

ecARTnz

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

Issue 2, 2010

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Kia ora

ecARTnz was developed to generate new interest in visual arts education for young children in New Zealand. The positive responses to the first issue show that many readers are impressed and inspired.

Here are some of the comments:

It doesn't come naturally to me so any help I can get in terms of ideas etc. will be welcomed. Thank you for showing me I can be creative and opening my eyes to this world of visual art. I am literally brimming with ideas now and have even started designing a cross stitch I have had an idea about for some time but couldn't take that next step. It is very exciting. Thanks for being so passionate about art!

What a fantastic magazine - I have been enjoying reading it. Well done on a very worthwhile contribution to the EC Arts community.

I just wanted to let you know how impressed I was with the first issue of ecARTnz...great articles, ideas and loads of inspiration, keep up the great work.,

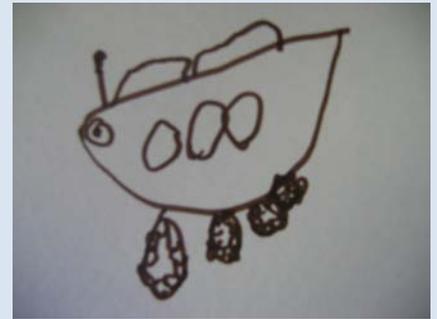
The mag is fab love love love it!!!!!!!

I have just come across ecARTnz newsletter and I am thoroughly enjoying it. Being that it is within a New Zealand context makes it so relative and inspiring to us early childhood teachers. I am an infant/toddler teacher working in a centre which is strongly influenced by the Reggio Emilia philosophy and so the importance of the 100 Languages plays a large part. I was also delighted to see an article from an infant/toddler perspective. Very often this age group is forgotten about and so it is wonderful to see all age groups being portrayed as extremely capable in expressing themselves through the visual arts. I look forward to many more issues to come!

Thanks for the lovely emagazine - appreciate the articles and links. They have helped us to be more mindful and interactive in our art experiences with children.

We want to keep sharing good stories about visual art education in New Zealand early childhood settings so send them in to us. The back page has editorial information about how you can contribute.

We hope you enjoy **ecARTnz** Issue 2!



Rollin' Good Time... **Master Classes on Children's Art, Creativity and Play**



14–16 October 2010

These Master Classes will focus on how best to integrate art in the early childhood classroom environment. Drawing on examples from world's best practice, the sessions will feature philosophies that inform high quality art education for young children, and will provide opportunities for provocations leading to dialogue and the exploration of practical problems relating to the valuing of the visual arts in early education, arranging the environment, monitoring children's learning, working with artists. Presenters are Dr Barbara Piscitelli (Australia) an early childhood educator / lecturer / researcher specialising in arts education; and Dr Susan Wright (Singapore) researcher / educator / publisher of several texts on the arts and creativity.

Eton House, Singapore

http://childcarewa.com/files/admin-images/Oct_2010_A_Rollin__Good_Time_date_claimer.pdf

The International Art in Early Childhood Conference

June 2011, Toledo, Ohio, USA

Aotearoa New Zealand Association of Art Educators 11th National Conference

July 2011, WINTEC, Hamilton

10th Early Childhood Convention

Christchurch Convention Centre and Town Hall, 26 - 29 April 2011

<http://www.econvention2011.org.nz/>



International Art in Early Childhood Research Journal

Latest issue now available

DIALOGUES WITH MATERIAL

E X H I B I T I O N

A review of the exhibition by Janette Kelly



Looking for inspiration in your visual arts programmes? If you read the review of *Children, art, artists: The expressive languages of children, the artistic language of Alberto Burri* (Vecchi & Guidici, 2004) in the first issue of **ecARTnz** and were inspired and provoked by it, then I recommend a trip to Auckland to see the exhibition *Dialogues with material*. This is Reggio Children's latest exhibition, and it is currently showing at the Floating Pavilion at the Viaduct Basin in Auckland. However, be quick! The exhibition ends on September 17th.

