Art History, Art Criticism, and Art Production

An Examination of Art Education in Selected School Districts

Volume II: Case Studies of Seven Selected Sites

Michael Day, Elliot Eisner, Robert Stake, Brent Wilson, Marjorie Wilson
The research described in this report was sponsored by the Getty Center for Education in the Arts, an operating entity of the J. Paul Getty Trust.

Library of Congress Cataloging in Publication Data
Main entry under title:
Art history, art criticism, and art production.
"Prepared for the J. Paul Getty Trust."
"R-3161/--JPG."
Contents: -- v. 2. Case studies of seven selected sites.
1. Art--Study and teaching (Elementary)--United States--Case studies. 2. Art--Study and teaching (Secondary)--United States--Case studies.
N353.A76 1984 707'.1273 84-17996

The Rand Publications Series: The Report is the principal publication documenting and transmitting Rand’s major research findings and final research results. The Rand Note reports other outputs of sponsored research for general distribution. Publications of The Rand Corporation do not necessarily reflect the opinions or policies of the sponsors of Rand research.

Published by The Rand Corporation
Art History, Art Criticism, and Art Production

An Examination of Art Education in Selected School Districts, Volume II: Case Studies of Seven Selected Sites

Michael Day, Brigham Young University
Elliot Eisner, Stanford University
Robert Stake, University of Illinois
Brent Wilson, Pennsylvania State University
Marjorie Wilson, Art Education Consultant
With contributions from Milbrey Wallin McLaughlin and Margaret A. Thomas

December 1984

Prepared for the Getty Center for Education in the Arts of the J. Paul Getty Trust
FOREWORD

This report is the result of a search for school districts that are developing art education programs that include art production, art history, and art criticism. It is sponsored by the Getty Center for Education in the Arts, an operating entity of the J. Paul Getty Trust. The research was encouraged because the Center believes that if art education is ever to become a meaningful part of the curriculum, it must broaden its content and become more rigorous.

The study is composed of three volumes. Volume I identifies the commonalities across research sites and compares the process of change in seven selected districts. It discusses factors associated with sustaining quality art education programs in view of declining student enrollments, shrinking school budgets, and emphasis on basic reading and computational skills.

Volume II contains individual case studies. Each study illuminates the characteristics of the art program as well as the personalities that have shaped it. Each is enriched by the research approach and writing style of its author. Volume III summarizes the study.

This case study research project has its genesis in the Getty Trust's commitment to improving art history scholarship, conservation of art objects, and art and museum education. As a private operating foundation, the Trust is primarily responsible for developing and administering programs that meet these objectives.\(^1\) The Trust has manifested its commitment to art education through the creation of its Center for Education in the Arts.

The philosophy of the Center is the belief that no child is fully educated or adequately prepared to live in an increasingly technological world without understanding the meaning and beauty transmitted by the arts. The Center is not alone in this belief. Several recent national studies on education share some of its concerns.\(^2\) Two nationally recognized educators, Dr. Ernest Boyer and Dr. Elliot W. Eisner, whose rationales for arts education introduce this report, support this philosophy and encourage art efforts.

The Center's establishment followed a year-long examination of the substance and quality of public school arts education programs, particularly those in the visual arts. Before developing its own program, the Getty wanted to better understand why arts education is accorded such low status in most of the nation's schools. This review was useful in identifying many of the features characterizing arts education content and practice. Chief among these is the traditional emphasis in visual arts education on fostering creative expression and developing artistic skills, such as drawing, painting, and sculpting. This approach is evidenced in programs that stress hands-on production activities to the virtual exclusion of teaching children about the cultural and historical contributions of art or how to value, analyze, and interpret works of art.

Other salient findings included:

- Lack of recognition among many school policymakers and parents of the cognitive and affective contributions the arts make to educational development;

---

\(^{1}\)In addition to the Center for Education in the Arts, the Trust's other operating activities include the J. Paul Getty Museum; the Getty Center for the History of Art and the Humanities; the Getty Conservation Institute; the Art History Information Program; the Metropolitan Museum/Getty Program of Art on Film and the Museum Management Institute.

• College admission criteria, teacher certification requirements, standardized testing, and high school graduation requirements, which consistently exclude the arts, thereby reinforcing the notion that the arts are not valuable to educational development or worthy of instructional time in the curriculum;

• The absence of written, sequential, and substantive curricula that convey the content and processes of art and provide for cumulative learning.

