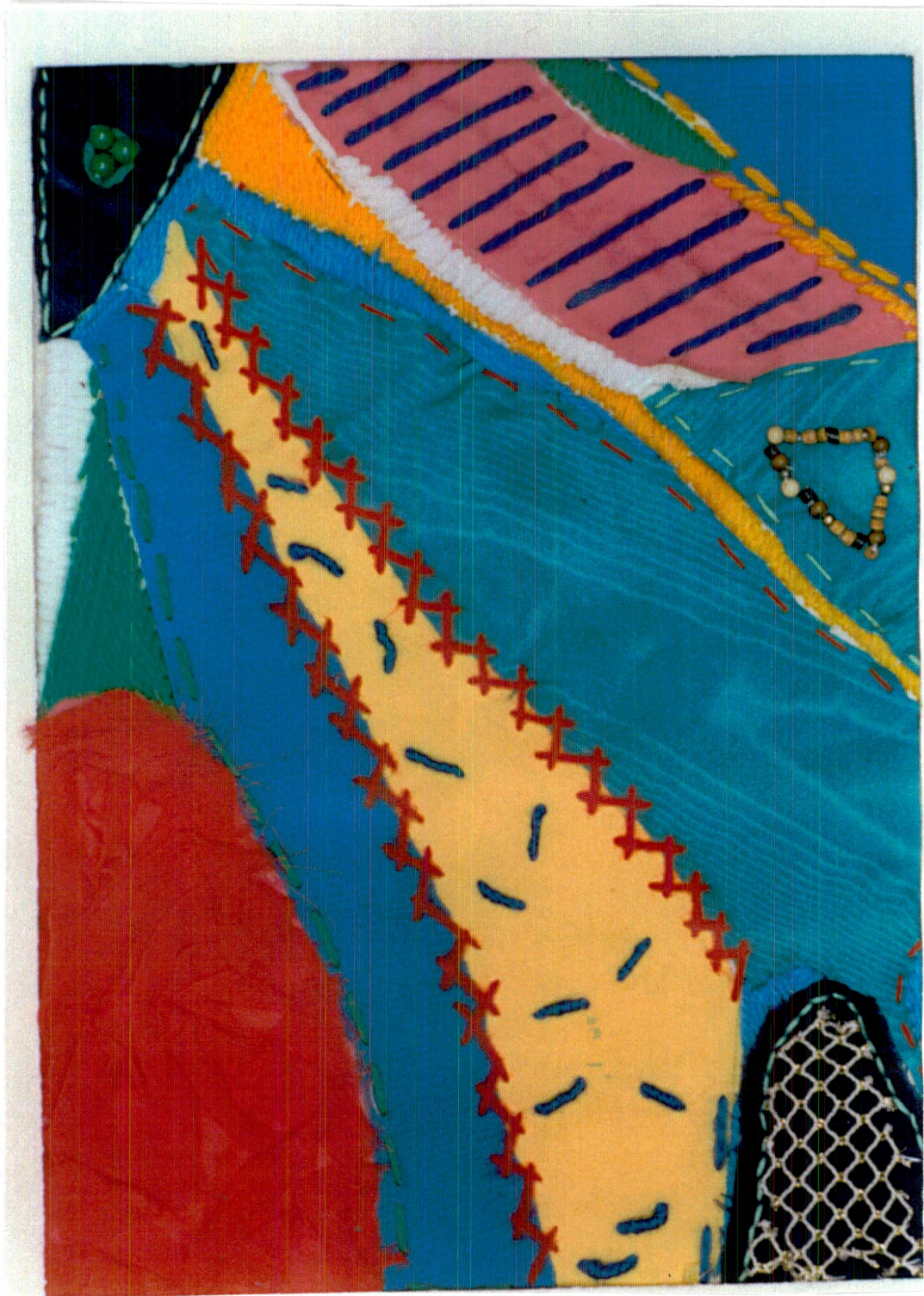


Fig. 4.7 Example of student's work





Fig. 4.8 Example of student's work





Fig. 4.9 Example of student's work

