

[Welcome](#)[Stories](#)[News](#)[Resources](#)[People](#)[Contact](#)**Issue 11, 2014**

**emagazine of professional practice
for early childhood educators
in Aotearoa New Zealand**

Ni hau



你好

Welcome to the 11th issue of ecARTnz!

2014 has been a busy year for many of us on the editorial board but we have managed to get out three great issues. Thanks must go to all of you who have made contributions to our emagazine, and any stories we have missed this year will be in the first issue for 2015.

Our readership is growing (but please keep spreading the word), and this year *ecARTnz* was introduced to a group of Chinese early childhood teachers in Beijing, who were attending the *2nd Art in Early Childhood and Project Approach* conference.

Consequently, we devote this issue to Chinese visual art. This is appropriate because the *6th International Art in Early Childhood* conference will be in Hong Kong next year. We have details about this conference in this issue. Also included is an article by the teachers from Tai Tamariki kindergarten who have written about their children's art explorations after visiting an exhibition by the Chinese artist Shi Lu. To showcase some excellent Chinese early childhood visual arts practice, I have written about a visit to Xin Jong Xie kindergarten in Beijing.

Have a happy Christmas and New Year!

Lisa Terreni
Editor *ecARTnz*



Welcome

Stories

News

Resources

People

Contact

Issue 11, 2014

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Stories and Reviews

- Tai Tamariki kindergarten explore the art of Shi Lu
- Visual art education for young children at Xin Zhong Jie kindergarten, Beijing



Tai Tamariki kindergarten explore the art of Shi Lu



By Bec Thomas, Maiangi Waitai, and the teachers and children of Tai Tamariki kindergarten

Tai Tamariki kindergarten is currently awash with colour as we display the creations of our children in response to the recent *Shi Lu* and *Throne of the Emperor* exhibitions held at Te Papa Tongarewa. Our children visited both exhibitions many times over and were exposed to various precious Chinese cultural artefacts, artworks and, as a consequence, were given the opportunity to develop new cultural and historical understandings about China. These exhibitions have provided both our children and adults with many shared learning opportunities, and teachers have loved responding to the diverse individual interests that emerged for the children.



The children were particularly interested in the exhibition of the Chinese artist Shi Lu. They noticed how his art changed greatly over the period of his career, and through periods of political unrest in China. The children asked, for instance, why his art looked so different at the start and the finish of the exhibition. We had discussions about how Shi Lu may have been feeling through the different periods of his life.

These talks about Shi Lu's life and feelings made some real connections with our children as they saw him as an artist and a person, and they started talking about when they were feeling good and feeling 'badder'. Some of the children expressed how painting, when they were feeling good, meant that their artwork featured things like: colours, flowers, a dolphin, a dog, and really fresh air. When we discussed how we would paint if we were feeling bad the children responded with things like: 'black', 'like war', and 'sad circles'. We really valued these emotional recognitions and responses to the paintings through the eyes of our children.



Very soon attention was drawn to the unusual types of brushes Shi Lu used, and also the slow and deliberate way he painted. We started to try out different tools back at kindergarten and we decided to make our own Shi Lu inspired creative brushes and painting tools in order to experiment with different brush strokes. A mix of false hair, lavender, feathers, muka, and twine were used to create the tips of the brushes.

Tai Tamariki Kindergarten explore the art of Shi Lu

continued



We had a great time exploring both the new materials, and old materials, in new ways and we drew lots of inspiration from the Shi Lu exhibition itself, as well as a reference book and a video about him. Children were able to explore different ways of binding their brushes so that the ends didn't fall apart. They also experimented with the thickness, length, and stiffness of the brushes to determine the mark-making effects on paper. When the paintbrushes were created the teachers commented on the beauty of the brushes as taonga (treasures) themselves, even before they were used for creating our paint and dye artworks.



Children of all ages were able to experiment in both small and large scale ways with the brushes. The younger ones really loved running and flicking dye up and down rolls of paper laid out on our deck. Some of the older children began to experiment with the Chinese symbols that they were seeing upstairs in the Shi Lu exhibition, and the teachers began to fill the kindergarten with lots of images and further provocations for learning in response to this.

If you visit our kindergarten you will see the children's artwork displayed across the ceiling and walls. The children's precious brushes are on display in our special Tai Tamariki perspex display case. It is important to us at Tai Tamariki that our environment reflects the interests and learning of our children and that they see how much we all value their mahi (work) and contributions. Perhaps our environment is also a visual reflection of the powerful provocation that the trips into the museum exhibitions and galleries can provide.



