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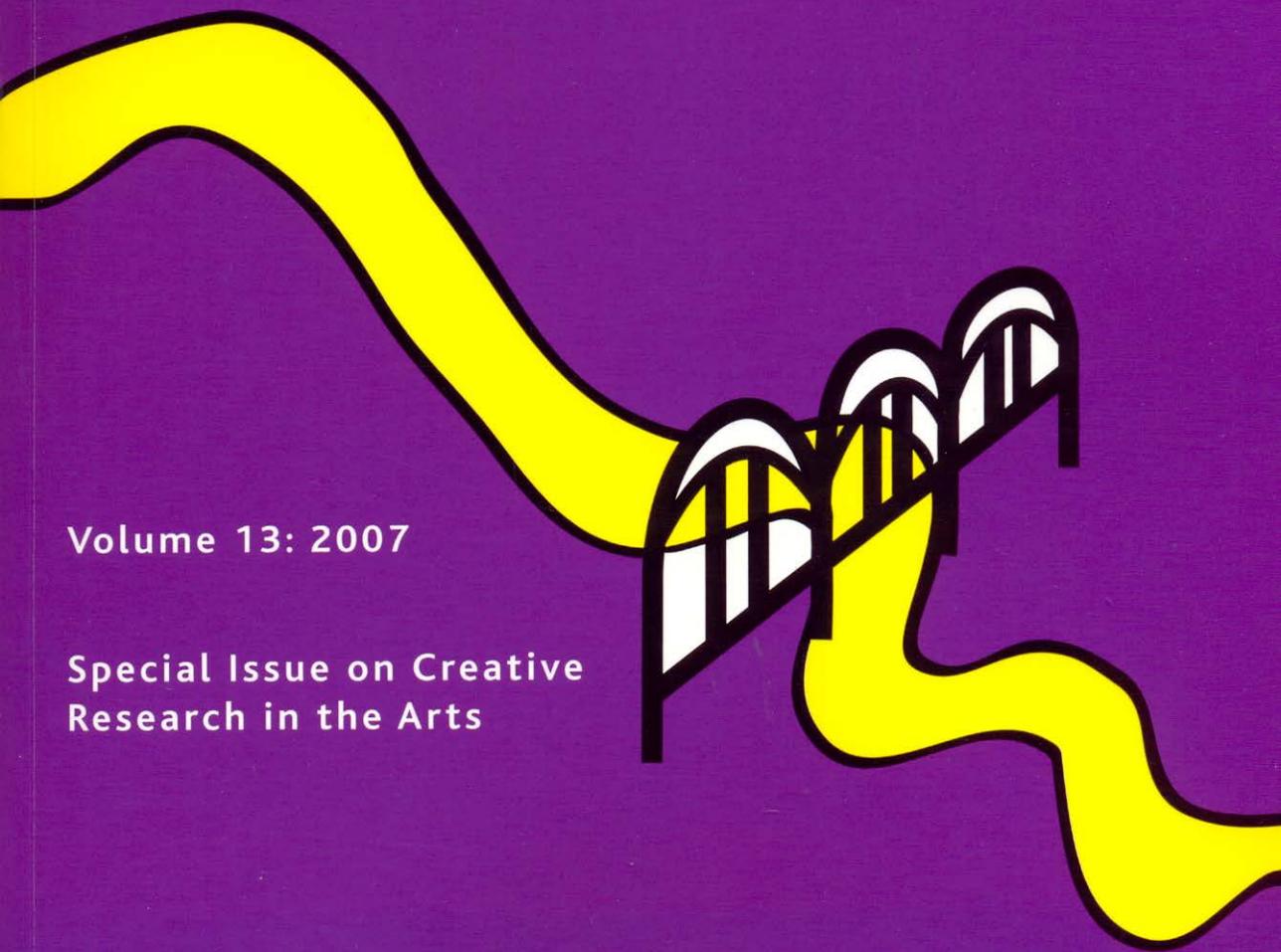
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Call for Papers

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This special section focuses on new developments in curriculum, a topic of current interest in view of the introduction of the new New Zealand curriculum in 2007. The new curriculum calls for creative responses from teachers, teacher educators and others interested in the material and content of teaching. For the first time in New Zealand, pedagogy has been included in an account of the school curriculum, so the editors welcome any papers which reflect interaction between curriculum and pedagogy as well as subject-oriented or content-focused papers.

