

# WINNERSAL COLONIAS

THE MAGAZINE FOR PROFESSIONAL MIGRANT ARTISTS



## CHILD in ART

Sometimes I find  
a place to sleep

But I never dream

UNIVERSAL COLOURS



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These days I am busy with two exhibitions which came at the same time; one in Helsinki, which was on the 23rd of April and it did end with a very good feeling, but nothing more than the feelings.

The second one in London. I have had a lot of shows in London but they were not like this one; especially in this exhibition came people which I did not expect, such as Dia Azzawi, Avtarjeet and Hanna Malalla.

What stops me while I am writing these lines is the new experience of Dia Azzawi, known as he is one of the Iraqi reformists or renewal in the Iraqi modern art, Dia participated with us in the EU-MAN second large-scale exhibition which was in the year 2000.

Dia deserve all appreciations and admirations, not because he is an Iraqi artist "the country from where I am" but because he is an active and persistent with all of his surroundings, with all of his art context, his wide artistic circle, in all that art invents or reach of intellectual and artistic products.

The experience of this artist who came from Iraq on the early seventies of the last century, to live in London, is not only his art; but it is an experience of challenges which sometimes need confrontation, he challenges the reality that he lives as an Arab man in London.

One of his great challenges was when he put a huge panoramic art work in one of the most well-known modern art museums, the TATE Modern of London. Dia presented his work with humility to us, the audience at the opening ceremony "I say his work, even though it was one work in huge size" he said things that no one can say.

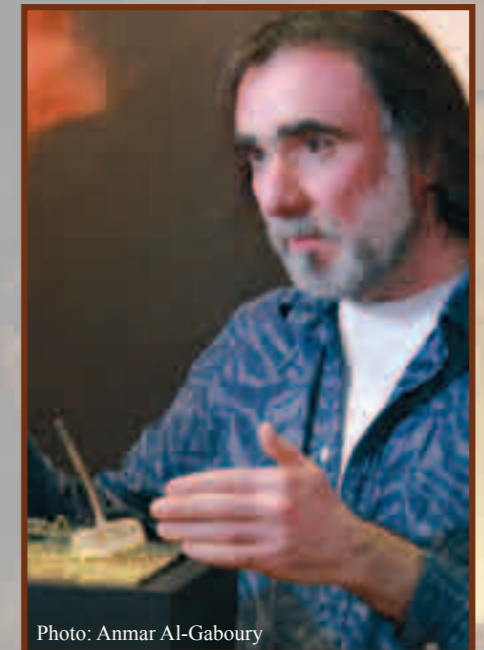


Photo: Anmar Al-Gaboury

The Arab man is not sacrificed, he is the victim

and the experience of this artist stopped me, let me ask many questions; does the migrant artist has a message, does the migrant artist fulfil his ambitions, because a lot of migrant artists such as Anish Kapoor and tens like Dia who proved their ability of alive interaction in societies which might not recognize them.

It is right that the world became smaller than ten years ago, it is true that we live the multicultural societies, all of us where ever we are, but unfortunately most of us do not comprehend this reality, he/she put a glass on the eyes which enable him to see only the past or what he/she produces.

But still, I told myself, we are in good condition, yes we are

Amir Khatib

## Parallel Worlds

Eija-Liisa Ahtila  
19 April - 01 September 2013  
Kiasma - Helsinki - Finland



Kiasma has several works by Ahtila in its collections. One of the highlights of the exhibition is *Where Is Where?*, which was donated to the museum by the Kiasma Foundation in 2008. The work is now seen in Helsinki for the first time.

Eija-Liisa Ahtila has since the early 1990s introduced new creative idioms into moving image art. Using images, sounds and stories, she constructs installations that embody alternating viewpoints. The viewer is swept into the stories. In her most recent works, Ahtila addresses the themes of globalisation as well as relations between humanity, animals and nature.

The exhibition book sheds light on the background of the works on show, as well as the themes in Eija-Liisa Ahtila's work that range from biopolitics to posthumanism.

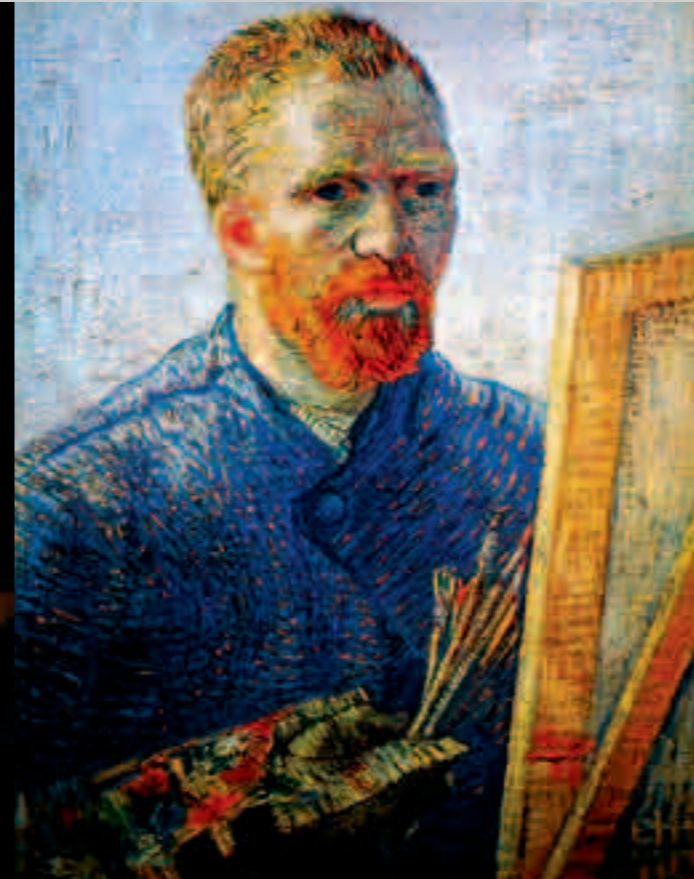
*The exhibition is organised by Moderna Museet, Stockholm in collaboration with Museum of Contemporary Art Kiasma, Helsinki.*

## Manuel Pardo Exhibit

4 May - 3 September 2013  
Emerson Resort & SPA N.Y.

The poignant and heartfelt works of Manuel Pardo have been widely exhibited in the U.S., Europe and Mexico. Born in Cardenas, Cuba in 1952, Pardo and his sister were two of the more than 14,000 children who left Cuba in what became known as the Peter Pan airlift. The airlift offered Cubans opposed to the Castro regime a quick escape out of the country for their children, however, parents were forced to remain in Cuba. Pardo and his sister survived under the care of foster families until they were reunited with their mother, Gladys Pardo, in 1966. In Cuba, Gladys Pardo was an educated woman and had a secure career as a medical professional; in the United States she was not qualified to practice medicine and instead worked 16 hours a day, 6 days a week, as a factory worker to support herself and her children. Gladys is a prime source of the images of women that figure so heavily in Pardo's work, and his devotion and reverence for his mother's sacrifices are shown in the way he adorns women in elaborate dresses, hats and stiletto heels, seating them in rooms richly furnished with swagged drapes, patterned wall papers, and paintings on the wall. His drawings are an adoring, grateful son's gift of extravagances to the mother who gave up everything for her children.

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## Van Gogh at work

1 May 2013 - 12 January 2014  
Van Gogh Museum - Amsterdam

The anniversary exhibition Van Gogh at work shows how in ten years' time Van Gogh developed into a unique artist with an impressive oeuvre. Over 200 works of art provide insight into Van Gogh's way of working, including paintings, works on paper, letters and personal effects of the painter, such as his original sketchbooks, paint tubes and only surviving palette, from the Musée d'Orsay in Paris.

### Masterpieces

Besides our own extensive collection, you will see top works from collections worldwide. Works which are rarely seen next to each other are brought together in this exhibition, such as two versions of *Sunflowers* (May-August) and *The bedroom* (September-January). A rich assortment of works by Van Gogh's contemporaries will also be on show. Pieces from the museum collection will hang side by side with unique works on loan by Monet, Gauguin, Seurat and Bernard that Van Gogh himself once saw.

The exhibition leads you chronologically through Van Gogh's development as an artist, from his first experimental drawings to his famous later paintings.

## The Shubbak Festival 2013

22 June - 26 July 2013  
London

Shubbak 2013 is a festival of discovery. We are proud to present new talent and new works from some of the most exciting young artists originating from the Arab world – wherever they may be residing – in your neighbourhood in London, in Brussels, or in cities like Beirut, Jerusalem, Cairo, Dubai or Marrakech.

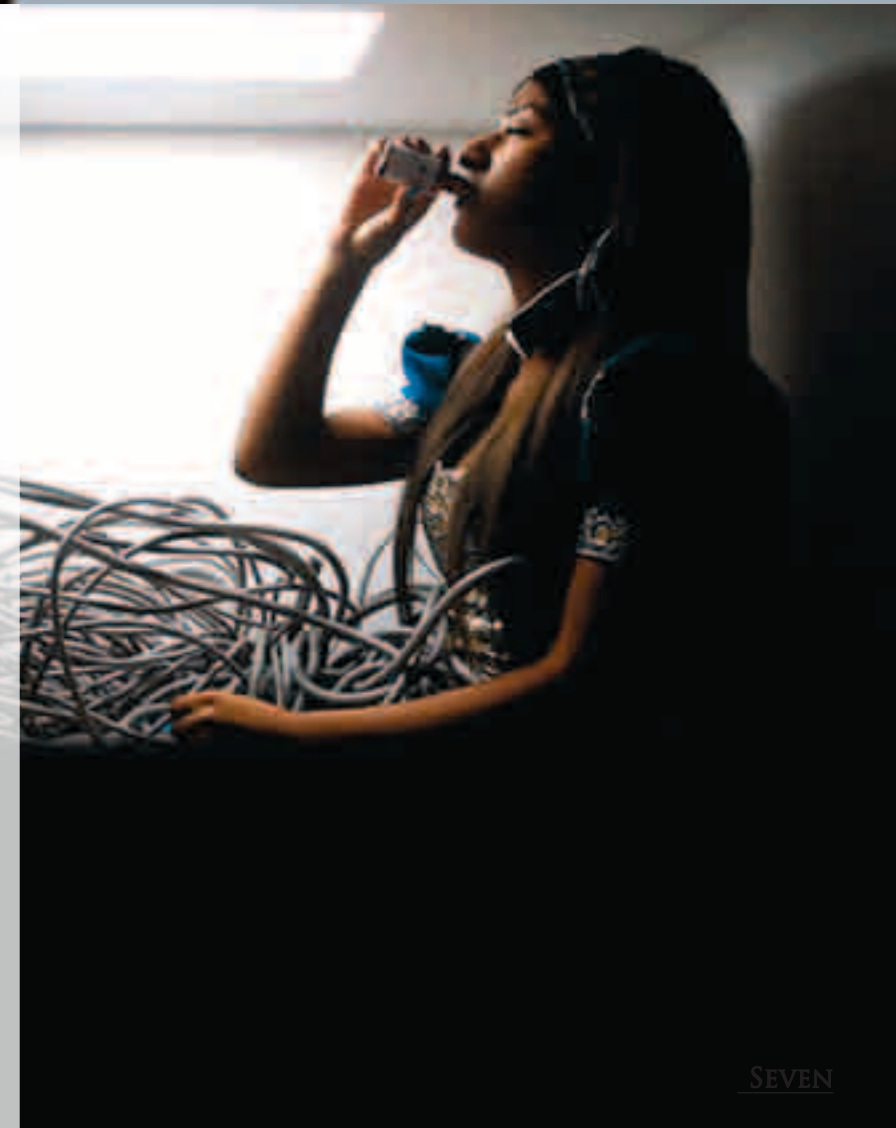
Shubbak is also a festival to discover or re-discover artists who have been pioneers in their fields for many years but have yet to receive the international platform which they so rightly deserve.