Visual art education for young children at Xin Zhong Jie kindergarten, Beijing

By Lisa Terreni, Faculty of Education, Victoria University of Wellington

In August this year I was honoured to be asked to present a keynote address at the *2nd Art in Early Childhood and Project Approach* conference, supported by the Soong Ling Ching Foundation, in Beijing. My presentation highlighted the importance of visual art education in New Zealand early childhood settings, and the significant role art plays in fostering young children's learning, thinking, and communicating. I was able to share with conference participants, who were predominantly Chinese early childhood teachers, some of the key philosophical and pedagogical beliefs that underpin *Te Whāriki* (the New Zealand early childhood curriculum), and how visual art is situated within it. I showcased three innovative early childhood art projects that demonstrated a connection to children's learning through their relationship with people, places and things (see Wright, 2013 *ecARTnz* issue 10, and Wilson Jackson, *ecARTnz* issue 9).

The first two days of conference featured presentations by academics and teachers interested in visual arts education and research. These provided many excellent opportunities for participants to discuss current practices in visual art education for young children in China, as well as see examples of international practice. For instance, Dr Sylvia Chard (Canada) who, with Lillian Katz, developed the Project Approach in the late 1980s, discussed how the Project Approach can be successfully implemented by teachers to enhance learning in a range of areas, particularly the visual arts. Dr Margaret Brooks (Australia) shared her experience as an artist, aligning her creative process with that of the Project Approach, demonstrating how artists and educators often implement creative investigations using similar stages of planning. Professor Zhu Jiexiang from East China Normal University, reviewed the development of early childhood art education in China by examining theoretical perspectives in relation to teacher practices. Professor Bian Xia, Associate Dean of Graduate School at Nanjing Normal University shared her project on ecological art education.

One of the main points of discussion at the conference generated by presenters was about the role of the teacher; how teachers can create opportunities to support and scaffold children's learning, without dominating their creative process or prescribing artistic outcomes, was intensely discussed. As we know, this is a debate that is still current in New Zealand.



Visual art education for young children at Xin Zhong Jie kindergarten, Beijing

continued



For me, one of most exciting presentations was by Yao Bingyue, a highly esteemed senior consultant on visual art for the Early Education Institute Beijing Academy of Educational Sciences. Mrs Yao is very interested in traditional forms of Chinese art, in particular paper cutting of which she is a great proponent. Paper cutting is an art activity unique to Asia, and is increasingly included as part of the art curriculum in early childhood settings in China. Her conference presentation illustrated, through a range of beautiful photographs, the many different ways young children can create astonishing art work using this method. She encourages teachers to provide opportunities for this type of art making in their classrooms, and to allow children to express their ideas freely with this medium.



On the final day of the Beijing conference, the programme organisers facilitated visits to several high quality early childhood centres in Beijing. I was with a group of teachers that visited Xin Zhong Jie Kindergarten (see <http://www.bjxjzj.org/>) and Dong Mian Hua Kindergarten. These are two excellent centres that are managed by the Education Committee of Beijing Doncheng district. Xin Zhong Jie Kindergarten is in the embassy zone of Dongzhimen, and it has 300 children on the roll from 14 different countries. The kindergarten's philosophy is guided by an aesthetics and virtue-based culture, where the fostering children's creative development is one of their key educational goals. Many of the kindergarten teachers at Xin Zhong Jie have expertise in English, dancing and multi-media. The staff also includes eight male teachers and five non-Chinese teachers.



Excitingly, as a follow on from Yao Bingyue's presentation at the conference about paper cutting the previous day, we were able to see a demonstration lesson in paper cutting at Xin Zhong Jie. The semi-structured lesson, led by an energetic and vivacious young teacher with a group of thirteen 5 and 6 year-old children, began with a group discussion about geese. The children were shown many different photographs, paintings, and short videos about geese. A traditional poem about geese was also recited. Throughout the slide show, the teacher and the children engaged in an animated discussion about their experiences, feelings, and encounters with geese. The children also sang a song and were encouraged to create the movements of geese with their bodies.

Visual art education for young children at Xin Zhong Jie kindergarten, Beijing

continued



Through the process of looking at the projected images, singing, moving, and talking about geese, the children began to develop ideas for their paper cutting experience. After the discussion, the children moved to small tables that had been carefully resourced for them. Attractive containers held sharp, pointed paper-cutting scissors and a range of different types of paper which children could freely access in order to create their own geese. They were also given a teacher-prepared paper fan, on which to display their own work once completed.