After reviewing these findings and verifying them with leading art educators, the Getty concluded that if arts education is to move from the sidelines of instruction to a more central place in a balanced school curriculum, its content needed to be expanded to include attention to all the disciplines making up the arts: art production, art history, art criticism, and aesthetics.

The inclusion of these four content areas in art instruction is important because each develops knowledge and skills that contribute importantly not only to children’s more complete understanding of art, but to their ability to draw facts and inferences about the cultural and historical contexts from which the arts spring and to analyze and interpret the powerful ideas that the arts communicate.

As adults we recognize that understanding of the arts is a composite of historical, critical, and technical information. It seems reasonable, then, to expect arts instruction to attend to all of these aspects. Yet, traditionally, this has not been the concept guiding such instruction in schools.

Education in the arts has emphasized affective development almost exclusively—imagination, feelings, and emotions. But when general education increasingly emphasizes cognitive development—thinking, ideas, reading, writing, and math—it becomes clear why arts education programs are often perceived as “frills” and marginally educational.

Since the mid-1960s a handful of visual arts educators have been calling for the approach to art education the Getty now advocates and embraces. This approach recently has been called “discipline-based” art because instruction is centered on the knowledge that constitutes the discipline of art. That knowledge not only consists of art making, illuminating artistic media, processes and techniques, but also incorporates content and skills drawn from the other areas that contribute to our understanding of art—art history, art criticism, and aesthetics.3

This comprehensive approach to visual art education is grounded in theory, but we also wanted to know whether any school districts in the country were practicing art education in this way. And if so, we wanted to know what we could learn from the classroom application of theory to practice. During the selection process we found individual schools and teachers who were teaching art from a discipline-based approach. But our objective was to study art programs being implemented on a district-wide basis in as many grade levels as possible to understand the variables that affect the development of a discipline-based program.

The Rand Corporation, a national research organization with extensive experience in analyzing educational change, was engaged to assist in the identification of school art programs that reflected a discipline-based approach. Rand researchers designed the study and completed a cross-site analysis of these selected districts. The Getty invited five educators with research experience in arts education to write case studies about the selected sites.

3The definition of discipline-based art education is still evolving. Since selecting the sites to be included in the study, the Center has added aesthetics to its definition of discipline-based art education. The case studies therefore do not address this content area, which is concerned with the nature and theory of art, as specifically as they do the art production, history, and criticism.
The study had two important purposes. The first was to determine whether the approach to visual arts education adopted by the Getty was being practiced in school districts from kindergarten through twelfth grade. The second was to learn more about the character of these programs from an in-depth study of each. We wanted to know what commonalities these programs share; what makes each distinctive; what curricula, instructional, and evaluation methodologies guide these programs; what factors encourage and constrain them; how they are being implemented; how children are responding to them; and why, given the way in which art education traditionally is taught, these districts chose a different approach to art instruction.

The study’s findings affirm that discipline-based art education theory has found its way into school practice. The forms of application vary from district to district, as might be expected. But most of the criteria that define this approach to art education are present in all—attention to productive, historical, and critical areas of art learning; a written curriculum; sequential and cumulative instruction; and the use of adult art works as exemplars.

All of the districts studied are considered to have promising programs, and most are well on their way to becoming exemplary models of discipline-based art education. All still are evolving and refining their programs, although some are further along in their development than others.

In determining what art education could be, the elements missing in these promising programs are as important as the elements that are present. These missing elements point out some important issues for the future practice of art education and the training of its practitioners. For example, as committed as the seven districts are to discipline-based art education, there is little evidence of adequate instruction in art history and criticism. Few are using curricula that can be viewed as exemplars leading to cumulative learning at each grade level. On the positive side, analyzing how these promising programs can be improved does not diminish their accomplishments. Given art education’s traditional emphasis on art production activities, these districts stand out for their pioneering efforts.

As a group, the seven case studies provide rich and vivid accounts of how art specialists and general classroom teachers are practicing discipline-based art instruction. They demonstrate the importance of support from school board members, superintendents, and principals; of a written curriculum; and of in-service training. They illustrate an expanded role for the professional art specialist, which includes more responsibility for curriculum development, in-service leadership, technical assistance, and program evaluation. They provide examples of school-museum collaborations. And they dispel the notion that systematic instruction compromises or constrains individual creativity.