We have brought together a wonderful range of partners and locations – from the largest museums to the most intimate fringe theatres, from public squares to new galleries. Our programme spans free outdoor family days and large-scale concerts, thought-provoking talks and the latest films, with special late-night gallery openings and a wonderful closing party.

Artists are at the centre of our festival. Their imaginations open up new ways for us to understand our world.

Shubbak is the window to these imaginations.

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## Art in Berlin 1880-1980

Collection  
Berlinische Galerie - Berlin

The Berlinische Galerie collects art produced in Berlin since 1870. From now on, the museum will be presenting internationally acclaimed works from the fields of painting, graphic art, sculpture, photography and architecture in exhibition architecture designed by the Berlin architectural office of David Saik.

The chronological presentation of our masterpieces in an area of 1,500 square metres reflects the interdisciplinary orientation of the collection and communicates an exciting dialogue among different artistic styles: Art around 1900, Expressionism, Berlin Dada, the Eastern European Avant-Garde, New Objectivity, Art in the National Socialist Era, the New Beginning after 1945 and Positions of the 1950s.



**Amir Khatib** and **Sattar Fartousi**, two EU-MAN members, holding an exhibition in the **Iraqi Cultural Centre** in London from the **4th May to the 20th of September**.

A great number of people honoured the artists attending the opening ceremony.

Worth mentioning Mr. Ali Abdulredha, well known Iraqi critic, who did the official opening and came from Cardiff especially to attend the exhibition.

The Iraqi Cultural Centre is very active and interactive with and for the Iraqi and Arab artists who live within the EU region.



Photos by: Anmar Al-Gaboury

## Helmut Newton 1920 – 2004

4 April - 14 July 2013  
Museum of Fine Arts  
Budapest - Hungary

Continuing the highly successful tradition of the past years, in the spring of 2013 the Museum of Fine Arts, Budapest is again staging a photographic exhibition. The show will feature around 250 shots by one of the greatest figures of fashion and advertising photography, Helmut Newton, reflecting his most significant creative periods. The material will be assembled with the cooperation of the Helmut Newton Stiftung, the foundation taking care of the artist's oeuvre in Berlin.

These selected works provide an offer a look into his most important periods through three of his key albums. Private-Property contains forty-five photographs from Newton's best fashion, portrait and nude shots from 1972 to 1983. Newton published his provocative nudes between 1985 and 1995, among others in his own periodical, the four-volume HelmutNewton's Illustrated. The fashion and advertising photos taken between 1983 and 2003 for the major fashion labels (Chanel, Yves Saint Laurent, Versace, Vogue) appeared in the album A GunForHire.



## SPESSI: Horse with no Name

18 May – 15 September 2013  
Reykjavík Museum of Photography

The exhibition A Horse with No Name comprises portraits of bikers taken by photographer Spessi on a tour of the USA in 2011–2012.

The objective of the portraits is to make a record of the unique culture of the biking world, and provide insight into it. The project may thus be seen as an "ethnological" study of this "tribe," with the aim of gaining an enhanced understanding of the origins of biker culture. Spessi travelled partly by motorbike himself, and also by truck. In addition to Kansas – where he lived for a year – he kept mainly to Arkansas, Tennessee, Mississippi and Louisiana – the poorest states in the Union.



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# For the invisible children of the world!



**U**NICEF IS THE DRIVING FORCE that helps build a world where the rights of every child are realized. We have the global authority to influence decision-makers, and the variety of partners at grassroots level to turn the most innovative ideas into reality. That makes us unique among world organizations, and unique among those working with the young.

We believe that nurturing and caring for children are the cornerstones of human progress. UNICEF was created with this purpose in mind – to work with others to overcome the obstacles that poverty, violence, disease and discrimination place in a child’s path. We believe that we can, together, advance the cause of humanity.

We advocate for measures to give children the best start in life, because proper care at the youngest age forms the strongest foundation for a person’s future.

We promote girls’ education – ensuring that they complete primary education as a minimum – because it benefits all children, both girls and boys. Girls who are educated grow up to become better thinkers, better citizens, and better parents to their own children.

We act so that all children are immunized against common childhood diseases, and are well nourished, because it is wrong for a child to suffer or die from a preventable illness.

We work to prevent the spread of HIV/AIDS among young people because it is right to keep them from harm and enable them to protect others. We help children and families affected by HIV/AIDS to live their lives with dignity.

We involve everyone in creating protective environments for children. We are present to relieve suffering during emergencies, and wherever children are threatened, because no child should be exposed to violence, abuse or exploitation.

UNICEF upholds the Convention on the Rights of the Child. We work to assure equality for those who are discriminated against, girls and women in particular. We work for the Millennium Development Goals and for the progress promised in the United Nations Charter. We strive for peace and security. We work to hold everyone accountable to the promises made for children.

We are part of the Global Movement for Children – a broad coalition dedicated to improving the life of every child. Through this movement, and events such as the United Nations Special Session on Children, we encourage young people to speak out and participate in the decisions that affect their lives.

We are active in more than 190 countries and territories through country programmes and National Committees. We are UNICEF, the United Nations Children’s Fund.

#### Young child survival and development

Over the past 20 years, child mortality has fallen by 35 per cent around the world. Yet too many children still die needlessly, most of them from causes that are both treatable and preventable.

#### Innovations save lives

In 2010, 7.6 million children died before reaching their fifth birthday. It is a sharp decrease from 1990, when more than 12 million children died under age five – but it is not good enough.

With less than 3 years left to reach the 2015 Millennium Development Goal (MDG) deadline on reducing child mortality, this progress must be dramatically accelerated.

The interventions needed to save these children are, for the most part, known. Existing high-impact, low-cost interventions such as vaccines, antibiotics, micronutrient supplementation, insecticide-treated bednets, improved breastfeeding practices and safe hygiene practices have already saved millions of lives.

And in recent years, the global community has learned a great deal about how to best provide mothers and children with quality health care. This knowledge presents an unprecedented opportunity to save many more children.

#### UNICEF in action

The chance to survive is a right owed to every child.

UNICEF and its partners are leading global efforts to end preventable child deaths, working with governments, national and international agencies, and civil society to support effective and life-saving actions at each phase in a child's life — from prenatal care in a mother's pregnancy to effective and affordable health care through childhood and into adulthood.

Sixty years of experience tell us that we can turn back child mortality and meet the Millennium Development Goals by 2015. But we must act together, and we must act now.

#### Social Transfers and Child Protection

Since the turn of the century, many low- and middle-income countries have introduced or expanded programmes providing direct transfers in cash and/

or in kind to families or individuals facing poverty and vulnerability. There is considerable diversity in the objectives, design and implementation of social transfers in lower and middle income countries, but they share the overall objectives of reducing poverty and fostering economic and social inclusion.

The aim of this study is to identify and evaluate the known effects of social transfers on child protection risks and outcomes in low- and middle-income countries. It discusses how the design and implementation of social transfers can maximise positive impact, which can serve policy makers and practitioners in their future programming.

#### Basic education and gender equality

In the first years of life, children establish the cognitive, emotional and social foundation upon which they can build their futures. Early childhood is the most significant developmental period of life. A baby who is visually stimulated, continuously engaged in interactive activities, hugged, cooed to and comforted is more likely to fully develop cognitive, language, emotional and social skills, all of which are vital for success in school, in the community and subsequently in life.

Yet, nearly half the world's children — especially girls from marginalized populations — are likely to miss out on programmes that can develop these skills in early childhood.

Studies in developing countries show that early childhood development (ECD) programmes lead to higher levels of primary school enrolment and educational performance, which in turn positively affect employment opportunities later in life. On the contrary, children who start school late and lack the necessary skills to be able to learn constructively are more likely to fall



behind or drop out completely, often perpetuating a cycle of poverty.

UNICEF strives to improve young children's capacity to develop and learn, and to ensure that educational environments provide the tools they need to flourish. We want to ensure that no child is at a disadvantage and that all girls and boys can realize their fullest potential, both inside and outside the classroom.

Our work on behalf of school readiness rests on three pillars: children's readiness for school; schools' readiness for children; and the readiness of families and communities to help children make the transition to school. Together, these pillars bolster the likelihood of a child being able to succeed in school.

Children's readiness for school helps them make a smooth transition from home/pre-school to school in terms of their preparedness to learn and to the new learning environment. Schools' readiness for children ensures that learning environments are child-friendly and adapted to the diverse needs of families and young learners as they enter school. In turn, families'/communities' readiness for school connotes a positive and supportive environment at home, which facilitates children's learning and the transition from home/pre-school to school.

With this in mind, UNICEF's efforts towards school readiness include work at policy and programme levels on formal pre-school programmes, community-based ECD programmes, along with parenting education programmes and peer-led learning initiatives. In many countries, parenting education initiatives integrate adult literacy with parenting and life skills education.

In countries with a tradition of com-

munity childcare, UNICEF promotes community-based early childhood care and development programmes, as well as linking formal preschool programmes to primary schools, and using national standards for school readiness. This approach may also entail training traditional caregivers on the latest ECD practices.

UNICEF has partnered with the Child-to-Child Trust to develop Getting Ready for School: A child-to-child approach, which provides supplemental cost-effective and efficient interventions in developing countries that have inadequate formal early learning opportunities. Through this approach, older children are empowered to help younger peers gain linguistic, social and emotional tools for successful learning and to make a smooth transition to school.

Recognizing that ECD can be a great equalizer for the most disadvantaged, UNICEF's flexible policy initiatives aim to reach children who are poor, vulnerable and marginalized.

In addition, UNICEF calls upon societies to address gender discrimination from birth. By the time they enter pre-school, most children have adopted socially-accepted gender roles and models of behaviour, which have an enormous impact on their education and their lives.

By ensuring that children achieve school readiness, UNICEF also works toward the achievement of Millennium Development Goals 2 and 3: achieving universal primary education, and promoting gender equality and empowering women.

ECD programmes represent a cost-effective investment in the future of children and yield tangible returns for society as a whole. ■

# The sensuous conditions and its pure features

# Jaffar Kaki

By Salah Abbas

**T**HIRTY YEARS BEFORE THE NAME OF THE ARTIST JAFFAR KAKI was glittered, dag deeply in the memory of the modern Iraqi plastic art. But he continued his creative way in Europe, especially in Spain. He worked at the artists' professional chamber Goan Mero.

If we tried to turn over the history of this artist we would find that he participated in many international exhibitions and harvested a lot of prizes, in addition he had many acquisitions in the most important museums in the world. However we should here cast a light with a general view on some of the visual chapters of his life and look at the artist - which we are all proud of - principally in the name of his country that accompanied him in his creative works.