There was no drawing of shapes or outlines before the children began their paper-cutting work...they just started to cut! Having done a paper cutting workshop myself in Cyprus I had a basic understanding of some of the techniques that are required, but it was amazing seeing such young children being so proficient. Each child was completely engrossed in the process, and did not seem to notice the large group of adults who were watching them so intently. During the art making, their teachers moved around the group, getting down to the children's level, and quietly offering support and encouragement when it was needed. What astonished me was not only the dexterity with which these youngsters managed the scissors so skillfully, but also how each child had such unique ideas about their work. These ideas were made visible through their paper cutting.



Once the work was done, children returned to their original seats and the teacher initiated another discussion. Individual children were invited to go to the front, and to show their work to the group and discuss it. Opinions were asked about the works. One small boy, whose creative process I had watched with great interest - he not only cut his paper but also folded it to create his pieces, was asked to present his work. When he showed his paper cutting to the group, everyone presumed that he had created two geese. "No", he said emphatically, "this is a goose and an aeroplane having a race!"



Because I have a particular interest in art and technology (see, for instance, Terreni, 2010), I was delighted to observe in the corner of the room another activity

Visual art education for young children at Xin Zhong Jie kindergarten, Beijing

continued



where children were creatively engaged using their paper geese. A computer station had been set up, with a child-friendly animation programme that enabled the children to make their own small stop-start animations. The animation programme, which has the facility to record voice-overs and insert music, added another dimension to the paper-cutting experience. I felt that it was a fantastic fusion between the traditional and the modern. The children were clearly delighted with their videos, and the opportunity to use multi-media added another dimension to their learning.

At the conclusion of the lesson, I felt very privileged to have been able to participate in the session as an observer. I was thrilled when one of the children presented me with his work. This now sits proudly in my office at Victoria University in Wellington. It is a wonderful reminder of my visit and of all the friendships I made in Beijing. After the lesson ended we had a tour of the rest of kindergarten, where there were multiple examples of other exciting visual art works on display, and where children were engaged in a range of free play learning activities. We then said good bye to the children and teachers at Xin Zhong Jie...but I will be back!



Acknowledgements:

I would like to acknowledge the assistance of Liu Xiaowei who was the translator for my keynote address.

Also, Dr Betty Wong (Assistant Professor, Department of Early Childhood Education, Hong Kong Institute of Education) and Carmen Chiu (Principal of the Hong Kong Federation of Youth Groups Ching Lok Kindergarten and Ching Lok Nursery) who were my translators on the visit to Xin Zhong Jie kindergarten.

Photographs: by Carman Chiu.

References:

Terreni, L. (2010). Art and ICT: Considering new possibilities for visual art education in early childhood settings. *Australian Art Education*, 33(2), 74–86.

For more about paper cutting see:

<http://artinearlychildhood.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/12/papercuttingchina.pdf>



[Welcome](#)[Stories](#)[News](#)[Resources](#)[People](#)[Contact](#)**Issue 11, 2014**

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News



**YOU ARE CORDIALLY
INVITED TO ATTEND...**



THE 6TH INTERNATIONAL ART IN EARLY CHILDHOOD CONFERENCE
11th to June 13th 2015
The Hong Kong Institute of Education, Hong Kong, China

Conference Theme: Art: Home, Schools, Communities

This conference will serve as a platform for discussion and exchange of ideas, creating new avenues for research and practice in the field round the world. You are cordially invited to take part in this exciting international event, and to share your cutting-edge knowledge and findings, frontiers experiences, innovations and best practices, as well as visions of art for children aged 0-8 years.

Important Dates

Deadline of abstract submission	1 Feb 2015
Abstract acceptance notification	10 March 2015
Deadline of early bird registration	30 March 2015
Deadline of regular registration	30 April 2015

For more information: <http://www.ied.edu.hk/aec2015>



The 6th International Art in Early Childhood Conference

Art: Home, Schools, Communities

11-13 June 2015

The Hong Kong Institute of Education
Hong Kong, China

Registration Fee

1. Registration Fees (All fee listed in Hong Kong dollar)

	Early bird Before/on MAR 30	Regular From Mar 31to Apr 30
Regular Participant*	<input type="checkbox"/> HKD 2500	<input type="checkbox"/> HKD 3000
Student* (Please show your valid student card at the Registration Table)	<input type="checkbox"/> HKD 1250	<input type="checkbox"/> HKD 1500
One day Participant#	<input type="checkbox"/> HKD 950	/
	Please indicate Day(s): _____	
	Please indicate Date: _____	

2. Conference Dinner on 12/6/2015

Attend

Not attend

Number of guests: _____ X HKD 450

3. School visit on 11/6/2015 morning

(50-60 places, first come first serve.