I attended the opening of the exhibition - which highlights four projects from the 2002 Reggio Emilia exhibition *The expressive languages of children, the artistic language of Alberto Burri*. Two features impressed me most about the exhibition - its aesthetic presentation, and the way it documented the depth of children's interest in, and engagement with, a range of natural and recycled materials used in visual art explorations. Stunning photographs were prominent on free standing display panels showing, for example, a toddler captivated by material floating down in front of him. Other photographs showed the collection of natural materials outdoors and their transformation into paint. A rich assortment of 'real' materials accompanied the panels showing how waste can be creatively transformed into research-rich possibilities for young children. The project involving children under 2.5 year-olds, *Black is made of all colours*, featured infants interacting with a vast array of fabric and plastics in shades of black. Whereas in *White, white and white* the object of much research and creation was infants' engagement with simple paper napkins.

In the promotional flier and exhibition displays, the elegant and poetic language used to describe the materials and their use is, in my experience, not often heard in ECE centres in New Zealand. Perhaps our all-too-busy programmes, coupled with some naïveté around artistic expression, results in teachers seldom looking at materials intensely, or talking with children about the "quantity, quality, density and variations in colour and hue" or "the white, lightweight, airy and delicate, slightly textured, opaque" ... or the "transparent myriad of possibilities of a paper napkin". Why not? The exhibition, with its inherent message of competent, capable children, suggests we should.

The Matariki Project

A student's reflection on a planned art experience

Gill Wright

As I prepared to go on teaching practice I realised that Matariki would occur while I was teaching so I did some prior research into art that had been inspired by Matariki. I purchased a Matariki painting called *Sprinkling Stars* by New Zealand artist Ira Mitchell-Kirk. Once at Papamoa kindergarten, I began to use this painting to explore elements of art, art appreciation and artistic techniques with children on a one-to-one basis (and sometimes one-to-two) in the kindergarten's outdoor project room, a special space designated for art projects. In this special space the children created their own Matariki paintings.

The process

Before touching any paint ourselves, however, the children and I looked carefully at *Sprinkling Stars* in its entirety. I provoked the children's thinking by asking questions and making observations such as: "The blurry lines around the stars make them look like they are twinkling"; "The sky is both dark blue and light blue, I wonder how the artist has made those different tones of blue?", "This big circular star in the middle makes my eye keep coming back to it" and "The wavy lines and shadows in the water make it look like its moving".

We also spent time looking closely at the artist's brush strokes and techniques. Then we experimented on special 'practising paper' using different brush strokes that we thought could be suitable for painting the sky. I painted alongside the children, discussing my techniques and intentions and commenting on theirs. A child painting alongside me said "I think that these brush strokes (flicking action with brush) look like the wind in the sky".

I also supported children by helping them to think about the colours of the night sky and encouraging them to consider how they could create different tones of blue using a limited palette of black, dark blue and white paint. The children and I spent a long time exploring the different tones of blue, experimenting with colour mixing using blue and white. As I discussed the tones, I used language associated with colour e.g. "dark", "mid", "light", and "pale" and compared the colours of blue I saw in the artist's painting with colours of surrounding objects and colours in the kindergarten environment.





I noticed how the children also began to do this and how, as they started mixing to create their own tones of blue, they used language such as “this blue is not light enough” or “the dark blue is not dark enough, I need more black”. I responded by asking them how they could make the paint lighter or darker, modelling techniques as I mixed my own paint alongside the children, and comparing and discussing the tones of blue that were created. After we had gone through these investigation processes, the children selected the size and shape of canvas to paint on and began to create their own work.

Upon reflection

When I reflected on the planned learning process after the children’s paintings were finished, I realised that there had been a time in my teaching career - not so long ago, when I believed that children’s art work and responses to provocations (such as this one) should be entirely their own, without any intervention from the teacher. However, I feel that there has been a shift in my pedagogy and hence my strategies for supporting children’s art experiences have changed. Through taking the Arts paper at university, concern about my own children’s anxieties about their inability to draw or paint, and on-going discussions with my Associate Teacher, I have developed new understandings and awareness. I now believe that my role in supporting and extending children’s knowledge and understandings in the Arts needs to be the same as it is in other areas of the curriculum, functioning as a “provider, observer, partner, collaborator and provocateur” (Robertson, 2000, p.160).