Jaffar Kaki confirmed his active presence through his understanding and his aim to modern arts and after. He invented a mechanism though his graphic work with a professional understanding to multiple techniques and moving the colours, implied lines also in creation of unity of subjective harmony between colour and stripe structures and the shapes which he construct or destruct according to the needs of the subject. How can we read his pictorial texts with neutral view and go with his understanding near to his anxiety?

At first sight, the works of Jaffar kaki seem that they obtain high degree of simplicity. They may inspire of abstract marks and create an atmosphere and coincidence in colours structure in spite of the existence of hard contradictions. The artistic values lead actually to ambushed aesthetic values when the feature of the tablet completed in its colour and form







sides. So it grants our received abilities a kind of recognition, increases smoothly every time in looking at lots of works. It is possible that these works effect our sight and may lead us to compete the artistic and technique values which we stack in before while we confront this quantity of works , we feel that our limits of sympathy increases step by step , and then his experience will be useful and stare to the future.

The tablets of Jaffar Kaki marked in deep perception and fertile imagination. But they submit to a very severe arrangement, even they seem simple form the first sight. He works of aim, faith and freedom when we astonish of the artist skilful and respect his experiences, that because he facilitate the function of the way which our eyes will take it in looking at the artistic works as a whole and gain the right of selective interpretation of his works, In this case, he was keen to add to his works free cultural values, with chaste aim.

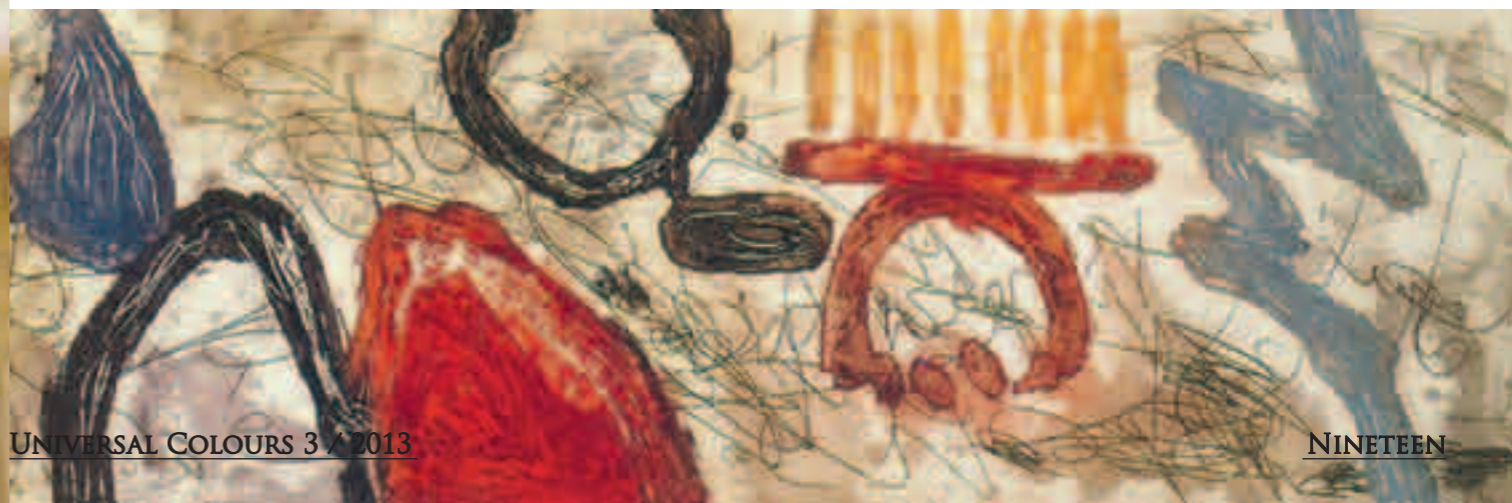


Perhaps the artist used the style of neighbouring and approaching among the colours and its feature in general , the lines and the nature of its continuous movement with hidden works , signs and pictorial units ,They may be overlaid but interfered in exchanging relations each with other so the sight and imaginative print and the lively effective experience make it more deep and very sharp allowed to create multiple works The colours, the lines ,the invest of condensed dough or deep digging in graphic works and the same of artistic and technical usage participate in activate the sensual sides We can consider the colours and figures as subjects devoted by themselves and to itself because they represent the sensual surface of the world .



When we attain a colour, its meaning hide in the way it seemed, Jaffar Kaki went deeply in the depth and mazes of human self in its different sensual changing.

But he organized it again according to expressive method accepted the probability and new vision in a dynamic reacted figure reacted with the out appearance of the tablet and the new changing in the world. ■



# Child's art in Finland

By: Amir Khatib

**A**RT EDUCATION FOR THE CHILDREN IN FINLAND is the best ever of the world, that what the statistics say, and as a matter of fact it is right, it is not only the arts education but the children's situation in Finland is the best ever in the world

Arts education for the children in Finland is not an easy task to talk about, it is very complicated

*"The cultural provision in Finland is abundant and Finns are active users of cultural services. Altogether 52 theatres, 25 orchestras and 132 museums receive government funding. The annual number of museum visitors is five million; the National Opera and orchestras have an annual audience of over 900,000 and the annual number of theatre-goers is 2.5 million"*

And if we go farther to look to the cultural map of Finland, we will find more.

*Attendance at cultural events increased in the 2000s, and differences between various population groups have evened out. The proportion of the population attending cultural events increased in the 2000s, and the differences between population groups are less significant. Still major differences exist between various municipalities in the provision of cultural services.*

*Awareness of the possibilities of fostering well-being through culture has increased. This provides a new springboard for improving the accessibility and availability of culture.*

*The number of those working in cultural professions has increased. However, professional artists in Finland only derive 50 per*

*cent of their income from artistic activities, while this figure in other Nordic countries is 70 per cent.*

We might reach a conclusion of these statistics that education is very high standard in Finland, but what about art education to the children?, as far as I know that there is more than 12 centres which professional working of educating children only in Helsinki.

And I know that there is more than one centre in each city, each province and each little village, this indicates that art is an important factor in the whole country, and the art education used a therapy sometimes to the children as well.

As well children are not used in any sector, they are the pampered people, unlikely in some other countries, children are used in any kind of industries an weather it is cinema or factories.

It does not surprise any one when the statistics talk about Finland as best country for the children at all, the art that they produce is a wonderful, the way they treat life is fantastic.

We just take a look to Annantalo in the heart of Helsinki, it is made special for the artistic activities of the children, if some one goes their, he/she will find all kind of art activities, this is one place might any one visit, or any tourist can go. ■

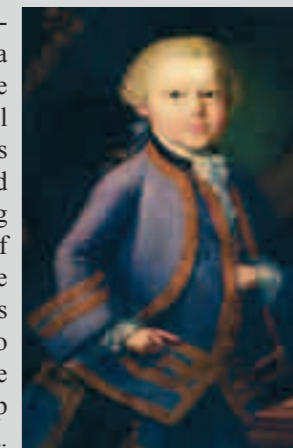
# Prodigy artistic semantics

By: Thanos Kalamidas



**W**HEN WE FIRST STARTED TALKING about this issue of UC I have to admit that the theme found me sceptic. An issue that connects the words child and art? Semantics. Of course it is semantics but in a world where the keyhole news reach millions through the net and reputations ruined with a click, semantics have their place and these are dangerous semantics. But then came Amadeus.

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart was a child in art and he remained a child till his very end. This music genius started reading and playing music in the age of five and in only one year he composed his own music. Lucky to have the father he had he didn't end up in a circus. Period. The other side of the child in art. Where the child becomes an object.



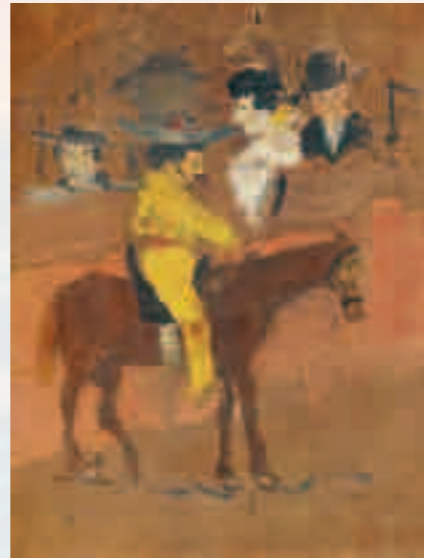
And there are millions of prodigy children in different forms of art including performing arts for ...children. The difference is that these children are used as objects, not even humans; slaves. But artists have been victimised all through history and children are the easy victims even when it comes to inspiration.

And children have given a lot of inspiration. From the teenage Kouros in ancient Greece to modern sorrow girls and the classic girl with the flowers. The symbolism of the naivety of the youth has inspired nearly all the artists and all forms of art. The "Miserables" is a contemporary example where the young protagonist literally steals the lights from the main character in the book, in the musical, in the play or the film.

So here we are with three huge pathways for the child in art. All three of them carry their bright and their very dark side to the limits of criminal side where tools of art have been used to explore, torture and destroy children. And then comes Pablo Picasso.



Pablo Picasso exhibited his work for the first time when he was just fifteen. And the "Picador" one of his most famous works was made when Pablo was eight years old. The master mind was exploring expression possibilities when other kids still learn how to read and write. And when we talk about exploring mind possibilities the Ukrainian Sergey Karjakin comes in mind.



Chess grandmaster in the age of twelve. Chess demands an organized mind with a lot of imagination. It is not a game, is a form of art where the brain is painting, sculpturing and performing in unbelievable speed. Almost inhuman or very human. Unlimited. Even though time was limited for Lucretia Maria Davidson.

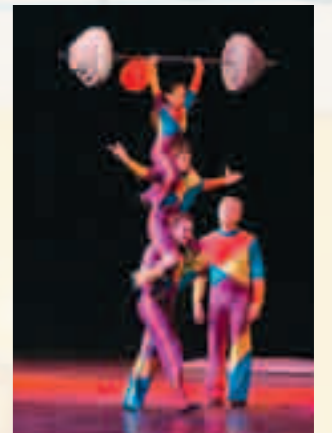
Lucretia Maria Davidson was a prodigy child poet, in the age of eleven she had already published her work and she was respected as a major poet of her time. Unfortunately and while her poetry was expanding beyond time, her life was limited to another five years leaving behind her only few of her works.

There is a film that has marked my thoughts for decades. It is the film "the elephant man" and the symbolism in this film are overwhelming. Is not the deformed young man the most heartbreaking of the story but the sense on how people especially young people, young gifted people can scare "normal" ones. And perhaps I've been turning to the same thing again but just think how many talents, how many prodigies disappear every single



minute, lost in millions just because they are not lucky enough to live in an environment that can take care of them and help them.

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart and Lucretia Maria Davidson were lucky because they flourished in an environment that supported them and helped them. But they were lucky. They were the exception that proves the rule and the rule has it that prodigies disappear. And inside their desperation and need to produce and create they become prodigy in self distraction. And this is where the state comes. But the state is never there. Defence, tanks and submarines are more important. Invading Iraq is more important than investing to education.



Educate the educators to understand and communicate art, to see and feel these prodigies and help them. Help them, not use them.

Another sad part of prodigy and child in art. It has always been a fashion to spot a child that can paint and make headlines. Even stage exhibitions and experts sell their creations. And when you dare say a but the answer is "they are only twelve!" The dark side of the child in art.