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CREATIVE TEACHING OR TEACHING CREATIVELY? USING CREATIVE ARTS STRATEGIES IN PRESERVICE TEACHER EDUCATION

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ABSTRACT *In this article we argue that it is critical for preservice teachers to experience innovative and imaginative learning and teaching in their higher education studies if they are to feel empowered to initiate creative teaching and learning activities in their own classrooms. By designing and utilising a range of imaginative strategies in final year Creative Arts units of study, two teacher educators aim to encourage primary student teachers to reconnect with their own creative potential. Exemplars from these units of study are used alongside a range of student responses to demonstrate how the imaginative use of arts practice and pedagogy can provide spaces for preservice teachers to explore what it means to teach creatively. In doing so, we offer them an opportunity to reflect on their own beliefs about teaching and how they see themselves as they begin their professional journeys.*

KEYWORDS

Creative teaching, Innovative learning and teaching, Creative arts, Higher education, Arts practice and pedagogy, Preservice teachers

INTRODUCTION

If early career primary teachers are to feel empowered to change transmissive and traditional educational practices that often exist in primary schools, it is vital that they acknowledge, understand and question their own emerging teacher identities and many taken-for-granted aspects of teaching practice. How could we, as two teacher educators passionate about the importance of the creative arts in learning, use the arts to help them explore these issues? And which artforms would be most appropriate to use in such an endeavour? In this article we report on our five year journey to design and develop two final-year Bachelor of Education Creative Arts units of study that encouraged preservice teachers to teach creatively. It is our hope that if student teachers have meaningful, creative experiences in their higher education studies, they will be more likely to offer such innovative opportunities to the children they will eventually teach.

Initially, we briefly outline our passionate creed (Laboskey, 1997) about the importance of an arts-led curriculum and the student teachers with whom we are working. We then use several exemplars from the units of study themselves, along

with student responses to these imaginative activities, to explore what we mean by teaching creatively.

VALUE OF THE CREATIVE ARTS IN LEARNING

The emphasis on the potential of the arts to serve broad social and economic goals is a recent phenomenon. In the early 1990s, arts advocates began to articulate the many instrumental benefits¹ to be gained from involvement with the arts. They claimed that the arts promote important gains, including economic growth and student learning. While policy makers acknowledged that these were not the sole benefits from engagement in the arts, they were to champion the public value of the arts for the next decade.

As a result, studies and reports such as *Champions of Change* (Fiske, 1999), *Reviewing Education and the Arts Project (REAP)* (Hetland & Winner, 2001), *Critical Links* (Deasy, 2002) and *Gifts of the Muse* (McCarthy, Ondaatje, Zakaras & Brooks, 2004) identified specific instrumental benefits associated with the arts. For example, McCarthy et al. (2004) found that studies of cognitive benefits focused on the development of learning skills and academic performance. These included better test scores; improved basic skills such as reading and mathematical skills; the capacity for creative thinking; and improved attitudes and skills that promote the learning process itself or “the ability to learn how to learn” (McCarthy, 2004, p. xiii). Heath (2000) advocated the use of visual arts to improve children’s ‘neural circuitry’ in the brain, while Catterall, Chapleau and Iwanga (1999) found that sustained involvement in particular art forms, such as music and theatre, are highly correlated with success in mathematics and reading.

Yet, to justify “the arts on the basis of their impact on academic performance is not uncontroversial” (Fleming, Merrell & Tymms, 2004, p. 180). For some, arguing in this way is in danger of conceding that other subjects are academically superior and leads to the undermining of the arts in education. Eisner (1999), for example, argues that those seeking information about the positive effects that art has on learning in more traditional academic school subjects should be asked to reverse the question, that is, ‘Do reading and maths courses contribute to higher performance in the arts?’ As Eisner (2002) has consistently argued, “the arts should be justified in education primarily in relation to their distinctive or unique contributions” (p. 234).

Quality arts education produces a number of attitudinal and behavioural benefits, including the development of certain attitudes such as self-discipline and self-efficacy, and behaviours such as more frequent attendance at school and reduced dropout rates, all of which can improve school performance. The development of more generic life skills, (e.g., the understanding of the consequences of one’s behaviour and the ability to work in teams) and the development of pro-social attitudes and behaviours among ‘at-risk’ and disengaged youth, (e.g., building social bonds and improving self-image) have also been cited.

However, people are drawn to the arts not because of these instrumental benefits but because they enrich people’s lives in deep, profoundly personal and often creative ways. Clearly the arts can provide individuals “with meaning and with a distinctive type of pleasure and emotional stimulation” (McCarthy at al.,

2004, p. xv). The intrinsic benefits of the creative process range from the immediate captivation and pleasure in creating or viewing an artwork to an expanded capacity for empathy and cognitive growth. More than anything else, engagement with the arts fosters the development of the imagination since it moves us away from habitual, everyday reality. It challenges our “saturated consciousness” (Apple, 1990, p. 5) and insists that we confront the stereotypes we take for granted. The arts provide individuals with an imaginative experience that is often more intense, revealing and meaningful than the actual or familiar one. It encourages them to connect and reconnect with their feelings and emotions. According to Uphilis and Smithrim (2003), “the arts are particularly important for experiencing the joy of creating, developing attention to detail, and learning ways of expressing thoughts, knowledge and feelings beyond words” (p. 46).