Using Mitchell-Kirk’s Matariki painting as a starting point for engagement in art appreciation with the children was a valuable teaching strategy. Adopting Kolbe’s (2005) concept of children as “aesthetic researchers” (cited in Pohio, 2006, p.32) enabled me to be an effective “facilitator of children’s developing visual literacy through increasing their awareness of the visual elements of line, shape, form, colour, pattern, space and texture” (Visser, 2004, p.10). Meaningful conversations were an important part of engendering children’s art appreciation because they helped them expand the ways they could use vocabulary associated with the visual arts. Working in a quiet space designated for art, coupled with my decision to work with only one or two children at a time, enabled me to effectively facilitate and scaffold children’s visual art learning experiences. The combination of these factors led to the stunning Matariki paintings created by the children.

Pohio, L. (2006). Visual art: A valuable medium for promoting peer collaboration in early childhood contexts. *Early Education*, 40 (Spring/Summer), 7-10.

Robertson, J. (2000). Drawing: Making thinking visible. In W. Schiller (Ed.), *Thinking through the arts* (pp.154-162). Amsterdam: Harwood Academic Press.

Visser, J. (2004). Visual language experiences: The beginnings of artistic self expression for infants and toddlers. *The First Years: Nga Tau Tuatahi*, 6 (1), 10-12.

The work of Gaye Jurisich

Artist and early childhood teacher

Gaye Jurisich is an experienced Hamilton-based artist. Her work includes painting and sculpture with a variety of media. Talking about her work Gaye says,

My art is a dialogue that involves the reality of space and time, visual associations and ambiguity. My work reveals elements of a journey, the familiar becoming unfamiliar, and the known becoming unknown...It is important that my work challenges ideas, initiates thought and provokes discussion about connectedness, to our past and future.

Gaye is also an early childhood teacher and her work as an artist has given her some important insights about working effectively with young children. She believes having had the time and energy to explore her career as an artist has been hugely beneficial for her on a personal level and had many spin-offs for her teaching, both with adults and children. Gaye shares some of these insights:

I have always worked collaboratively with children in visual arts exploration, even when it seemed that I was on the wrong boat. Now, I find that my practice and recent research have confirmed that I was on the right track. Collaborative practices are useful for helping children develop robust understandings and meaning-making across all areas of the curriculum.

Asking children about their work and exploring ideas in their art, or drawing alongside them and with them on the same page, can help them to develop complex concepts. If I describe their works in art terms, they sometimes look at me with amazement, like I have opened some kind of special door of understanding and acceptance of their efforts. Trust in their own self-efficacy increases immediately once they know that I am truly interested in their work and want to talk to them about it. (personal communication, September 2010).

A powerful example of co-constructing an art work with a child occurred when Gaye worked with an eight month infant for about 20 minutes, each of them taking turns to cover a whole page (with very few gaps) of Gaye's pad with her ball point pen.

The infant encouraged Gaye to maintain this interaction through her giggles, studious intent, and willingness to repeatedly pass the pen back to forth.

Examples of Gaye's installations



Passing Red – Hamilton City, 2008



Crossing, Brick Bay Sculpture Trail. See http://www.brickbaysculpture.co.nz/work_detail.php?id=44

Leaf work with children



Excerpt from:

Learning Story for Carys

Carys invites me to draw with her and I agree. She instructs me what to draw and the colours to use. Gradually over the next 20 minutes we work on the whole picture, drawing a bus, with people and stickers in the windows looking out. There is a snake on the roof which we colour in together - I use red and Carys uses green. "They will get a fright when they look up and see a snake on the roof eh?" she laughs..."Do you like to draw too?" she asks me." Yes I do, I draw lots of things" I reply. "I do too" she says.

She decides we need a road and I suggest trees but she disagrees. "Can you draw a car over there?" she says and points to the other side of the paper. "Yes, I will do the wheels and you do the top bit" I reply and we continue to work on the car together.

"I made a mistake with the windows, I want doors but I coloured too much" Carys says as she shows me the problem. "We can fix that no problem; this pencil will draw over that blue colour one" I reply. Carys decides we need sky too and looks outside "It needs to be blue like that". "Wow, I think our drawing is pretty good, what do you think?" I ask and she smiles as she keeps colouring and we make a tiny bird as well. At the end of the process I ask "Can I take a photo and write a story?" get the camera. But she takes control saying "I can do that" and takes several shots of her work.