Actually I want to close with something beyond stereotypes and dark thoughts. Helene Schjerfbeck's paintings with children are a superb example of the child in art. The artist often paints her self even through her memories. The child is not an object or just an inspiration, is she, her memories, her inner wishes, her expression and her communication. The child is in art. ■



# A day in the life of ... a children's art therapist

By: **Kate Guscott**

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/social-care-network/2012/dec/21/children-art-therapist-day-in-life>

**M**Y ALARM GOES OFF AT 7AM and hazy-eyed I throw on my swimming costume and head to the lido across the road from my east London flat. By 9 o'clock I'm sitting in my supervisor's family kitchen. She's also an artist and art therapist, and is presenting me with a frothy cup of coffee. I always have a head and notebook full of questions and thoughts about the children I work with and always know that although there may not be a straightforward answer, that I will come away from supervision with a fresh sense of being ready to continue the work.

I share the concerns, observations and thoughts I have about these children and we discuss this and come up with directions for my work with each child. All art therapists must be fully registered with the Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC) and are encouraged to become full members of their professional body, the British Association of Art Therapists (BAAT).

Ten o'clock and I'm heading west, by bike, to my most frequent workplace, Bayswater families centre. I'm here Wednesdays and Fridays and in other schools and families centres across London the rest of the week.

When I get to the office at Bayswater, I'm always pleased to see a good friend and energetic work colleague who runs a mentoring programme called ChanceUK for children with behavioural issues, and my art therapy trainee who made an excellent start to her placement with me two weeks ago.

I spend the rest of my morning responding to emails. I send an art therapy report to social worker, school and family therapist, in which I recommend a parenting assessment be carried out and that consideration be given for placement of a child I have been working with for over two years at a therapeutic boarding school.

Contributing my professional opinion to the network around a child is an important aspect of my job, while being influential in this type of decision is one of the most challenging.

After briefly popping out for lunch I prepare the art therapy room for sessions. I am seeing three children today for individual art therapy. Over the course of the week I might see 15-20 individual children.

The children I am currently working with are dealing with issues including parental mental illness, domestic violence, drug and alcohol misuse, experience of war and bereavement.





Some of the children I see for art therapy are in foster care or are on child protection plans, often as a consequence of them having suffered some form of abuse or neglect. I tend to work with children where loss and trauma have been prevalent throughout their lives.

Many of the children are referred to me because their difficult behaviour has drawn the attention

of teachers, foster-carers, parent or carer, and extended family members.

This behaviour can have many different guises, from the child presenting as withdrawn and shut off to being aggressive towards others, or self-harming. Many of these children have never been given an opportunity to express themselves about their experiences.

Art therapy sessions are weekly and for many children provide a safe, consistent and confidential space in which they are able to use the art materials and play to work through their experiences and feelings with a trusted adult in order that some understanding and transformation can take place.

In one of the sessions an 11-year-old girl creates a bejewelled sword from polystyrene, which, she says, is magic because it knows who is good and bad and can only harm the bad. We speak about how and to what extent people defend themselves, what is enough or too much and relate this to her relationships and behaviour. I am constantly moved and inspired by the creativity, and resourcefulness of the children I work with.

I briefly catch up with the art therapy student before she leaves at the end of the day. I write notes from my sessions and lock up.

After work I head to a friend's yoga class and grab dinner with her afterwards. We have a lot to catch up on so I don't get home until almost midnight – when it's PJs on, and lights out.



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# WHAT IS CHILD ART

By: **Anna Reyner**

<http://artandcreativity.blogspot.fi/2006/09/what-is-child-art.html>

**C**HILDREN LOVE ART BECAUSE it's fun and provides them with authentic self expression: the freedom of choice, thought and feeling. How important is art in a child's human development? What does a picture tell us about the child who created it?

Children's art is many things to many people. To a parent, art is a display of their child's imagination. To an educator, it's a teaching tool. To a psychologist, art is a way to understand a child's mind. To a grandparent, it's a way to feel connected. To a librarian, it's a way to enhance book knowledge. To a child, art is a way to have fun, make decisions, and express choices.

Picasso wrote "Every child is an artist. The problem is how to remain an artist once he grows up." Is children's art an act of genius? Are children more creative than adults? Perhaps Picasso was simply impressed by the spontaneity of children's art. Child art, like most child behavior, is direct and uncensored. A young child doesn't critique his work – he paints freely and with pleasure, enjoying the fine and gross motor experience of moving paint over paper and watching lines, shapes and colors come to life. Art puts a child in the "driver's seat" and provides freedom: the freedom of choice, thought and feeling.

## Art is a Language

Do you remember seeing a photograph that communicated a whole world of feeling? Perhaps it was a famous photograph or simply a family snapshot that captured the richness of a special moment. A picture is often worth a thousand words. Visual images communicate emotions and complexities that words cannot. The ability to communicate non-verbally is particularly important for children. Art is a powerful tool that gives children the ability to express their thoughts and emotions long before they can fully express themselves with words.

Once you acknowledge that art is a language, the importance of respecting a child's artwork becomes obvious. Yet too often adults praise art before really looking at it, offering routine comments like "What a pretty picture!" Comments like these can actually be damaging to a child's self esteem, causing him to feel misunderstood. Pictures sometimes communicate sad or angry feelings that are not "pretty" at all. It's far better to view a child's art slowly and with quiet interest before making any comments. Over time, with

authentic and respectful support from adults, children will use art as way to draw out real feelings.

## What Art is Not

Art is not coloring books or mimeo sheets. Art is not copying or coloring between the lines. Art is not restrictive. To be art, a work has to demonstrate individuality. I like to distinguish between "fine art and applied art" – another way of saying "arts and crafts." Both fine and applied arts can demonstrate individuality. If a child's painting or Treasure Box looks like everyone else's, then there's no creativity or imagination involved. What's the quickest way to tell if it's art? If a child can't recognize which project is his at the end of the day, it's not art!

## Encouraging Creativity

- Take time with a child's art
- Show respect for the art and the artist's process
- Comment on lines, shapes and colors: "I see you used three colors."
- Show curiosity: "How did you get this effect here?"
- Comment on changes: "You're drawings look bigger these days."
- Ask open ended questions: "Will you tell me about your picture?"
- Provide fuel for creativity: "What other materials do you need?"
- Collect recycled boxes, tubes, lumber scraps. Make 3-D creations
- Provide a variety of drawing, painting and clay materials
- Avoid coloring books

## Parent Involvement

How can parents nurture children's creativity at home? Research shows that parent involvement in their child's education is positively related to learning and achievement. Art can be a wonderful family activity. Parents who understand the value of art are more likely to keep art supplies at home, designate a household area for "messy art," and become involved in art themselves. Parents and teachers working together to nurture creativity – imagine the possibilities!



TREAT THE EARTH WELL. IT WAS NOT GIVEN TO YOU BY YOUR PARENTS, IT WAS LOANED TO YOU BY YOUR CHILDREN



# Art in Early Childhood: Curriculum Connections

By: Jill Englebright Fox, Ph.D., and Stacey Berry, M.Ed.

[http://www.earlychildhoodnews.com/earlychildhood/article\\_view.aspx?ArticleID=113](http://www.earlychildhoodnews.com/earlychildhood/article_view.aspx?ArticleID=113)

**A**RT HAS TRADITIONALLY BEEN AN IMPORTANT PART of early childhood programs. Friedrich Froebel, the father of kindergarten, believed that young children should be involved in both making their own art and enjoying the art of others. To Froebel, art activities were important, not because they allowed teachers to recognize children with unusual abilities, but because they encouraged each child's "full and all-sided development" (Froebel, 1826). More than a century later, early childhood teachers are still concerned with the "all-sided" development of each child. Our curriculum includes activities that will help children develop their cognitive, social, and motor abilities. As Froebel recognized, making art and enjoying the art of other people and cultures are very important to the development of the whole child. The purpose of this article is to discuss the importance of art in young children's learning and development and to describe elements of an art program within a developmentally appropriate early childhood curriculum.

## Art and Socio-Emotional Development

Young children feel a sense of emotional satisfaction when they are involved in making art, whether they are modeling with clay, drawing with crayons, or making a collage from recycled scraps. This satisfaction comes from the control children have over the materials they use and the autonomy they have in the decisions they make (Schirmacher, 1998; Seefeldt, 1993). Deciding what they will make and what materials they will use may be the first opportunity children have to make independent choices and decisions.

Making art also builds children's self-esteem by giving them opportunities to express what they are thinking and feeling (Klein, 1991; Sautter, 1994). Sautter (1994) stated that when children participate in art activities with classmates, the feedback they give to each other builds self-esteem by helping them learn to accept criticism and praise from others. Small group art activities also help children practice important social skills like taking turns, sharing, and negotiating for materials.

## Art and Cognitive Development

For very young children, making art is a sensory exploration activity. They enjoy the feeling of a crayon moving across paper and seeing a blob of colored paint grow larger. Kamii and DeVries (1993) suggested that exploring materials is very important because it is through exploration that children build a knowledge of the objects in the world around them.



Activities centering around making art also require children to make decisions and conduct self-evaluations. Klein (1991) described four decisions that child artists make. First, they decide what they will portray in their art—a person, a tree, a dragon. Second, they choose the media they will use, the arrangement of objects in their work, and the perspective viewers will take. Children decide next how quickly or how slowly they will finish their project, and finally, how they will evaluate their creation. Most often, children evaluate their artwork by thinking about what they like and what other people tell them is pleasing (Feeney & Moravcik, 1987).

As children grow and develop, their art-making activities move beyond exploring with their senses and begin to involve the use of symbols. Children begin to represent real objects, events, and feelings in their artwork. Drawing, in particular, becomes an activity that allows them to symbolize what they know and feel. It is a needed outlet for children whose vocabulary, written or verbal, may be limited (de la Roche, 1996). This early use of symbols in artwork is very important because it provides a foundation for children's later use of words to symbolize objects and actions in formal writing.

## Art and Motor Development

While making art, young children develop control of large and small muscle groups (Koster, 1997). The large arm movements required for painting or drawing at an easel or on large paper on the floor build coordination and strength. The smaller

movements of fingers, hands, and wrists required to cut with scissors, model clay, or draw or paint on smaller surfaces develop fine motor dexterity and control. With repeated opportunities for practice, young children gain confidence in their use of tools for making art and later for writing.

Making art also helps children develop eye-hand coordination (Koster, 1997). As children decide how to make parts fit together into a whole, where to place objects, and what details to include, they learn to coordinate what they see with the movements of their hands and fingers. This eye-hand coordination is essential for many activities, including forming letters and spacing words in formal writing.

#### Art Experiences in Classrooms for Young Children

Although art activities help children develop in many areas, teachers must recognize that art also has value in and of itself. Fostering the development of children's aesthetic sense and engaging children in creative experiences should be the objectives of an early childhood art program.



Activities that involve children in both making and enjoying art are essential if programs are to meet the needs of the whole child. The challenge for early childhood teachers is to provide these activities in an art program that is developmentally appropriate and that can

be integrated throughout the curriculum. Such a program should include:

- using reproductions to expose children to masterpiece art
- taking field trips to local museums to provide opportunities for art appreciation
- providing access to a classroom art center in which children choose their own topics and media
- displaying children's artwork in a classroom gallery involving families in the art program.