Unfortunately, the creative arts are not always afforded the prominence they deserve. In fact, they are “not always acknowledged in teaching, learning and assessment in the education system” (Simons & Hicks, 2006, p. 82). Despite the fact that Allen (1995) and Greene (1995) claim that our imaginations are the most important faculty we possess, many Western educational systems, including those in Australia, do little to develop that fundamental creativity which “lies within each of us waiting to unfold” (Allen, 1995, p. xvi). Unlike in Spain, where the development of creativity in the curriculum was mandated by the *Education Act of 1970* (Sternberg, 2006), in Australia, as in many other countries, such fostering of creativity lags behind. This is of huge concern for us as teacher educators, given that we are constantly demanding that those who are currently at school will need to be creative problem-solvers if they are to live with the accelerating change of the 21st century, and their teachers will need to be able to facilitate the development of this ability.

According to Eisner (2005), boundary pushing, inventing, boundary breaking and aesthetic organising are key features of the development of creativity. Like us, Eisner (2005) believes that “art teachers [are] concerned with the development of imagination, the refinement of sensibility, and the promotion of personal discovery” (p. 65). Yet the issue of creativity is multi-faceted and open to disparate and often contradictory definitions. According to Sternberg (2006), “creativity as a problem of study is large, unwieldy, and hard to grasp” (p. 3). If each of us is or can be creative to a lesser or greater degree if given appropriate opportunities, often referred to as ‘small c creativity’, we believe that imagination is a key component of such creativity. Perhaps the definition of creativity offered in *All Our Futures: Creativity, Culture and Education* (DfES, 1999) provides identifiable characteristics:

First, they [the characteristics of creativity] always involve thinking or behaving imaginatively. Second, overall this imaginative activity is purposeful: that is, it is directed to achieving an objective. Third, these processes must generate something original. Fourth, the outcome must be of value in relation to the objective. (p. 30)

In a rapidly changing world, our students need to be creative in order to adjust to several careers in a lifetime, to be innovative, to see connections and solve

increasingly complex problems. However, if we take the figures in the often-cited *Robinson Report* (Robinson, 2000) as a guide, we find that by age 5, a child's potential for creativity is 98%; by the age of 10, this figure has dropped to 30%; at 15 it is just 12%; and by the time we reach adulthood our creativity has plummeted to a mere 2%. It is imperative that all levels within the education system, including higher education, explore ways to redress this alarming decline of creative potential.

It is our belief that working with the creative arts, whether in schools or in universities, allows students an opportunity to reconnect with their creative potential, to develop their imagination and thereby encourage new ways of understanding and knowing. It also provides an educational process for research and reflection. The next section of this article provides our rationale for the importance of creative teaching at any level of education but using our work in teacher education at the University of Sydney as a case study of innovative practice. Clearly, different people have varying ideas about what constitutes creative teaching. For us as arts educators, creative teaching requires an openness to experience, a willingness to take risks and healthy amounts of flexibility, spontaneity and open-mindedness in regards to our students. We are not suggesting that creative teaching occurs only in the creative arts – colleagues in English, Science and Mathematics could equally present an argument for creative teaching within their disciplines – but because it is our area of expertise and a subject that continues to be marginalised in many educational contexts, we focus on creative teaching as evidenced in the creative arts.

CREATIVE TEACHING

Advocates of creative teaching argue that it results in deeper understanding among learners (Bereiter, 2002; Sawyer, 2004). By offering innovative units of study that empower student teachers to be actively involved in designing their learning against a backdrop of traditional, transmissive educational practices commonplace in many institutions of higher education, we are encouraging our students to engage in creative arts experiences, to see meaningful connections across the creative arts and experience different routes of learning that can be accessed through the creative arts.

Through this process we aim to reconnect students with their creative potential. In using the creative arts in education, we hope to demonstrate how they can open doors to different ways of learning but at the same time provide spaces in which to research their own teaching practices. According to Simons and Hicks (2006), “integrating creative styles of teaching and learning in our educational practices is not only timely ... but is also necessary if all students are to be offered opportunities to explore their creativity and come to ‘know’ without the pressure of formal modes of learning and assessment” (p. 80). It is our hope that students will then be encouraged by their own imaginative efforts to translate these experiences to meet the needs of the primary students in their classrooms.

The next section describes two year-long optional units of study for fourth and final year Bachelor of Education primary teacher education students in more detail.

These students enter teacher education directly from secondary school with a strong desire to teach to 'make a difference.' They have usually achieved excellent results at school (an average University Admission Index of over 90). However, by their final year, many have frequently reported dissatisfaction with traditional assessment tasks and heavy workloads in their units of study evaluations required by the Sydney University's Institute of Learning and Teaching. *Integrating the Creative Arts A and B* are two units of study offered as an elective unit. Students have two hours a week contact time over 12 weeks in each semester and also work collaboratively in classrooms to explore the creative teaching of the creative arts in various primary school contexts.