Whereas Gaye encouraged the infant to maintain her involvement by communicating her excitement and providing descriptions of the child's creation saying "running, jumping, heavy, abstract, wispy complex lines".

In another example, Gaye describes a collaborative ephemeral work with kindergarten children using pittosporum (kohukohu) leaves. At group time after a short discussion about the leaves, Gaye started the art work by placing a selection of leaves in a circular pattern in the centre of the mat and then grouping them in twos around the circle. The children and teachers each had an opportunity to add their leaves into the arrangement. Then they all stood up and looked down at the creation.

When Gaye asked for children's responses to the work they said it was "like fireworks" or "like a bomb going off". The teachers encouraged all of these suggestions and the resulting discussions amongst children. The collaborative art experience created opportunities for pattern making and helped develop spatial awareness and some mathematical concepts. Best of all it allowed for laughing and associated thinking, and plenty of fun talk among the children and teachers. Documenting these experiences in Learning Stories provides Gaye with excellent vehicles for reflection.

In *Learning Story for Carys* Gaye describes a collaborative drawing activity with a 4 year-old girl, highlighting Carys's competence, her involvement and the co-construction that took place.



Gaye's key message for early childhood educators is that they need to be involved in children's visual art learning experiences. She encourages teachers to learn more about current contemporary practices in the arts. By doing that, she argues that teachers can become competent, confident, hands-on collaborators who willingly share important knowledge with children.

Exploring photography

Pigeon Mountain Kindergarten



Children drive many aspects of our learning programme here at Pigeon Mountain Kindergarten. An ongoing interest that continues to develop is children's exploration of photography. Over time this interest has deepened as children use digital cameras to take photos of people, places and things within and beyond the kindergarten environment. Children decide many different and creative ways in which their photographs can be used- framing their photos, scrap booking, movie-making or using them as a form of self assessment.

To support and follow children's growing interest in photography we suggested the idea of small groups of children exploring our natural environment. As the kindergarten is situated on a reserve right under a small mountain called Pigeon Mountain (O Huirangi), we considered how we could enhance a sense of connection and/or reconnection with this mountain through photography. Children enthusiastically and positively responded to this suggestion and consequently, 'Mountain Photography' has grown and evolved. The children have also begun exploring and investigating the boardwalk across the road from us – a natural habitat for pukeko and ducks. We continue to be amazed at the uniqueness and quality of each individual photo.

It began with the introduction of a 'real' camera

In 2008, following a decision to introduce cameras for children to use, we purchased two children's Kidpix cameras. We thought they looked appealing and resilient for children's use. The children did enjoy using them – but in a limited way. However, we were soon to discover their interest and curiosity was with our 'real' cameras!

In the 2nd term of 2009 our student teacher introduced her 'real' camera to Hailey, one of the children. Hailey was most excited and over the next few days she became an enthusiastic photographer. This soon caught on and many other children became involved in investigating and exploring photography around the kindergarten with our 'real' cameras, which encouraged "each child's sense of camera ownership and independent decision-making" (Richards, 2009, p.4).

Scrap booking begins

As a team, we considered how we could develop this interest and remembered the scrap booking resources that had been donated recently. Hailey and her keen photographer friends were introduced to this idea and scrap booking was born. Today scrap booking continues to be a permanent feature of our programme – and includes children's 'Mountain Photography'.



We observed that through children's interests being supported by photographic and creative scrap booking opportunities, they became drivers of their own process. Ownership of the cameras had moved – they had now become everybody's property. This was a major shift for us in our practice as teachers, and a turning point in what has become children's ongoing photographic exploration and investigation.

Mountain Photography evolves from a bi-cultural lens

When thinking about integrating a bi-cultural aspect with children's growing interest in photography, we considered the previous learning we had with the exploration of the mountain, Pigeon Mountain - O Huiarangi. We were reminded that bi-cultural learning does not just happen on its own, that at times intentional teaching can enliven and enhance Maori-based interests. Ritchie (2003) suggests "If few Maori children attend the centre, or if staff are ill-equipped to identify and enhance Maori-based interests, even well intentioned teachers may fail to deliver a bi-cultural curriculum" (p. 91).