To integrate an art program into a developmentally appropriate curriculum, adults must recognize that children express their ideas through art, just as they do in writing. Creative teachers find ways to support children's learning across the curriculum through activities in which children make art and enjoy the art of others. The following elements form the basis of an art program to be integrated into a developmentally appropriate curriculum for young children.

#### Using Masterpiece Reproductions

Posters and smaller reproductions of masterpiece art can be purchased at most art museums or through teacher supply catalogs. Less expensive reproductions can be obtained from calendars, stationery, magazines, and newspapers. Teachers can use these reproductions in many ways to support children's learning throughout the classroom and curriculum.

Reproductions may be used on signs to designate learning centers or label parts of the classroom. For example, Jacob Lawrence's *Builders #1* might be displayed in the woodworking center, or Jean Simeon Chardin's *Soap Bubbles* could be hung over the water table. Reproductions could be used to indicate gender on the restroom door or where children line up to go outside. Reproductions could also be used on bulletin boards to accompany displays related to thematic units. The work of Piet Mondrian might be used to illustrate a focus on primary colors or shapes, that of Claude Monet might accompany a unit on spring, while the works of Maurice Utrillo might go with a study of communities. Masterpiece art would not, in either learning centers or group discussions, replace the use of real objects or photographs as visual aids, but would provide children with another way of seeing and thinking about the concepts they are learning. Reproductions help children to make the connection "between reality and art—someone's interpretation of reality" (Dighe, Calomiris, & Van Zutphen, 1998, p. 5).

#### Museum Field Trips

Taking young children to an art museum can be a challenging experience for any adult. Museums are designed for grown-ups who engage in thoughtful reflection, not for active children who want to point and exclaim. With a little preparation, however, a museum field trip can be an enjoyable experience for all.

Many museums schedule special times for children's tours and family visits. During these times, the museum staff and other patrons expect children to visit, and special tours and support personnel will be available. If the children will not be participating in a tour planned specifically for them, it is important that the teacher select a few key items on which to focus during the visit. Artwork done by artists featured in the classroom or portraying objects related to thematic units will be of interest to the children. They will have a context for thinking about and discussing what they see. Because the attention span of young children is short, museum field trips should not be lengthy. Thirty minutes is probably long enough for children to view the pieces pre-selected by the teacher without getting tired or frustrated in the museum setting. Other exhibits can be saved for future field trips.

#### Classroom Art Center

The art center should provide opportunities for child-centered activities. Although teachers might suggest themes, too much direction or assistance interferes with the creative process. Adult models for children to follow are also frustrating because most children do not have the fine motor and visual perceptual skills to replicate adult efforts. Instead, teachers can encourage children to design and complete their own projects by recognizing that the same themes may be repeated many times as children explore ideas and practice skills.

Open-ended materials such as paint, crayons, markers, scissors, glue, clay, and assorted paper support child-centered activities. Although having too many choices can be overwhelming for young children, making a selection from two or three options at a time is an excellent way for children to practice decision-making. Lowenfeld and Brittain (1975) also "cautioned" teachers not to change materials or introduce new materials into the center too often. Children need time to practice and develop skills with materials if they are to use them to express their ideas and feelings.

Finally, it should be noted that the creative process takes time. Although some children will complete their artwork within a short time, others will need large blocks of time to design and make their projects. The design of the art center and the class schedule should encourage children to return to a project and work until they decide it is completed (Edwards & Nabors, 1993).

#### Displaying Children's Art in a Classroom Gallery

A classroom gallery exhibiting children's art highlights the work for the children themselves and for classroom visitors. A large bulletin board or wall space provides a backdrop for the gallery. Children should take the responsibility for mounting their work and selecting its placement in the gallery. Labels, including a title for the work, name of the artist, medium, and year of creation, can be dictated and will provide a meaningful experience with print. Children can also serve as curators and lecturers, giving tours of the gallery to classroom visitors.

#### Involving Families in the Art Program

Keeping families involved in the life of the classroom is an important responsibility for early childhood teachers. Sharing with families the role of art in the curriculum and the activities in which their children are participating will encourage their support of the program and of their children's learning. Family involvement can be encouraged in several ways. Inviting families to participate in museum field trips and classroom art activities provides the opportunity for shared experiences and discussion between children and their parents.

Teachers may also suggest at-home art projects for children and parents to participate in together. These projects should always be optional and teachers should provide any special materi-



als that might be needed in a packet which includes explanations and directions for the project. Brand (1996) suggested linking art projects with book themes as a way of encouraging parents with differing skill levels to feel comfortable in working with their children at home. For example, after reading *Lucy's Picture* (1995) by Nicola Moon, children and parents might work together to create a collage depicting activities they would like to participate in together from materials found at home and/or supplied by the teacher.

"Artists' knapsacks" for children's use at home are another way to involve families in classroom art activities. Four to five knapsacks, each featuring one medium such as paint and paper or modeling clay, can be available for children to check out and share with their families. Although the general purpose of the knapsacks should be shared with parents, specific directions for each knapsack need not be provided. The goal of the knapsacks is to encourage the same creative use of materials at home as in the classroom.

#### Conclusion

Through the art activities described in this article, young children will develop abilities and skills that have application in many other areas of the curriculum. Most importantly, however, children will also develop an appreciation for the art of other people and cultures, and the confidence to express their own thoughts and feelings through art. Far from creating individual prodigies, this integration of making and enjoying art in the early childhood classroom will result in the "all-sided development" of the children participating. ■

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# CHILDREN IN ART

By: Susanna Rustin

## GALLERIES: AN ACCIDENT WAITING TO HAPPEN?

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/artanddesign/2009/dec/01/children-in-art-galleries>

**I**F YOU'RE TAKING A SMALL CHILD to an art gallery, what's the worst that could happen? A two-year-old girl was among those requiring first aid at Tate Modern earlier this year after visiting Robert Morris's *Bodyspacemotionthings*, which featured see-saws and a tightrope. But parents and gallery staff are more likely to worry about the risk of damage children can pose to the art. Children like to touch things; they can be clumsy and are prone to sudden movements.

"We've had a few accidents, usually involving pencils," says Toby Watley, head of exhibitions at Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery. "Kids point to something that isn't glazed and the pencil ends up touching the canvas and making a mark. Luckily, we have a conservation team." Such incidents, ironically enough, usually occur when children armed with crayons have been invited to get really close to the paintings, such as in one of the organised activities that Birmingham, like other museums and galleries, has increasingly begun to lay on.

Museums have invested hugely in access and education programmes over the last decade, and many have figures to prove it. Manchester Art Gallery saw family visits increase from 32,000 to 77,000 over the last four years. Even grown-up and not obviously child-friendly collections, such as the Wallace and Dulwich Picture Gallery in London, now have family days. While parents are hugely appreciative of what galleries have to offer, and above all of the fact that they are free, most can remember a visit to an art gallery where they ended up feeling awkward and in the way.



Sara Holdsworth, head of programmes in Manchester, agrees that adult visitors “don’t always want hundreds of children racing around”, but says “just because the front hall has 35 buggies in it doesn’t mean the whole gallery is

full. Often museum staff can panic more than the general public.” She says they get occasional complaints. “That’s where you need really good front-of-house staff, who can say, ‘Have you been to some further flung place in the gallery? — the Goya etchings or whatever it is — that isn’t a place where families will be.’”

Watley says problems tend to focus around temporary exhibitions, “where people have paid to come into a space and may have particular expectations. If they’re wanting a specific experience, and something gets in the way, then they are more disgruntled.”

Journalist Dea Birkett launched the Guardian’s Family-Friendly Museum award in 2003, after she was asked to leave a Royal Academy show when her young son shouted at one of the exhibits. She believes things have improved a lot since then, but that it is a somewhat precarious peace. She thinks special events geared towards families provide cover for the fact that galleries do far too little the rest of the time. The reality, she says, is that “day after day, children and young people get told off in galleries” that are “overdirected and incredibly regulated. People love school groups, they love youth groups — what they hate is the unexpected child.”

In general, art galleries accept they have been slower to adapt to families than museums; the word “posh” comes up repeatedly as they explain why this is. “There was this perception,” says Holdsworth, “that museums were good places for families — they had dinosaurs and mummies — but art galleries were for posh people and connoisseurs.” It was partly to dispel their aura of hushed gentility that galleries developed the families agenda in the first place. Like other public service providers, they discovered that organising activities for children was the easiest way to widen their social mix.



Gillian Wolfe, head of education at Dulwich Picture Gallery for 25 years, proudly cites the example of the young offender from a secure home the gallery worked with, who learned to distinguish between Gainsborough and Pous-sin, and says the ultimate goal of programmes like hers is “social mobility”. It is virtually impossible to find anyone from the museums world who has a bad word to say about bag-laden pushchairs, biscuity crumbs or grumpy teenagers, and a member of staff at another gallery insisted on going off the record to talk, even in the most general terms, about competing priorities, and the fact that not everyone at her institution is wild about the toddler crowd.



Philip Athill, who runs Abbott and Holder gallery in London and writes for the Oldie, points out that later closing times have created a natural adults-only zone anyway. “Children should be in bed by then. I love the evenings, I think they’re totally gorgeous. I was in the Spanish show [The Sacred Made Real at London’s National Gallery] on Friday night; it was dark outside, pouring with rain. You’re nicely weary, and it’s emotionally very intense, an incredibly enjoyable time for going. It’s just a question of thinking about it before you go. Maybe it’s best to steer clear of Sundays at the Tate.”

When I suggest to the National Gallery that The Sacred Made Real, with its gruesome crucifixions, severed head and reclining figure of Christ with blood dripping down the cracks between his toes, is surely one exhibition where children might be advised not to go (I was surprised there wasn’t a warning at the entrance), I was told they had decided words were unnecessary as the poster said it all; and, in any case, Catholics — including one Spanish primary school — were very keen to bring young children.

Watley, whose children are two and four, says “the things they get engrossed in are never what you expect. It’s always easy to assume that buttons to press and things to move are what they’ll go to, but when I’ve brought my eldest daughter in, she’s spent as much time in front of



an enormous painting of the sea as she has with the interactive displays.

“The scale of some of our really big pictures is quite overwhelming for smaller visitors – especially in the Round Room, where all the pictures are large and dramatic. It’s all about experiences and memories, taking something away that they can talk about because it was interesting and vivid and different.”

Emily Pringle, a curator at Tate Britain and mother of children aged nine and 11, says young people particularly excel at the sort of contemporary art older people may regard as difficult. “Particularly at Tate Modern, there’s a sense of adventure because of the architecture of the building. My children find it a very liberating space. They are more media-savvy in lots of ways than I am. They can engage very easily with video art and installations. They tend to engage on a formal level – what’s it made of? – and on a conceptual level. I remember when I brought them to see the Crack by Doris Salcedo’s [Shibboleth], the first question was, ‘What is this doing here?’ So you’ve got a way in right away. With kids, there’s always that sense of, ‘What’s the idea here?’”