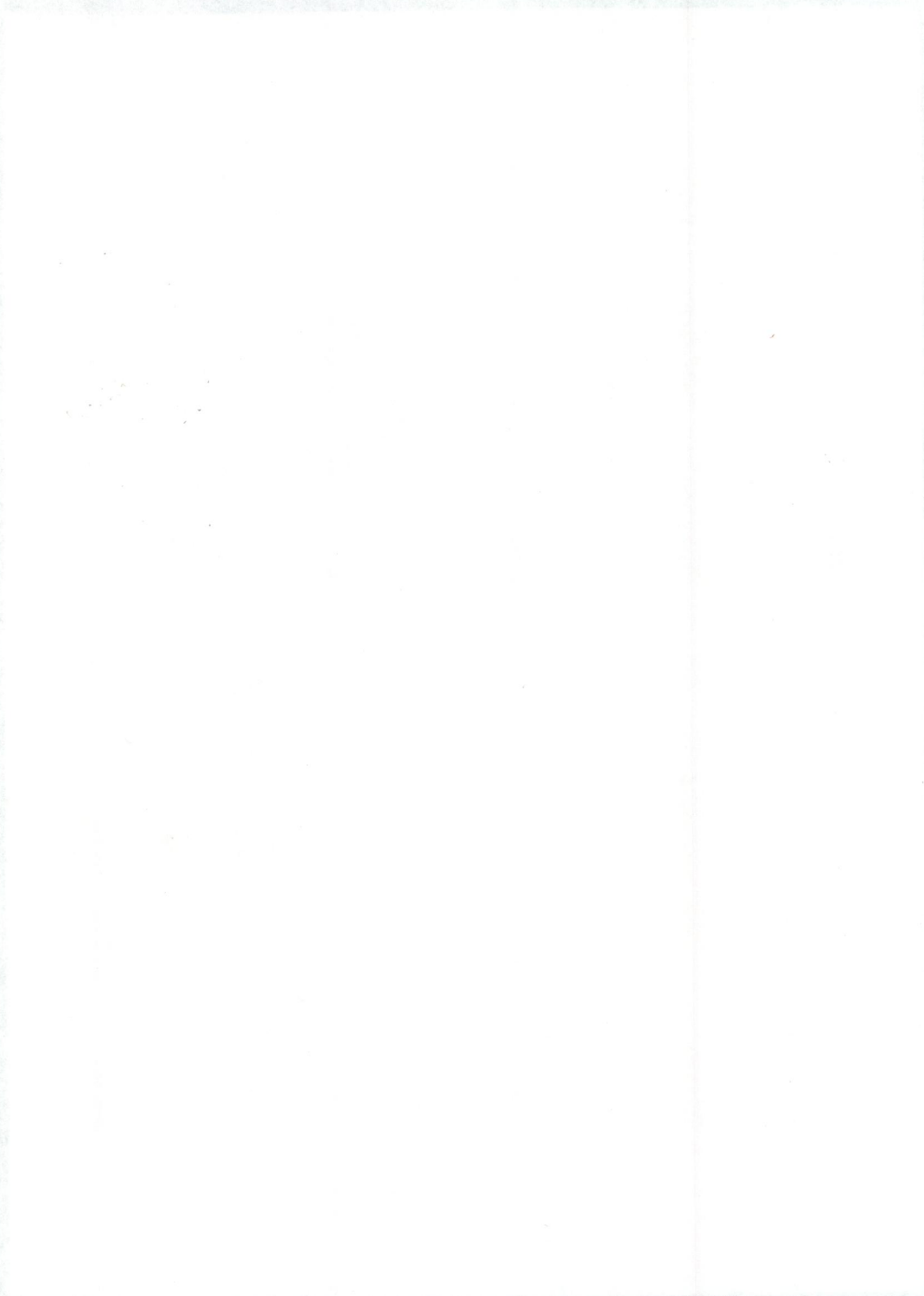




Fig. 4.10 Example of student's work



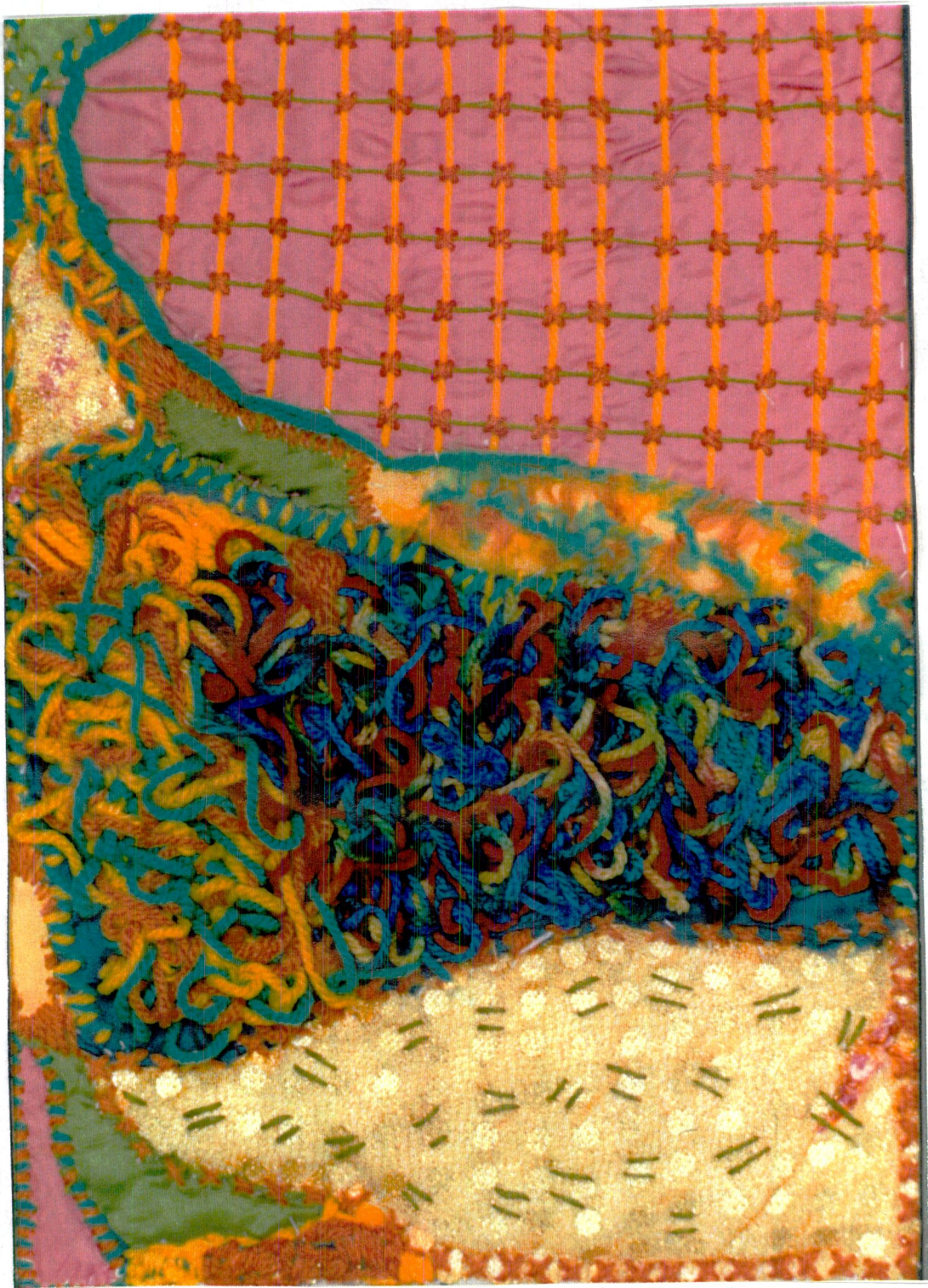