(Local transport on your own expenses.)

Attend

Not attend

4. Welcome reception on 11/6/2015 (inclusive)

Attend

Not attend

*Registration fee for participants includes program book with abstracts; access to all keynote and presentations; coffee breaks; two lunches; welcome reception.

Registration fee for participants includes program book with abstracts; access to keynote and presentations, coffee breaks; lunch/welcome reception of the registered day.

Registration is in HK dollars. Here is a conversion tool:

<http://www.xe.com/currencyconverter/#>



Welcome

Stories

News

Resources

People

Contact

Issue 11, 2014

emagazine of professional practice
for early childhood educators
in Aotearoa New Zealand

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[Welcome](#)[Stories](#)[News](#)[Resources](#)[People](#)[Contact](#)**Issue 11, 2014**

**emagazine of professional practice
for early childhood educators
in Aotearoa New Zealand**

People



Lisa Terreni is a senior lecturer in early childhood at the School of Education at Victoria University of Wellington's Faculty of Education. She has been involved in early childhood education for many years – as a kindergarten teacher and as professional development adviser for the Ministry of Education. She is also an artist.

Lisa's research interests focus on exploring how visual art can be used to enhance young children's thinking, communication and literacy skills, and the impact ICT can have on young children's visual art learning experiences. Her Masters in Education research focused on children's and teachers' use of an Interactive Whiteboard for visual art learning experiences in a kindergarten setting. Lisa also has a keen interest in social and cultural diversity and how teachers can meet the needs of diverse communities.

Lisa is currently undertaking data gathering for her PhD entitled *"I know what that is! It's modern art!" Early childhood access to and use of art museums in Aotearoa New Zealand*. This research aims to determine the current extent of art museum visiting by the early childhood sector in New Zealand, investigate existing practices between art museums and early childhood centres and barriers to access, and to examine ways in which art museums and early childhood centres can effectively work together to create meaningful learning environments for young children.

Lisa has been instrumental in developing the early childhood visual arts network as part of the Aotearoa New Zealand Association of Art Educators. She initiated the development of the emagazine of professional practice *ecARTnz*, and is one of the editors of this New Zealand online publication.

Publications



Lisa's recent publications include:

Terreni, L. (2014). It's a matter of distinction: Bourdieu, art museums, and young children attending early childhood services in New Zealand. *International Art in Early Childhood Journal*, 4, 1-10.

Terreni, L. (2013). Children's rights as cultural citizens: Examining young children's access to art museums and galleries in Aotearoa New Zealand. *Australian Art Education*, 35(1), 93-107.

Terreni, L., & Shuker, M. J. (2013). Self-authored e-books: Expanding young children's literacy experiences and skills. *Australasian Journal of Early Childhood*, 38(3), 17-24.

Clark, B., Grey, A., & Terreni, L. (Eds.) (2013). *Kia tipu te wairua toi – Fostering young children's creative spirit through the Arts: Arts in Early Childhood Education*. Auckland, New Zealand: Pearson.

Richards, R. & Terreni, L (2013). Actively engaging through the visual arts: Recognising children's artistic experiences and repertoires. In B. Clark, A. Grey & L. Terreni (Eds.), *Kia tipu te wairua toi – Fostering young children's creative spirit through the Arts: Arts in Early Childhood Education* (pp.39-48). Auckland, New Zealand: Pearson.

[Welcome](#)[Stories](#)[News](#)[Resources](#)[People](#)[Contact](#)**Issue 11, 2014**

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Contact details

Editorial Board information

ecARTnz, an emagazine of professional practice for early childhood educators, is a quarterly publication developed to generate new interest in visual art education in Aotearoa New Zealand. The intention of the recently established editorial board is that ecARTnz will showcase examples of teaching and learning, literature, and conferences of interest to educators in early childhood education and beyond.

Members of the editorial board are: Lisa Terreni (VUW), Janette Kelly (UoW), Dr Beverley Clark (Unitech), Nicky de Latour and Janita Craw (AUT), and Lesley Pohio (UoA).

The board is responsible for promoting the magazine, writing, reviewing and editing contributions, and ensuring that the emagazine is of a consistently high standard. The views in this journal do not necessarily reflect those of the editorial board members.

Contributions are invited for the next issue of ecARTnz. Submissions of 500-1000 words accompanied by up to 8 photographs sent as .jpgs are welcomed.

For further information please email Lisa Terreni at lisa.terreni@vuw.ac.nz