NOTE: We said before that a two-year-old girl was among those requiring first aid at Tate Modern earlier this year after visiting Robert Morris’s Bodyspacemotionthings, which featured see-saws and a tightrope. Tate Modern advises that this incident occurred outside the gallery and was unrelated to the Robert Morris installation, although a number of other accidents were reported to have taken place associated with the exhibition. ■



Helsinki Festival

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Walt Disney’s most ambitious animation project arrives in the Helsinki Music Centre as a dazzling orchestral screening. Helsinki audiences will be treated to a never-before-seen selection of scenes from the resplendent and evocative Fantasia and an accompanying programme of classical music. The highlight of the evening will be Sibelius’ *The Swan of Tuonela*, which Disney had intended to include in his film but which never reached completion. Now this historic animation will be screened for the first time in front of a concert audience, with the Helsinki Philharmonic Orchestra performing the musical score. When it first premiered in 1940, this genre-breaking and forward-looking film classic awed cinema audiences everywhere, as famous classical music pieces were illustrated by the near-psychedelic visions of the finest animators of the era.

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Conductor: Erkki Lasonpalo

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- Ludwig van Beethoven, *Symphony No. 5*
- Ludwig van Beethoven, *Symphony No. 6 (movements 3-5)*
- Piotr I. Tchaikovsky, *The Nutcracker Suite*
- C. Debussy, *Claire de Lune*
- Jean Sibelius, *Swan of Tuonela*
- Amilcare Ponchielli, *Dance of the Hours*
- Paul Dukas, *The Sorcerer’s Apprentice*
- Sir Edward Elgar, *Pomp and Circumstance*
- Ottorino Respighi, *Pines of Rome*
- C. Saint-Saens, *Carnival of the Animals – Finale*

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# Children's books: Guidelines for Choosing Multicultural Books

<http://www.rif.org/us/literacy-resources/articles/guidelines-for-choosing-multicultural-books.htm>

**M**ULTICULTURAL BOOKS CAN OPEN THE WORLD TO CHILDREN. By introducing young readers to new people and places, they can begin to see similar human qualities that are common bonds between all people and discover the wonderful differences that distinguish one culture from another.

## Check the Content

When choosing multicultural books, look for stories that include a variety of cultures with different family compositions. Books that include single parents, grandparents who play key roles in nurturing children, and extended families who share a home and each other's lives are among the variety that are available.

Choose books with minority characters who are independent thinkers and who face challenges and solve problems. Consider what kinds of characters make good role models, such as characters who resist moral or social compromise. These characters may achieve success through actions that are accepted and valued by their communities. They won't give up a behavior held dear by family or culture to "make it" in the world.

Avoid books that have characters with stereotypical roles and behaviors. Minority characters do not have to be "the best" at something to be valued and accepted by the majority group. For example, a character does not have to be an extremely talented athlete to win the game or be unnaturally forgiving when friends are unkind.

The following are some quick points to keep in mind as you look for appropriate multicultural books:

Choose books with strong plots and well-developed characters.

Look for accuracy in stories about modern-day experiences, historical fiction, and all nonfiction.

Look for books with culturally based themes and books about realistic, everyday events and activities that include characters from diverse groups.

Consider your own views about the author's culture and experiences.

## Illustrations and Photographs

Choose books with illustrations that depict people from different races in different ways. Look for drawings of characters that suitably convey skin color and facial details. Merely darkening or lightening a character's skin color to indicate that he or she is African American, Asian, or Hispanic is inappropriate. And avoid books that use stereotypical caricatures of a group's physical features.

Choose books with photographs that accurately portray present-day events. Captions on all photographs should be correct and specific. For example, an appropriate caption for a photograph of a city might read, "Harare, Zimbabwe," not the more general "Africa." ■

# Learning from Children's Art and Writing

By Ellen Booth Church

<http://www.scholastic.com/teachers/article/learning-children39s-art-and-writing>

**F**OUR-YEAR-OLD MICHAEL WORKS AT THE ART TABLE with a wide grin on his face. He looks up at his teacher and exclaims, "Look, Mrs. Kelley, my lines look like mountains!" As Michael moves his crayon way up on the page, then way down, creating a zigzag pattern, he clearly delights in exploring the creative possibilities of the lines he's forming. In many ways, art is the first language of the beginning reader and writer. Children usually draw or paint before they write. They use what might look like simple scribbles, squiggly lines, scratchy marks, and blobs to represent something else. The connection to writing is clear.

## Make the Connection

How can we help children make the connection between art and writing? One way is to introduce "art words." This is a wonderful way to expand children's vocabulary and teach them about the basic elements of art: color (names of shades, light and dark), shape (circle, square, triangle, flat, fat, big, little), texture (bumpy, fuzzy, lumpy, soft, smooth, hard), line (long, short, straight, curvy, thick, thin, spiral, slanted), and space (front, back, high low, near, far). You may notice that these words are also important in children's math and science explorations.

## Focus on the Process

We have all heard the expression "It's the process, not the product that matters" in regard to art activities. As teachers, we know that children learn how to think and solve problems by freely exploring art materials and language. As they "mess around" with a rich assortment of materials, children create their own representations in their own way. No two projects will look the same. Isn't that a lot like writing? A group of writers may be looking at the same object or situation but write about it in many different ways. It's best to let go of the models and expectations for a fancy or perfect finished product. Children's art and writing are always unique and perfectly their own.

## Look with an "Artist's Eye"

Art offers a perspective. It is looking at the world with an artist's eye that inspires children to create visually through art and writing. Looking at things this way means seeing differently. Art is seeing: shapes in clouds - rainbows in puddles - shadows on the lawn - texture through the

trees - lines on the buildings - forms in the dark - beauty in everyday things - up close, while looking far away

How does this lead to writing? When children draw what they see through an artist's eye, the words and descriptions seem to flow naturally. Sometimes open-ended questions help children's verbal or written expression. One preschool class became fascinated with the rainbows they saw in the playground puddles. After free exploration with watercolors and drips of food coloring on paper, children talked about their personal handmade rainbows. When asked, What do you think makes rainbows? the children had some interesting things to say: Rainbows are in puddles because they fell out of the sky with the rain.

Plants make rainbows. The colors from the flowers melt down into the ground and pop up in the puddles!

Puddles are rainbows on the ground.

You can only see puddle rainbows if you get really close because the color fairies make them and they are really short!

## Expressing Feelings

We all know how important open-ended art materials are as an outlet for children's emotions. A lump of clay or a brush at the easel allows children to express joy and happiness, or work through feelings of sadness, fear, or anger. Children express themselves through their artistic movements. Pounding the clay, making big swipes of the brush can be an appropriate and much needed release for a child who is having a hard day. When art is not highly planned and programmed into a particular project, children can freely express themselves through a variety of media. Your easel can be the perfect place for this. By varying the types and colors of

paints, the implements to paint with, as well as the papers and objects to paint on, you offer a year's worth of open-ended art for free expression. You might want to keep an unbreakable mirror nearby for children to "see" themselves and how they are feeling. The results can be amazingly powerful!

## Scribbling Leads to Learning

How did you learn to draw and write? Most of us started off in the scribbling stage. Ideally, you were encouraged to explore the feel of the crayon or pencil in your hand and on the paper, and you were not asked to "make something" that looks right or even recognizable. It's interesting that both art and writing begin at this stage. So why is it that when learning to write, children can get locked into trying to make letters perfectly rather than learning to express themselves? With the current proliferation of workbooks for young children, we are finding children at younger and younger ages asked to make a letter "fit" in the lines or to trace letters over and over. Scribbling in both art and writing is a wonderfully heartfelt expression of thoughts, images, and emotions. Let's celebrate scribbling as both an art form and a writing tool.

## Discussing Children's Art

How do you feel when someone judges your outfit or hair? Do you feel as though the person is projecting her own personal taste on your style? Believe it or not, young children can feel the same way when we talk to them about their art. When we tell children what we see in their picture and what we like about it, we are often imposing our own personal sense of style on something that may be very different from what they imagine. In the purest sense, art speaks for itself and does not need any further discussion or description. But, of course, as teachers, we like to invite children to talk about their artwork. Here are a few things to consider:

You can best encourage children to use art for expression by avoiding the typical compliments ("That's pretty!"), judgments ("I really like what you painted!"), corrections ("Nice picture, but remember that dogs have four legs"), and questions ("What did you draw?").

The safest way to respond to a child sharing her artwork is to not respond right away. By smiling and nodding first, you give the child a chance to think of and say what she wants to say about her work. Often, in that pregnant pause, a child will chime in with something she wants to tell or show you.

Sometimes all that needs to be said is a simple "Thank You." It is amazing, the power of those two little words. In this context they say so much: "Thank you for making this picture, for showing me, for working so hard on it." There is no judgment or generalized compliment in this approach,

just sincere gratitude for the artistic effort. An effective approach is the nonjudgmental descriptive method. This is describing, without judgment or compliment, just what you see on the paper. "You used many colors and some of them have mixed together to make new ones! I notice you made lines across the bottom of the page and squiggles on the top." This can open the doors for the child to tell you something more about the artistic elements you are describing.

## Sharing Artists' Work

It used to be that it was difficult to use the work of great artists because of the difficulty of finding good representations of their art. With the advent of the Internet, all that has changed. Have you discovered the "image search" button on Google? It offers the best quick access to almost any image, including the work of great modern artists. Just go to [www.google.com](http://www.google.com) and type in the artist's name to run the search. Up pops some mini snapshots of their work almost instantly. You can click on the small version to get the larger image and then print



it. Now, you've got pictures!

Why use great artists' work? It is often easier for children to talk about what they see and feel in another artist's creation than it is for them to talk about their own. When you invite children to look at the work with an artist's eye, you open the door for seeing and feeling what the artist is expressing. Of course, this is just what we want children to do with their own work! Talking about what the artist might be thinking, feeling, trying to say sets the stage for children to talk about their own work. Use the art to help children with their writing.

Show children pictures of paintings of several artists. (Paul Klee, Piet Mondrian, Henri Matisse, Jackson Pollack, and Joan Miro offer good places to start.) Explain that artists have a "style." Invite children to examine the art and discuss what they see. Children may be surprised to see that much of the artist's work is similar to their own beginning drawings. One class was excited to notice that the paintings of Pollack "look like the mat under our

easel!" As children realize that artists don't always draw or paint recognizable things, it relaxes the pressure they feel to draw something that looks perfect. In one kindergarten, when a child started to tease a boy about "just scribbling," he responded by saying, "No, it's my style!".

After showing children an artist's work, provide art materials for them to begin creating their own abstract art. Children might experiment outside with dripping paints on large sheets of paper to create a Jackson Pollack mural, for example. Children can paste colorful cutout lines and shapes to create Mondrian-style art. As children finish, ask them to study their creations and suggest titles. Provide file cards for them to write the titles using inventive spelling or let them dictate the title for you to write.

#### Creating a Sidewalk Art Show

Families are thrilled to see their children's art, and particularly enjoy seeing children's titles and writings. Consider a springtime sidewalk art show to share children's explorations with art and writing. Involve children in mounting and displaying the artwork on the playground or along a hallway. Hang a clothesline and help children hang their mounted works with colorful clothespins. Try attaching children's names to the clothespins for easy recognition. Ask children to draw "invitation cards" you send home to families with the date and time of the event. Children can help bake cookies to serve as well! Make a video of the event as families enjoy the art and writing.