Fig. 4.11 Example of student's work



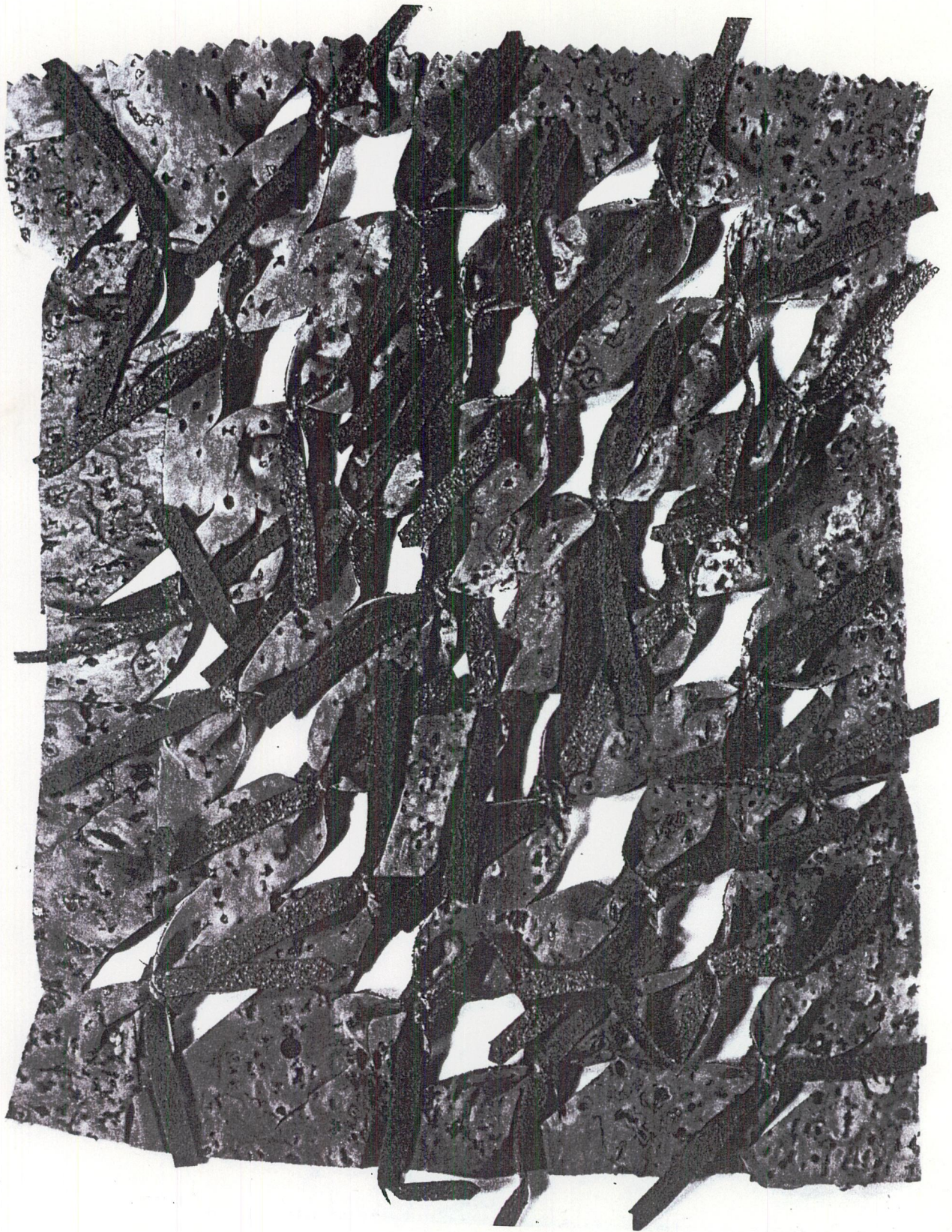


Fig.4.12 Art Historical Reference Used