STRATEGIES FOR TEACHING CREATIVELY

The Creative Arts units, first introduced in 2002, are innovative in nature, especially given the traditional, if not conservative, constraints at the tertiary level. Before beginning the unit, we write to the students asking them to engage in an arts experience before the semester commences. We suggest that they engage in an experience outside of their comfort zone: that is, whatever is unfamiliar or something they feel less than confident about. This immediately introduces student autonomy in terms of the choices they make even before the teaching year has begun and demonstrates that we will not restrict their learning experiences by prescribing them in the same manner. It also suggests from the outset that we are pushing them beyond their existing areas of expertise to explore new and unfamiliar territories.

Course content is negotiated with the student teachers (Boomer, 1992) in their first session. This is a new concept for many students, who are accustomed to being presented with an already developed, largely unchangeable unit of study outline. Many are initially uncomfortable about taking hold of their own professional autonomy, having gone through a primary, secondary and tertiary system of education that often rewards conformity. In some cases, they question whether our motives are genuine. What we are trying to do is provide opportunities for student choice based on their own needs to develop deeper knowledge and understanding at this point in their professional journey.

Likewise, we offer a range of alternative modes of assessment based on student compatibility and then negotiate the criteria. We hope to make it clear that we do not want the students to restrict themselves to traditional, expository essays or standard units for the classroom. We do not engage in 'guess what's in the teacher's head' games. Rather, we hope they will portray their experiences using art forms, if possible. It is by offering different types of assessment that we hope to see evidence of the effectiveness of the creative arts as a way of learning, teaching (Gibson & Ewing, 2005/2006) and assessing. In addition, we aim to introduce them to authentic strategies that transcend the usual range of assessment that evaluates summative and often fairly superficial knowledge gained at the end of a semester. Our units focus on and encourage the deep learning and deep understanding elements in the New South Wales model of quality pedagogy (New South Wales Department of Education and Training, 2003). Students are often astonished when

they are asked to write their own grade descriptors and are given a range of options or the opportunity to add an additional assessment option to those offered.

In the following section, we discuss some examples of the innovative strategies used in the units of study, *Integrating the Creative Arts*. In each instance, we provide a rationale for its inclusion in the course, a detailed description of the learning and teaching involved and, where possible, feedback from the student teachers themselves.

INTERPRETING OUR OWN SPACE

Towards the end of their first session, the education students form groups of four or five to engage in an activity designed to ‘make the familiar strange’ and to encourage creative and imaginative ways of doing, seeing and being. The activity itself offers the students an opportunity to participate in creative educational experiences outside the classroom. It had been adapted from an activity given to art students at the University of Memphis a number of years earlier.

In 2000, multidisciplinary Austin artist Terry Allen² visited the University of Memphis and worked with students and professors to challenge “common perceptions and misconceptions of Memphis by rendering an alternative vision of the city” (Murley, 2000, p. 1). This was actualised in an art exhibition titled ‘Secret Memphis’ at the University of Memphis Art Museum.

In order to acquire artwork for the exhibition, Allen tore a map of Memphis into pieces and groups of students drew a piece at random and went off to explore that particular area of the city. His explicit instructions were to dig deeper than the surface. The artists’ mission was to explore their area of the city as if for the first time and then recreate representations of the neighbourhoods using any type of medium they wanted.

Following Allen’s adventurous lead, our students are given a section of a University of Sydney map. They are asked to visit, experience and then ‘creatively interpret’ their site in the next session of the course. This could be achieved through the utilisation of visuals, role-play, movement, soundscape or any combination of these. The choice is theirs.

In 2005, we saw one group of students creating an in-class collage with found objects they had retrieved from their site. Another used freeze-frame moments to capture key people and actions they had observed. A game of ‘Pictionary’ was developed by a third group, which aided the other students to recognise significant University and Faculty buildings located in their area of the University of Sydney. The group that had been allocated the space that included campus dormitories wrote and performed a song entitled ‘The College Blues.’

Well, I woke this morning at 8:53,
Class starts at 9 but my head’s killin me.
Not exactly sure what I did last night
But for some strange reason my whole head’s painted white.
I got the college blues,
Yeah, the college blues
My flatmates are amused

I got the college blues.
I wade through the mess in my humble abode
And run to my lecture just over the road
I pass a girl; she seems to know me
I think we made out in chemistry.
I got the college blues
Yeah, the college blues
My liver hates all the booze,
I got the college blues.
Afternoon comes in time for rugby,

It's time to prove I'm so manly
Take off my shirt and make a lot of noise
The girls must be impressed by this bunch of boys!
I got the college blues
Yeah, the college blues
I just better not lose,
I got the college blues.