#### Constructing Art Portfolios

You may want to start an art portfolio for the children in your class. Save any dictation, writing, or words children have for their work. When you review the work together, children will see not only how they have grown artistically but also linguistically. Involve children in the selection of the work they want to save. Periodically revisit the portfolios with children. Invite them to spread out their work, going from old to new. They will see clearly the progression of their artwork and language skills throughout the year.

No matter what goes on in your art center, the availability of paint and paper, clay, or just things to assemble will keep children inspired day after day. Swirls of color, joyous or brooding, or forgiving lumps of clay to be whacked and pounded are a refuge and an outlet for emotions, and fertile ground for ideas to take form and flight. As George Bernard Shaw once said, "We use a mirror to see our face and the arts to see our soul." ■



# BRING ON THE LEARNING REVOLUTION

<http://sirkenrobinson.com/>

By Ken Robinson

**I**N 2006 I SPOKE AT TED ABOUT DEVELOPING CHILDREN'S NATURAL POWERS of creativity and imagination. Returning to TED in 2010 I wanted to focus on the need for a radical shift in education more generally. Reforming education is rightly seen as one of the biggest challenges of our times. In my view, reform is not enough: the real challenge is to transform education from a 19th century industrial model into a 21st century process based on different principles.

Current systems of education are based on the manufacturing principles of linearity, conformity and standardization. The evidence is everywhere that they are failing too many students and teachers alike. A primary reason is that human development is not linear and standardized, it is organic and diverse. People, as opposed to products, have hopes and aspirations, feelings and purposes. Education is a personal process. What and how young people are taught have to engage their energies, imaginations and their different ways of learning.

In this talk, I make a passing reference to fast food. Let me elaborate briefly. In the catering business, there are two main methods of quality assurance. The first is standardizing. If you have a favorite fast food brand, you can go to any outlet anywhere and know exactly what you will find: same burger, fries, cola, décor, and attitudes. Everything is standardized and guaranteed. By the way, this "cheap" food is also contributing to the most costly epidemic of diabetes and obesity in human history. But at least the standards are guaranteed.

The other method of quality assurance are the star ratings guides, like Michelin. These methods do not prescribe what's on the menu, when restaurants should open, or how they should be decorated. They set out criteria of excellence and it's up to each restaurant to meet them in their own way. They can be French, Mex-

ican, Italian, Indian, American or anything else. They can open when they choose, serve what they like and hire whom they want. In general they are much better than fast food and offer a higher standard of service. The reason is that they are customized to local markets and personalized to the people they serve.

Education reform movements are often based on the fast food model of quality assurance: on standardization and conformity. What's needed is a much higher standard of provision based on the principles of personalized learning for every child and of schools customizing their cultures to meet local circumstances.

This is not a theory. There are schools everywhere that demonstrate the practical power of these principles to transform education. The challenge is not to take a single model to scale but to propagate these principles throughout education so that teachers, parents, students and principals develop their own approaches to the unique challenges they face in their own communities.

Standardization tends to emphasize the lowest common denominator. Human aspirations reach much higher and if the conditions are right they succeed. Understanding those conditions is the real key to transforming education for all our children. ■



# Highlights

## Avtarjeet Dhanjal Beyond the Object

Howard Gardens Gallery  
Cardiff School of Art and Design UK  
15th February - 14th March 2013

**C**OMING TO GRIPS WITH AVTARJEET'S WORK is not straight forward since its terms of reference belong to the world of philosophy and astrophysics rather than that of art, and yet they are rendered through the medium of the visual arts. The issues he deals with, head on, concern the nature of infinity. It addresses our perception and (attempted) understanding of that vast void that is the universe. These ideas and concepts pose questions to which we can, for the most part, only speculate and hypothesise, since our understanding of the vast tracts of space in which we find ourselves are almost impossible to imagine. The discourse this provokes is not the stuff of casual conversations about aesthetics.

When trying to evaluate any given exhibition there are fairly dependable points of reference and comparison. There are issues concerning levels of skill, execution and the clarity of expression of ideas, the sympathetic use of appropriate materials, and so forth. These are usually measurable and can be criticised or praised within their own context and in relation to other artist's work. However the language we employ to measure the visual arts must be, by definition, inadequate since the two mediums are not necessarily compatible.

My feeling has always been, and remains to be, that the actual creation of the work, (importantly this includes the making process), will always take precedence over our attempts to describe it in text.

The exhibition at Howard Gardens Gallery at Cardiff Metropolitan University was effectively commissioned over a short time span and was, to a major extent, made during the week running up to the exhibition opening. However, despite the short period of preparation the ideas with which Avtarjeet is dealing are the subject of extensive and long term contemplation and consideration.

The exhibition title, "Beyond the Object", refers to the situation the artist has reached: making objects, sculptures and work in 3D are no longer his central concerns in preference to installation and the actual process of creating.

Gallery Two at HG Gallery has been transformed into a single installation blacking out natural and artificial light and inviting the visitor to view (and walk round) a three dimensional rectangular 'chamber' open at one end only. The floor of the chamber forms a lake which reflects the illusion of the sky at night in gentle animation. Hundreds of tiny blue lights shift and change in slow sequence creating an illusory depth of perhaps ten feet. At the same time it suggests the infinity of space, it is a powerful illusion made possible by the suspension of several layers of lights in the canopy over the chamber.

To quote the artist from his recent publication "Light Over The Horizon - An Artists Journey".

"I create installations which are mostly ephemeral by

nature. I do these mostly for the sake of the experience of doing them or for the sheer delight of creation. On another level I make gestures to infinity. In other words, for me these installations are a way to revive/renew my connection to the infinite. My installations are not objects of any material value and can't be approached or accessed in terms of their market value".

Referring to a similar installation created at the ORO Gallery in Malmo, Sweden he writes. "My idea was to turn a small limited space of this room into an infinite space, where one could not see the walls ceiling or the floor"

The notion of infinite space attempted here, and the media through which the artist chooses to represent it, is limited by the nature of its construction and execution, which varies reflecting the amount of time given to its construction. This seems to be a reasonable balance, since the ideas are successfully conveyed. Many viewers visiting the chamber must have considered (as I did) the possibility of jumping into the 10 feet deep lake and beyond into infinity. The power of this illusion has been, however, transmitted by an actual depth of 2 inches of blue tinted water.

This installation is supported by a series of apparently simple large scale graphite and charcoal drawings depicting circular and rectangular 'voids', black and dark grey holes in space on large sheets of white paper. In earlier exhibitions these images were imprinted upon very large suspended sheets of paper and conical piles of black dust. This exhibition, and earlier shows are the product of many years thinking, observation and consideration. The show itself is the tip of a philosophical iceberg and Avtarjeet holds the key. Just how one chooses to describe or evaluate this work, it seems to me, needs a language beyond that of aesthetics as his work covers a very broad spectrum indeed.

Richard Cox is an artist and the Director of Howard Gardens Gallery. ■

# Highlights Monster Engine

## What children's drawings would look like if they were painted realistically

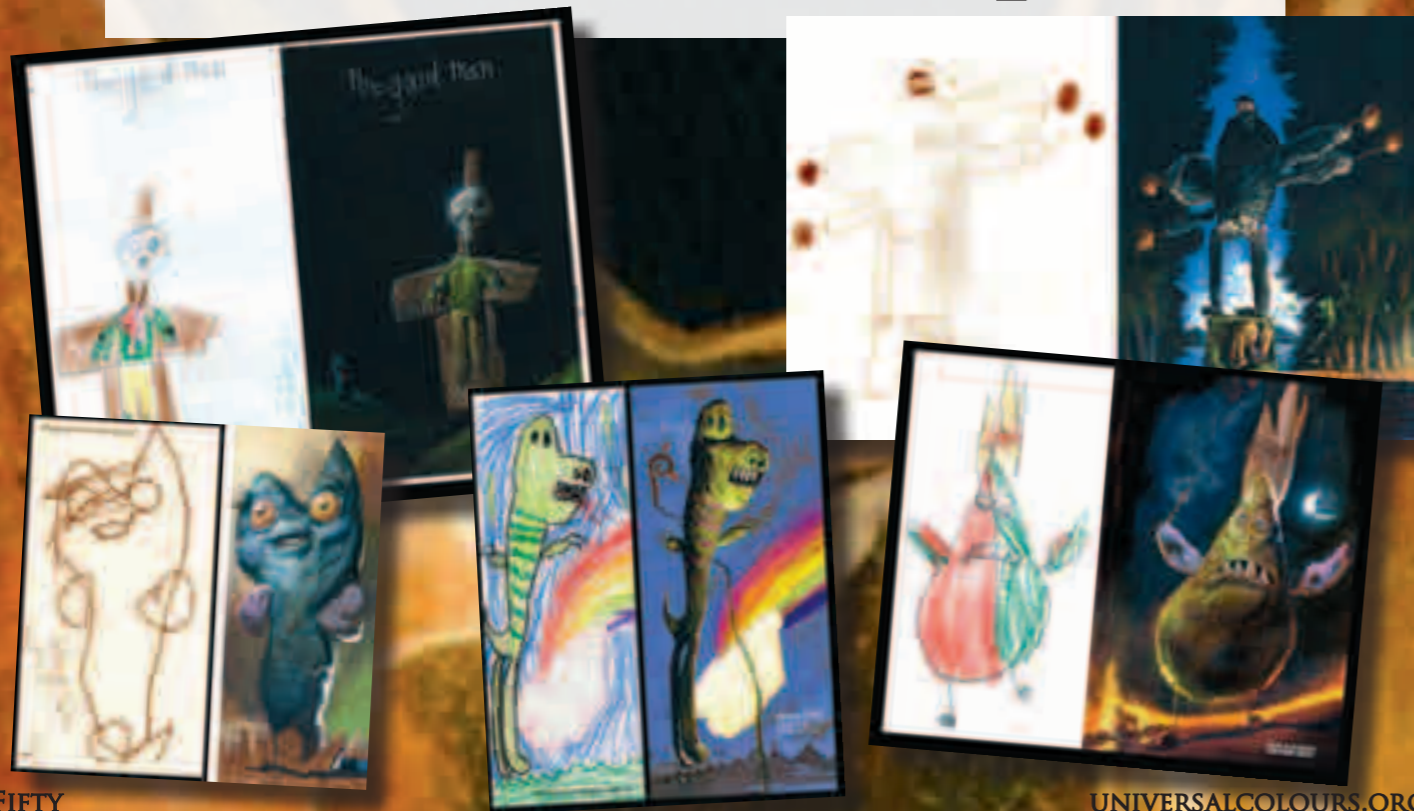
**T**HE MONSTER ENGINE IS ONE OF THOSE PROJECTS that make me love the Internet for its ability to expose amazing creative talent to a worldwide audience. Illustrator Dave DeVries started with a simple question: What would a child's drawing look like if it were painted realistically?

In his own words:

"It began at the Jersey Shore in 1998, where my niece Jessica often filled my sketchbook with doodles. While I stared at them, I wondered if colour, texture and shading could be applied for a 3D effect. As a painter, I made cartoons look three dimensional every day for the likes of Marvel and DC comics, so why couldn't I apply those same techniques to a kid's drawing? That was it... no research, no years of toil, just the curiosity of seeing Jessica's drawings come to life."