Fig. 4.13 Art Historical Reference Used



Fig. 4.14 Example of visual aids used

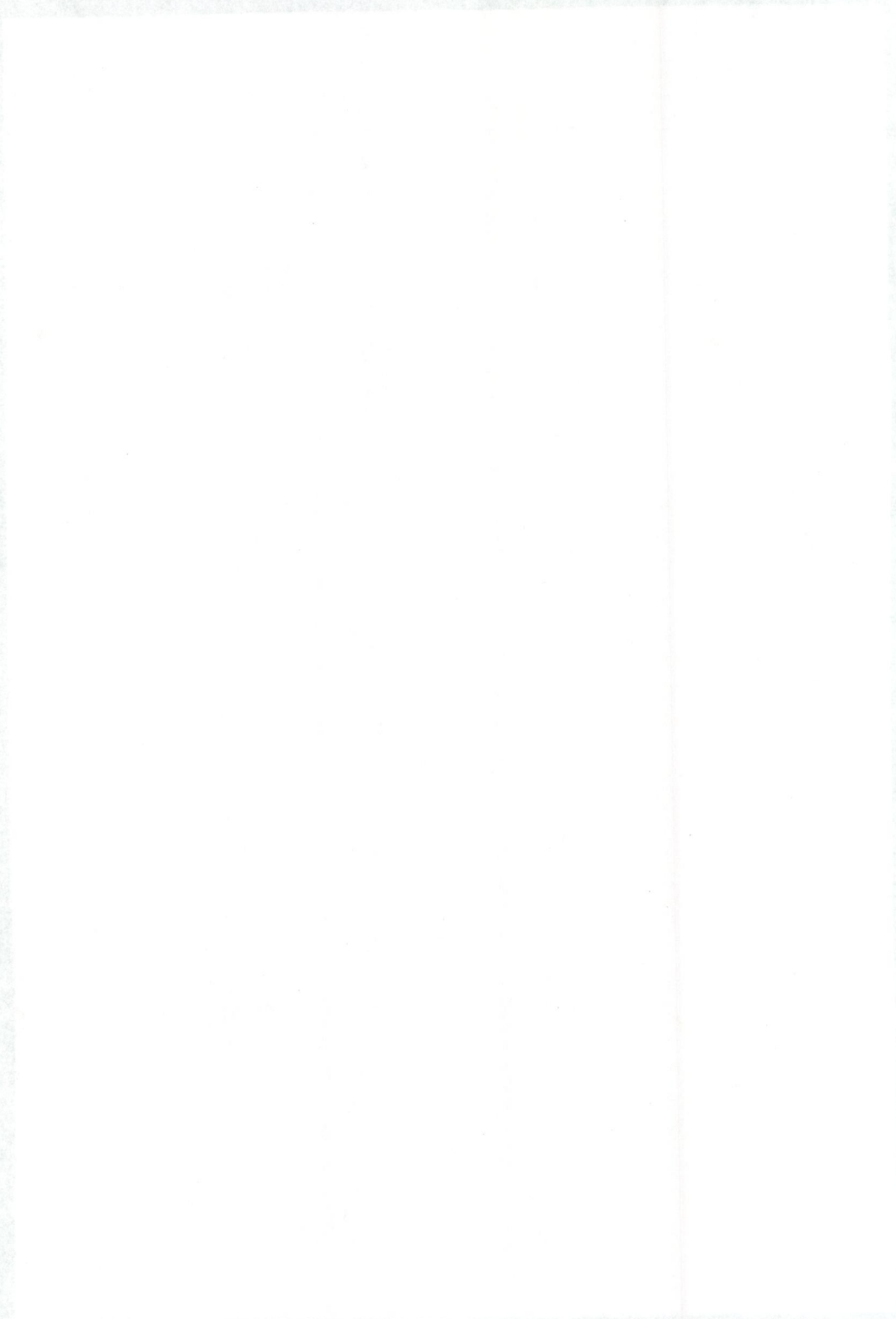




Fig. 4.15 Support studies used





Fig. 4.16 The Surrounding Environment





Fig. 4.17 A contemporary textile artist's work

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