Night rolls around; it's time to go out,
But I think tonight it's my turn to shout.
Put on my jeans and my polo shirt
Grab all my money, it's time to flirt!
I got the college blues
Yeah, the college blues
Oh which beer do I choose?
I got the college blues.
(by Rich Thompson, 2005)

Each year, the diversity of responses to the task 'creatively interpret' is overwhelming, as is the clear connection the students see in its relevance and adaptability for their future classrooms. Clearly, primary students could work with a map of their own school in an activity designed to challenge conventional ways of thinking and doing.

COLLAGE AS METAPHOR IN DEFINING TEACHER IDENTITY

The next session was designed to use the creative arts as a mechanism to explore images of preservice teacher identity and how these might impact on their teaching practice. In suggesting this, we are asking the students to consider which artform would be most appropriate to use in this endeavour. Our proposed activity is based on the work of arts-informed educator, Morna McDermott, who had used collage as a means of representing identity with her preservice teachers (McDermott, 2005). She argued that:

... collage can reveal the inner workings of how preservice educators connect a system of thought that relates to their own personal lives to their teacher identity. Creating collage allows emerging educators to discuss the shifting relationships between self, community, power,

language, social equality, and educational practices, unhinging linear frames of thinking and dominant ideologies and practices that often go unchallenged in the classroom. (p. 49)

Since we want the student teachers to consider how their personal life experiences relate to their own teacher identity, and how their philosophies and influences impact on their decision to become a teacher, we also focus on metaphor. According to Ortony (1975), there are various ways in which metaphor can facilitate learning since a “metaphor can impress a concept or idea through the powerful image or vividness of the expression” (Fraser, 2003, p. 180). Moreover, metaphors enable the creative process to manifest itself. This is exactly what we are hoping to achieve by asking the students to juxtapose elements in unexpected and unusual ways.

The students work individually to select a metaphor that encapsulates how they feel at this moment in time about being a teacher. They are then asked to transform this metaphor into a collage using both image and text. The following examples clearly demonstrate that the use of a literary device such as metaphor and an artform such as collage are particularly powerful mechanisms since each can “assist the creator to grasp a difficult and seemingly elusive idea” (Fraser, 2003, p. 181).

Sophia’s³ collage is titled *The other side* (Photo 1) and she uses the metaphor ‘Just a babe in the woods’ to relate her perceptions of the teaching. In her reflective text, she writes:

At this point in my career, I am still fresh-faced and optimistic about the journey ahead. I am eager to enter the next stage ... although I have heard many a horror story about the dreaded ‘First year of teaching.’

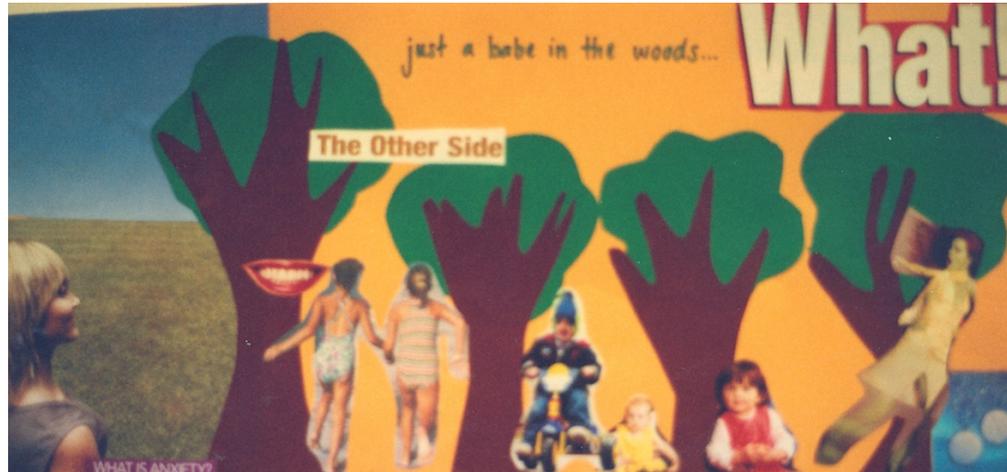


Photo 1. *The other side*

Andrew voices similar thoughts in his collage *Finding my way* (Photo 2), which features a curious baby in an idyllic field of flowers. Using ‘Looking towards a brighter future’ he records:

At this time, I'm still learning. There are a few blank spaces and lots of questions to be answered. But I'll find my way and grow into a brighter future.



Photo 2. *Finding my way*

Debbie focuses on growth in her collage entitled *Growing into a teacher* (Photo 3). Utilising images of seeds, plants and flowers, she provides an analogy of 'sprouting like a new seedling.' She states:

I'm still feeling green yet ready to sprout. I feel I am ready to start teaching on my own ... The initial stages will involve hard work and a lot of stress. I still have a lot to learn. I need to be fed. I need to be watered if I want to grow to full strength. Resources, continual learning, teachers' support, reading and professional development. As I grow taller and stronger I will need to be pruned back in order to grow again. I need to step back, look at myself and my teaching. Adjusting, changing and amending helps me to grow again ...