The Monster Engine is the 48-page outcome from that curiosity, and it looks wonderful. He describes the process as follows:

"I project a child's drawing with an opaque projector, faithfully tracing each line. Applying a combination of logic and instinct, I then paint the image as realistically as I can." ■



# Highlights Graffiti Art

## To boost your inspiratio

**G**RAFFITI (OR SPRAY PAINT) OFTEN REGARDED BY OTHERS as unsightly damage or unwanted vandalism. But some times, the boring wall is supplied with a true piece of graffiti art, making it a joy for the eyes. A new game from Atari, Getting Up, is based on tagging.

I made a collection of pictures showing these fine spray paint creations. By looking at them and studying the details, you could boost your (Photoshop) design inspiration. If you're not in to design, just sit back and enjoy this amazing form of art. ■



# fARTissimo

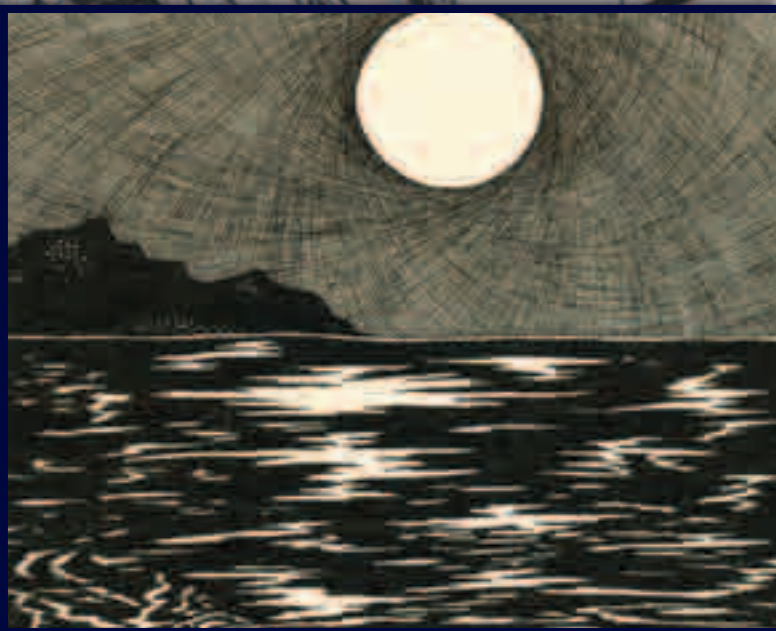
By Thanos Kalamidas

## Doodling a child

There is a child in art and art in every child. It always has to do with the depth and the wish to see what is projected. Not what is there. What is there is lost, forgotten often forgiven. Like doodling in a piece of paper, a napkin or a note. Trying to express projecting, ignoring out of boredom. Lost reflexes combined with new found feelings. Searching, discovering the already found. There is an eclipse of the mind in doodling, a minimalism of the logic dominion in curves and faulty lines. All the same colour. The lettering is part of the drawing, part of the message that is not in the words but in the worlds. The curves and lines, the lines and the curves.

She's in search for what she lost but she has no memory of it. Perhaps it was big, perhaps it was small, it was in different places and different times. But it was there. And doodling slowly she tries to find it. She tries to listen but the voices only disturb the music, it is somewhere there and she has to find it. Art is a process of the mind and doodling is only in the hand.

Out of boredom, in search of a lost touch and the need to lose it all over again, she draws pathways in monochromatic rainbows. Taking orders. I want you to write this, and she never thought to say ...why? The pathways lead out of the walls, or at least she says so. But there are more walls and the touch is not there. And the search continues for what is lost and she has no memory of it. Then it becomes boredom, a logic dominion of curves and faulty lines. The inner doodling belongs to Magda Dasaki, the curves and the pathways to her wants cryptographically still to come.



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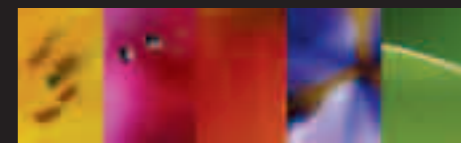
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# Sharing

By Avtarjeet Dhanjal

**WE ALL ARE CONTINUOUSLY WRITING OUR STORIES**, not necessarily with pen on paper but through our actions and interactions with the people, places and the objects we gather around us.

When you invite someone to share your food at home, you are sharing a lot more than just the food. You are allowing the visitor to know, where you live, how you live, your relationship with your space, with food, and with the people and objects you around you.

It's very much like allowing your guest to read a chapter of book of your life. Some people are afraid to share such personal information with their friends; they would rather meet you in a restaurant and pay for your meal instead of inviting you home.

During my recent visit to Minsk Belarus in February this year (2013), the Belarusian National University arranged its international guests to stay at its guesthouse, and we had our meals in the canteen served by these expressionless women, those give you expression that they had discarded their souls a long time ago and now working as robots in the service of their duty and the nation.

I always wondered how people lived at home and what kind of food they ate. Being aware of my curiosity, one day my guide/interpreter brought some home cooked pancakes for me, that we shared at lunch. After tasting these delicious pancakes, somehow I felt if these very simple pancakes had created my link to the people of the country. On my last

evening, Ira, a young lady whom I had met during my seminar at the University, invited me and my guide to her home for a meal and couple of her other friends.

This was my first glimpse in to the life a young Belarusian woman. Ira has a deep interest in Indian yoga, that could be seen the way she had decorated her apartment. Each object was carefully chosen and presented in a way that expressed here care and respect for each object how simple may it be. Yes it was like reading a chapter from the book of her life.

Allowing a stranger to peep into your private life, such gestures vary from culture to culture, which depends upon one's upbringing, which comes from local cultural practices. Those cultural practices are again impacted upon by several factor including climate, geographical location and history of the land.

Looking back in human history, man had been a hunter gatherer without any fixed abode. The idea of 'privacy' or sense of 'ownership' was not part of its conceptual vocabulary until man discovered cereals and started to cultivate them methodically. Cultivating cereals and tending them needed one to stay around the field for extended periods, as a result man started to build more stable shelters.

This very act of cultivation and building more stable shelters gave the cultivators sense of ownership of the crop and the shelters they had built. Further introduction of the shuttered portals to these shelters developed the idea of private space within the shelter and public space outside. It is also thought that such stabilisation of life also helped to develop stable relationships between man and woman, and their off springs.

Some animals and birds also have this sense of territory and of the female companions, and mating preferences, but modern man has taken this idea of privacy and ownership to the point of intolerance of the others' presence within the space around them.



It is also thought that humans those lived in colder climates started to establish their stable shelters much earlier than humans living in warmer climate. As a result even in this 21st century, some of the tribes in Africa and other temperate regions of the world still continue to live as hunter gatherers.

Today people living in colder countries tend to spend major part of their lives indoors, as a result they would hesitate to invite someone into their house, which is considered their private space.

Where the case for residents of the warm countries is exactly the opposite; they tend to spend major part of their time in open spaces, which by the very fact of being open, is shared with the other people, may it be with the members of an extended family, of just neighbours.

I remember growing in the Panjab, in our house, the large front room with a large portal opening to the street was kept wide open most of the day, and visitors could walk in almost any time of the day. During summer months most people slept either in the open courtyards or on the roof terraces of their homes, where there was little privacy for an individual or for the most intimate relationships between couples.

Now I have lived in Europe for nearly four decades, I still tend to leave my front door unlocked most of the day, while I am around.

When I came to live in England, the idea of 'Private Property' came as a bit of shock to me. I remember once walking in the English countryside with a friend, we lost our way, I knocked at the door of a house that was at the corner from where we needed to turn one way or the other. The woman who opened the door, before letting me to speak, pointed to me that I had entered or trespassed onto her private property. Where in very similar circumstances, while I was walking in the Spanish countryside, I asked a Spanish farmer in my broken Spanish to help me with directions, and the farmer after a little conversation invited me to his farmhouse for glass of wine before sending off to the direction I needed to go. Of course Spain is a warmer country than English countryside.



I think issue of sharing and generosity is more complex than simple question of warmer and cold climate.

During my travelling in Europe early 1980s, I had to stop at a small border town between France and Spain. I needed to look for a hotel for the night, and I was trying to communicate, with my limited Spanish, with the barman at a local restaurant/bar; seeing my difficulty a man came to my help from one of the tables, and he told me that he spoke English and offered to help me. He rather invited me to his table. Once I was at the table, he introduced himself as Geoff, and his lady partner as Katherine. They invited me to share a glass of wine with them while I told them about how I ended up at that place.

Geoff originally from North Wales, had migrated to Australia, where he met Katherine. They both were teachers, and Geoff owned a small cottage about three miles on the French side of the border. Very soon they told me that I did not need to look for a hotel, they would be very happy if had stayed with them for the night, though they had one bedroom in the cottage.

Soon after our introduction Geoff and Katherine drove to a small village, which was mostly dark by this time of the evening, where they had really a small cottage, converted from a farmer's chicken shed. The cottage had a living room, a tiny kitchen and a equally tiny bathroom on the ground floor a bedroom upstairs connected by a wooden staircase.

Once we were settled in, Geoff lighted a wood fire in the fireplace, and Katherine invited me to the kitchen, and very excitedly showed me several tins of Indian spices. She indirectly asked Geoff if he would cook an Indian meal for the evening. I offered to help in preparation of the food.

Once the meal was on the table, and we were drinking more red wine, I told my hosts that I felt like if I was in a dream world, not sure what I was experiencing, whether it was real. Since only an hour ago, I was a homeless stranger in this small town, and now I was sitting in a warm place and served with an India meal. Geoff got up and found a cassette of recording of some Indian film songs, which he carried with him since his travels in India a decade earlier. Once Indian music was playing on the cassette player, Geoff said, yes now dream was complete.

# Last Drop

Later Geoff and Katherine told me that they were only returning a tiny part of the favours they received while both travelled in India, where very often they were invited to people's homes, though they had just met them.

Here in Shropshire, I met John & Rita, a couple, I found them surprising open and friendly; whenever I visited them or sometime I just dropped in unannounced, Rita would always fix a pot of tea and invariably it was accompanied with a freshly cooked piece of case; if she had always expected someone to drop by.

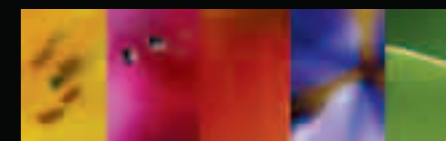
Very soon, I also found something unusual in their household, whenever their phone rang, John would shout, "Rita, a call for you." And John never answered the phone. One day I asked John about this anomaly; he responded that he had no friends and nobody ever rings him home.

It raised my curiosity about John, one day I invited him for a walk; John explained me reason behind his statement of not having any friends. He was brought up in Yorkshire, stayed home till he was 16. He could not recall a single incident when someone a friend of a relative had come to stay with the family for the night during all his growing up years, nor he was encouraged by his parents to invite any of his school mates to their home. When John left school it was time of the Second World War, he joined the Air Force. There again they were trained not to be close friends, in case one of them was killed in action, others would not be heartbroken. So John never learnt how to make friends.

After the War on his return from the Air Force, John joined the Police; again the training emphasised not to be too close friends with really anyone. Though John was a very warm person, but his upbringing and later his job training left him without any friends.

Rita was brought up on a tea estate in Assam in eastern India; of course offering a pot of tea to any visitor was a normal act in the household she grew up, even when someone dropped by unannounced. One is not surprised that phone always rang for Rita not for John.

Avtarjeet Dhanjal



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