As an opportunity to connect with our mountain we began to offer what has become known to us as 'Mountain Photography'. We are fortunate to be situated on a reserve right under the mountain with a boardwalk and park filled with pukeko, ducks and nature across the road. These provide intriguing subjects for their photographs. Over the past eighteen months the community at Pigeon Mountain Kindergarten has continued to be amazed at the wonderful photographs taken by the children. Intertwined with scrap booking 'Mountain Photography' has become a feature of our programme and we believe it enhances the valued concept of Whanaungatanga, the heart of relationships.

Our experience of children engaging in photography in the kindergarten and neighbouring environment resonates with Richards (2009) research with young children she calls 'visual ethnographers'. She concluded that, "the nature or importance of photographic or artistic images could not be predetermined but evolved out of the research process" (p.11). Our children too are becoming photographic researchers as they make and share their discoveries with us. Their sharing creates connections for us as a community. Through our ongoing conversations with children and parents (and amongst children themselves), understandings have developed about their unique perspectives. These are reflected in children's purposeful engagement with photography and the environment.

Mountain Photography – the process

When we introduced "Mountain Photography" we only had three 'real' cameras. At that time, we considered this to be a limitation. However, we have since discovered that this is, in fact, a positive feature. The important principle of one child: one camera means that three children at a time can go across the road to the boardwalk with a teacher. For the next hour the children have the time, space and freedom to observe, discover and take photographs. The small group and high adult: child ratio allows for the sharing of quality photographic possibilities and for quiet space and thought. In the following week the children's photographs are made into black and white photo books for children to revisit and create connections when they take them home to share with their family. The books also include a profile children create of themselves and they also chose a photo from the book for our wall display.

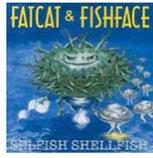
The wonderful photographs and images on display make us aware that what began as photographic exploration has become so much more. "Mountain Photography" is a visual display that gives us as adults cause to reflect and consider the powerful images that children have observed. The photographs capture their sometimes impulsive, sometimes thoughtful and sometimes playful and enthusiastic responses to their environment revealing their possible selves as photographers. Despite the photographic possibilities afforded to children by our unique environment we believe that there are opportunities in all environments for children to observe, explore and amaze us with their views and insights shared through this medium.

Richards, R. D. (2009). Young visual ethnographers: Children's use of digital photography to record, share and extend their art experiences. *International Art in Early Childhood Research Journal*. 1(1), 1-16.

Ritchie, J. (2003). Te Whaariki as a potential lever for bicultural development. In J. Nuttall (Ed.), *Weaving Te Whaariki: Aotearoa New Zealand's early childhood curriculum document in theory and practice*. Wellington: NZCE

Arty Music by Fatcat & Fishface

An interview with Robin Nathan by Lisa Terreni



I distinctly remember discovering Fatcat & Fishface's *Horrible Songs for Children* and playing it at my centre. The album name intrigued me and the CD cover artwork was compellingly bizarre! The most memorable concert held at the centre included our rendition of a song from the first CD - *Favourite Undies*. Staff wore underpants on their heads and the children sang the words lustily. The song became an instant hit. Funky, funny, anarchic and very entertaining, the work of Fatcat & Fishface has a unique place in music produced for young children in New Zealand. Recently I interviewed Robin Nathan, producer of Fatcat & Fishface.

Lisa: When and why did Fatcat & Fishface start producing music for young children?

Robin: Fatcat & Fishface released their first CD *Horrible Songs for Children* in 1997. It started as a humble cassette to test the waters, but after several reprints (by popular demand), moved to CD. *Horrible Songs for Children* won Best New Artist for Older Children (5 to 12) at the USA based Children's Music Web awards where the judges are children. We learned that our entry provoked considerable debate. The organisers later said "We thought New Zealand was a conservative place. Boy, did we learn something!!"

Lisa: What inspired your music and lyrics?

Robin: Fatcat & Fishface's music and lyrics are just a natural result of the two composers combining their humour and experience. It's like rubbing two sticks together to produce a flame.

Lisa: The art work on the CD covers is almost as unique as the music. Whose is it?