Photo 3. *Growing into a teacher*

Finally, Ellie's collage *The glass is half full* (Photo 4) is presented in the shape of a large wine glass. In her accompanying statement, she writes:

This collage represents my perceptions and expectations of how teaching will be and how I would like to be as a teacher. The metaphor symbolises my optimism in following through my dream and my hope to stay positive ... The main feature of 'super teacher' is my idealistic perception of how I would like to be and the phenomenal responsibility that teachers take on ...



Photo 4. *The glass is half full*

According to McDermott (2005), whose creative teaching strategy we adapted:

... artistic practices such as the collage study are vital to empowering beginning educators to address social inequalities and power relationships as they emerge within their own classroom. Having been given the opportunity to explore for themselves the power of art, they, in turn, may use collage or other art forms to empower their students as well. (p. 59)

Although one of our stated aims is a desire to reconnect student teachers with their creative potential through creative teaching, the collage as metaphor activity illustrates the scope of the creative arts for opening other doors to learning. Thus

the students participate in innovative processes that enable them to develop a visual image for defining their teaching philosophies and, in doing so, create spaces for critical reflection both now and in the future. Once again, they are able to see the implications for primary students.

EMPOWERING THROUGH NEGOTIATED ASSESSMENT

Given the innovative nature of the units of study, *Integrating the Creative Arts*, it is imperative to utilise authentic assessment as an ongoing learning activity and one which we hope the student teachers will utilise in their future classrooms. Initially we offer the students a range of alternative modes of assessment that may match their unique style of learning and suggest that they detail their experiences using artforms, if possible. Our aim is to “involve the students as much as possible in the formulation and conduct of the assessment as a means of exploring more fully the meanings and consequences of ‘flexibility’ in learning” (National Advisory Committee, 1995, p. 18). This flexibility is evident in the range of assessment options we offer the students and our willingness to take other possibilities on board. The manner in which the assessment task could be delivered, (i.e., written, electronic, performance or visual modes and the use of partnerships or learning teams to work on the assessment task), is also negotiated.

In this final section, one of the assessment options, a rationale for teaching the creative arts via an artform, is explored in some depth. Each example utilises a different artform and is accompanied by a supporting text that in some way shows evidence of wider reading and reflection on the part of the student teacher.

Sandy presented as appropriation of the Pop Art style of Roy Lichtenstein. To supplement a series of large, comic-like images (Photo 5), she writes:

I chose to represent the artwork through the genre of Pop Art for specific reasons. As a movement Pop Art was essentially designed to provide a satirical and perhaps ironic look at popular culture and everyday scenes of the time. What could be a better way to view our educational system; a system that influences and shapes almost all parts of our lives? The way in which the Creative Arts are not taken as seriously as some of their ‘more academic’ KLAs (Key Learning Areas), led me to present a world where such a view has led to a complete demise of Creative Arts in learning. What effects would this have on the world beyond school?

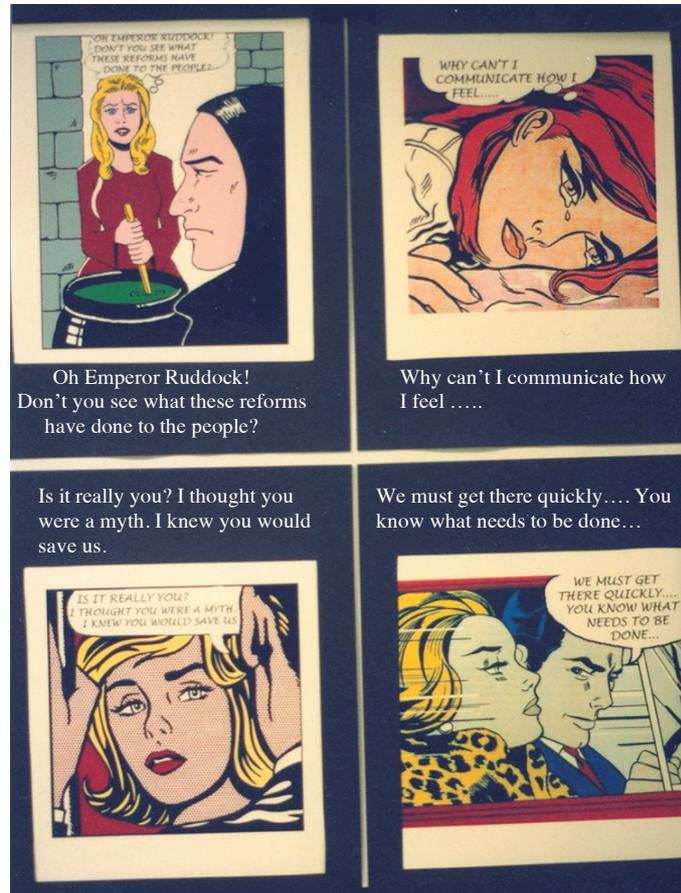


Photo 5. Appropriation of Litchenstein⁴

Using the medium of black and white photography, Kathleen draws comparisons between two polarised worlds. She records the following:

I imagined a world without the four arts – drama, dance, music and visual arts and thought about why they were important to me personally and in the context of this assignment, as a primary school teacher. *A Choice* (Photo 6) seeks to portray two worlds – one devoid of colour, movement and emotion; the other encapsulating what was missing in the first. The worlds used are interchangeable – expression, empathy, movement and interpretation may be found in each of the creative arts.