Robin: Fatcat & Fishface have only ever used two cover artists. Margaret Feeney produced an original oil painting for each of the covers of our first five CDs (*Horrible Songs for Children*, *Selfish Shellfish*, *Dogbreath*, *Pretty Ugly* and *Meanie*). Her distinctive style has a depth and humour which matches the music and helped our covers stand out amongst regular children's fare. Stephen Templer provided the cover art for our two most recent albums - *The Bestest & Horriblest Songs for Children* and *Birdbrain*. Stephen's style is more illustrative. He has a unique aesthetic which is playful and funky. Stephen has directed two of our animated music clips to date.

Lisa: Why was video part of your creative process?

Robin: Fatcat & Fishface do not perform live, so making the music videos was a method of getting our music out there, as well as a creative endeavour in its own right. I have responsibility for visual representations of Fatcat & Fishface's music. It's important that they are original, distinctive, and match the cheeky style of the songs. Fatcat & Fishface have five animated music videos so far. The clips have been screened at the NZ International Film Festival (Animation for Kids section) and are regularly played as fillers in children's programming on TV. Given that the clips have been largely self funded (we slip between the cracks of both NZ on Air and Creative NZ) I have worked mainly with talented up and coming animators and artists. To capture the 'energy' of our music we have explored different styles of animation - puppetry, illustration, claymation etc, and have found our niche in a mixture of hands-on techniques coupled with computer technology.

Lisa: How can Early Childhood teachers get hold of Fatcat & Fishface CDs and videos?

Robin: We think Fatcat & Fishface music inspires children to express themselves – by singing, dancing or drawing, so it is good to have in an EC collection. Our CDs are available via our website: www.fatcatfishface.com Many independent record stores stock them, or feel free to contact us directly and we will send them out: Fatcat & Fishface, P.O.Box 11711, Wellington. You can see all five animated music clips on our site: www.fatcatfishface.com and we look forward to creating more in the future!

REmida Perth Creative Reuse Centre: Inspiration and transformation

Janette Kelly

Last year I visited REmida Perth Creative Reuse Centre which is part of REMIDANET, an international organisation operating in Italy, Denmark and Sweden. Originating from the philosophies of Reggio Emilia, and named after the mythological King Midas, “REmida encourages a golden perspective on discarded materials” (see <http://www.remidawa.com>). These centres promote a more sustainable future through environmental, educational, social and economic objectives.

REmida Perth has a network of community partners and works with education, arts and sustainability groups. Manufacturers and suppliers provide a vast array of materials for reuse by children, teachers and artists. Workshops aimed at early childhood, schools, after school care centres and community groups encourage the valuing of waste. They focus on the history and philosophy of REmida, and provide a tour of the centre and introduction to materials. The staff communicate the value of waste materials and talk about the transformation of materials (inspiration and imagination), transitional art (reusing and reusing again) and the value of long term projects (making things last).

The centre was amazing and the staff and volunteers welcoming, knowledgeable and passionate about sustainability. They clearly believed in “the role of art in bringing value to objects and how aesthetics can be used to transform rubbish into value” (REmida Perth, 2009). I watched children and adults (including a visiting artist) interacting with the materials and the environment and began to understand the philosophy. This is a “proactive approach to environmentalism and to change through giving value to imperfect products and otherwise worthless objects ... to generate new opportunities for communication and creativity, all within a perspective of respect for objects and the environment” (Reggio Children, 2005, p. 9).

It was inspiring and the work was transformational. I saw materials used and displayed with aesthetics, beauty and originality. I joined up and continue to receive monthly newsletters and invitations to professional development and creative workshops. My desire to visit Reggio Emilia and European REmida centres was reawakened as I imagined possibilities previously unavailable to me. For a spectacular journey of discovery into the potential of materials to inspire imagination and creativity I highly recommend *Remida Day* (Reggio Children, 2005).

You can view more photographs at:
<http://picasaweb.google.com/WaikatoJanetteKelly>

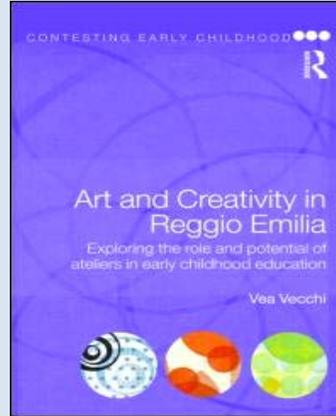
REmida Perth. (2009). *Promotional material*. Perth, WA: Author.