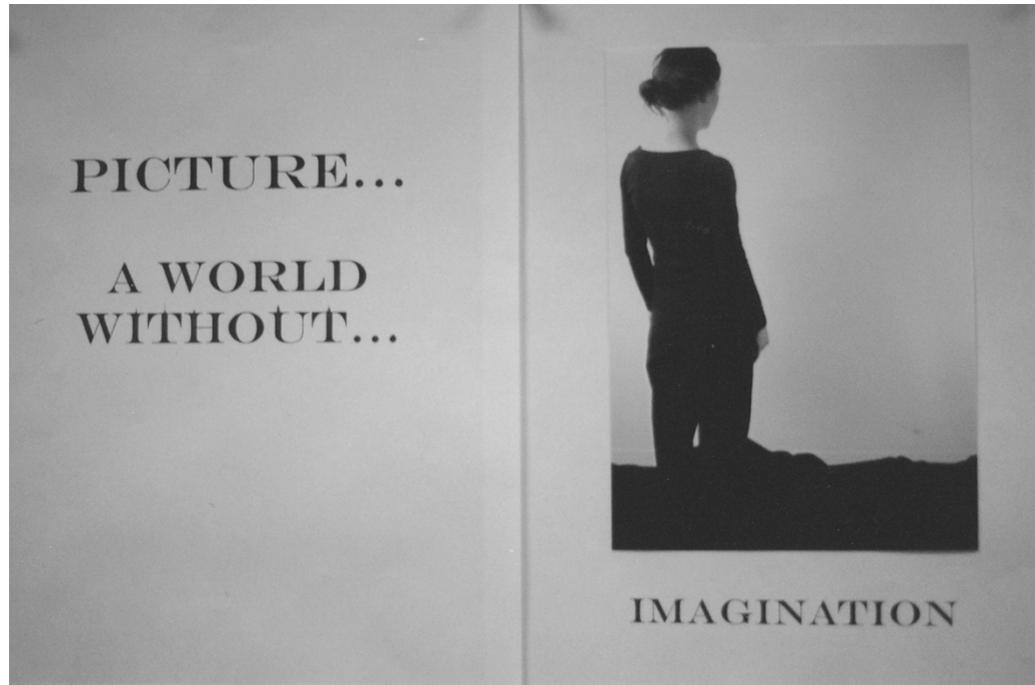


Photo 6. *A Choice*

Bec, on the other hand, produced a picture book entitled *Rufus and Jemima* (Photo 7). In her notes, she explains the reasoning behind this choice of assessment task:

Rufus and Jemima is a simple tale of contrast that aims to express the many benefits of an education rich in the creative arts. The story follows two characters, Rufus and Jemima, through a week at school. Jemima has many experiences involving making and appreciating visual arts, music, drama and dance, expressed in bold colour. Rufus does not, and his washed-out watercolour world lacks the brightness of Jemima's acrylic adventures. The structure of the story, and the purpose of Rufus' character are not designed to propose an either/or approach. I do not suggest that the creative arts can free schools from bullying, inappropriate curriculum choices or autocratic teachers. What I do suggest is that the arts have a vital role in children's emotional and social development, and a quality education in the arts can provide students with valuable experiences and essential skills that encourage confidence, self-awareness, critical thinking skills, acceptance, self-expression and co-operation.

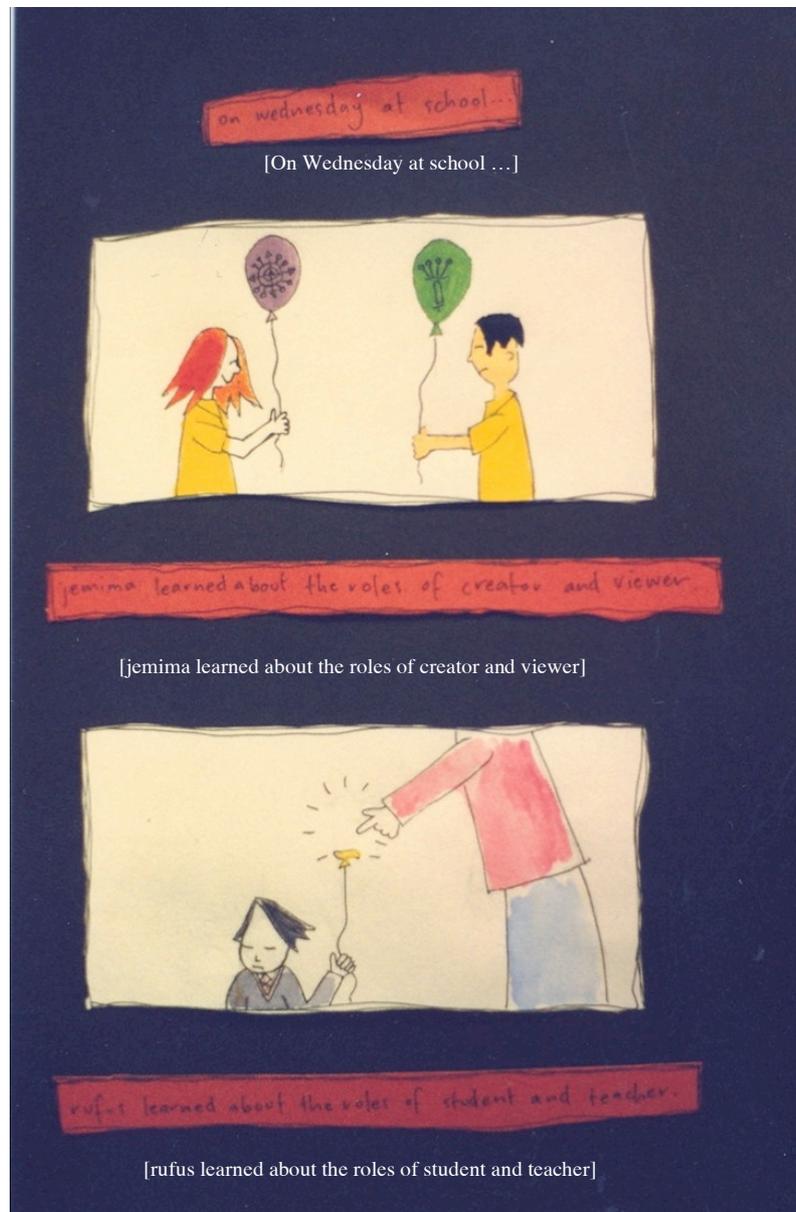


Photo 7. *Rufus and Jemima*⁵

Finally, Alicia's rationale was presented in the form of a painting (Photo 8). In her accompanying text, she explains the symbolism within her painting of a sole female figure:

A red ribbon swirls around the legs of the female character; this is a sign of her entrapment to memories, hopes and fears ... the black and white area in the upper left symbolises a dull and lifeless spirit without creativity. The theatrical masks ... using the creative arts as a

powerful tool of expression. The hand represents not only hope but the importance of the process.



Photo 8. *Symbolic painting*

The creative energy that is embedded in each of these rationales is evident. Not only have the student teachers been able to find a space to express their own creativity but, in doing so, they are able to articulate the integral role of the creative arts in their own lives and the lives of their future students. Given the many dimensions of student-centred flexible learning, negotiated assessment has the potential to empower students and as such has a significant place in our units of study and in any tertiary environment (Theobald, 1998).

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Writing in the *Sydney Morning Herald* about his keynote address at the 'Backing Creativity' symposium in Melbourne in 2005, Ken Robinson argued that education systems do not need change; they need a revolution. In many ways, we consider ourselves subtle revolutionaries working on behalf of the creative arts so often marginalised within our schools and universities. By reconnecting our education students with their own creative potential, we hope to enhance their understanding of how the creative arts can be used to promote different ways of learning in their own primary-aged students. In developing the units of study, *Integrating the Creative Arts*, we have been able to move 'outside the academic square' and provide opportunities to teach creatively using the creative arts. This creative teaching, in turn, has allowed the students spaces to research and reflect on their own teaching practice. As these units of study have evolved over the past five years, we have continued to follow Reimer's directive: "Begin modestly by teaching with art, then about the art and finally through the art" (Reimer, 1996, p. 6) and we believe that our student teachers have benefited.

However, if we are to see whether this experience at university translates into long-lasting results in the primary classroom, we will need to move into our student teachers' classrooms and experience their creative teaching in, across and through the creative arts. While anecdotal evidence suggests this has been the case, the next phase in our journey will involve interviews with these early career teachers and their primary school students.

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¹ 'Instrumental benefits' refers to gains that can be achieved through another means.

² Terry Allen is a multidisciplinary artist. In addition to his outdoor installation sculptural work – which is emphatically mixed-media – and his paintings, writings and drawings, Allen is also a songwriter, composer, pianist and lead vocalist for the country rock group Panhandle Mystery Band in Lubbock, Texas. He is perhaps best known for his cross-disciplinary project Youth in Asia, initiated in 1983.

³ Pseudonyms have been used throughout this article with the exception of the writer of 'The College Blues.'

⁴ Typed text added for clarity.

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