Reggio Children. (2005). *REMIDA day muta...menti (English version)*. Reggio Emilia, Italy: Author.



Books that will inspire and provoke

A review by Lesley Pohio



Art and Creativity in Reggio Emilia: Exploring the role and potential of ateliers in early childhood education, written by Veia Vecchi, is the eighth book in the series *Contesting Early Childhood* co-edited by Gunilla Dahlberg and Peter Moss. The book explores the contribution of art and creativity to early childhood education in the pioneering preschools of Reggio Emilia. It carefully examines the role of the atelier (an art workshop that is integral to Reggio Emilia preschool environments) and the atelierista (an educator with an arts background who works with children and teachers in the preschools). Veia Vecchi, using her own experience as one of the first atelieristas to be appointed to the Dianna School in 1970, reflects upon the history of the atelier and the evolving role of the atelierista.

Gandini, Etheredge and Hill (2008, p. 125) encapsulate the essence of the atelier, stating:

The atelier, a space rich in materials, tools, and people with professional competence, has contributed much to our work on documentation. This work has strongly informed - little by little - our way of being with children...But the atelier [is] most of all a place for research, and we expect that it will continue to increase.

Central to the book is Vecchi's emphasis that the atelier and the atelierista "are at the heart of the learning, key partners with teachers, not technical specialists who transmit specialised skills and help children produce nice products". She sees the role of atelierista as being that of a guide "for border crossing between the world of art, architecture and design, equipped as sensitive antennae for contemporary issues" (Vecchi, 2010, p.xix).

The publication *Art and Creativity* has come at an opportune time, particularly as some early childhood centres in New Zealand are beginning to actively explore the provision of an atelier (and an atelierista) and how this can work in the New Zealand cultural context. However, this enlightened book also provides a deep look at the importance of art and aesthetics in children's lives, using language that is poetic but also accessible. For those interested in exploring the relationship between the arts and education, not only from an early childhood perspective, this is an important book to read.



Lesley Pohio is a senior tutor at the Faculty of Education, University of Auckland. Lesley has extensive experience in the field of early childhood education - as a Head Teacher of a large multi cultural kindergarten in Auckland and, more recently, working in the tertiary sector. Currently, Lesley's main teaching and research interests are in the visual arts in early childhood education. She has a strong interest in the pedagogy of Reggio Emilia, particularly in the *atelier* (art studio) and the *atelierista* (art teacher) and the implications these have for children's learning. Lesley is an active member of Aotearoa New Zealand Association of Art Educators (ANZAAE).

ANZAAE Member profile

Masters thesis:

Pohio, L. (2009). *The implementation and integration of information and communication technologies: Teachers' perspectives*. Unpublished Masters' thesis, Unitec Institute of Technology, Auckland.

Publications

Gould, K., & Pohio, L. (2006). Stories from Aotearoa/New Zealand, In: Fleet, A. Patterson, C., & Robertson, J. (Ed.), *Insights: Behind early childhood pedagogical documentation*. (1stedn), Australia, Pademelon Press, 78-86.

Pohio, L. (2009). Reggio Emilia pedagogy in early childhood education: How can this approach enhance visual arts experiences in New Zealand? *He Kupu The Word*, 2 (2), 10-18.

Fuemana-Foa'i, L., Pohio, L., & Terreni, L. (2009). Narratives from Aotearoa New Zealand: Building communities in early childhood through the visual arts. *Teaching Artist Journal*, 7 (1), 23-33.

Pohio, L. (2008). Visual art in the early childhood context: A critical dimension for enhancing community connections. In: Smith, P (Ed.), *The Arts in education: Critical perspectives from teacher educators School for visual and Creative Arts in Education*. Auckland, N.Z: Faculty of Education, The University of Auckland University, 13-24.

Pohio L. (2006). Visual art: A valuable medium for promoting peer collaboration, *Early Education*, 40, 7-10.

Editorial information and the new board of ecARTnz

ecARTnz, an e magazine 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, 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 e magazine 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 eight photographs are welcomed. For further information or submissions please email Lisa Terreni at lisa.terreni@vuw.ac.nz