Originally the Center undertook this study to inform its own program decisions. Because the Getty wants to be responsive to the many inquiries from educators and parents about the findings, the study is available publicly in three formats: the Rand cross-site analysis; the complete case studies; and a concise summary of important findings and issues.

This foreword would not be complete without special words of appreciation and recognition to all individuals in each school district—administrators, teachers, and students—who participated in the study and also to the members of the research team. The Center is privileged and fortunate to have had the opportunity of working with them all.

The openness, cooperation, and enthusiasm of the school personnel in the seven districts was indispensable in providing thorough and accurate information about each program. Their personal and collective devotion to providing their students with a balanced education is commendable.
The researchers' analysis of the strengths as well as the shortcomings of each program is not only informative and instructive, but invaluable to the districts as they continue to perfect their programs. During the 18 months it took to complete their reports, they constructively criticized each other's work, responded to critiques of their drafts by professionals in the field of education and art education, and demonstrated the sensitivity of caring educators in working with school personnel.

Since the commencement of this study, several reports have been published on the character of American education. The issue of excellence in education has captured the national spotlight and raised our consciousness about our individual responsibilities in ensuring quality education. Several of these studies have recognized the arts as basic to education. They have pointed out that if art education is to become a basic and essential subject in a balanced curriculum, its instructional content will have to become more substantive and rigorous. The art programs included in this study have become "basic" subjects in their districts' core curricula because they embody these qualities. They give us insight into what art education can and should be.

As an institution vitally concerned with illuminating the value of the arts to a civilized society and their value to the educational development of children, the Getty hopes this report will prove useful to all those who share our concerns.

Leilani Lattin Duke
Director
Getty Center for Education in the Arts
Los Angeles, Fall 1984

The Getty Center for Education in the Arts' other research and development activities include: The Getty Institute for Educators on the Visual Arts, a staff development and curriculum implementation pilot project with Los Angeles County school districts; a children's television series on the arts co-sponsored with the National Endowment for the Arts; assessments of museum education needs, teacher training programs in art education and discipline-based art curricula; and the development of discipline-based art education theory and application.
THE ARTS, LANGUAGE, AND THE SCHOOLS

Great nations write their autobiographies in three manuscripts, the book of their deeds, the book of their words and the book of their art. Not one of these books can be understood unless we read the two others, but of the three the only trustworthy one is the last.

John Ruskin

We humans are no match for the lion in strength, are outstripped by the ostrich in speed, win no medals against the dolphin in swimming, can smell less acutely than the dog, cannot see as well as the hawk during the day or the cat during the night. Yet, so far as we know and understand, it is the human species that excels in the use of symbols. The sending and receiving of sophisticated messages sets us apart from all other creatures on the planet earth.

We build our nests, seek our mates, destroy our enemies. But unlike the other forms of life, we take infinite pains to express our experiences and record our relationships and feelings, accomplishments, and failures. We capture those experiences and by means of symbols send them on to others through a process we call language.

In the early dawn of civilization our first parents used sticks and stones and grunts and groans to convey feelings and ideas. Then words were formed; a vocabulary took shape followed by written squiggles, making it possible to send messages from place to place and transmit them from one generation to another.

Then written and spoken language was enriched. Poets used words to create metaphors, forcing us to view familiar things in unfamiliar ways while the rhythm of the words carried another kind of meaning.

But even with the beauty of the written and the spoken word, language skill was incomplete. There remained those human experiences that could not be captured by the sounds and visual impressions we call words. These symbols simply could not portray adequately such joy as the coming of spring or grief and loneliness at the ending of love. They could not adequately convey the sound of the babbling brook.

For the most intimate, most profoundly moving universal experiences we needed a more subtle, more sensitive set of symbols, a richer language we call the arts. From the dawn of civilization men and women have used music, dance, and the visual arts to transmit the heritage of a people most effectively and to express the deepest human joys and sorrows most profoundly.

Murray Sidlin, the conductor of the New Haven Symphony, said:

When words are no longer adequate, when our passion is greater than we are able to express in a usual manner, people turn to art. Some people go to the canvas and paint; some stand up and dance. But we all go beyond our normal means of communicating and this is the common human experience for all people on this planet.

Those people who uniquely extend and add such richness to our language we call artists. But everyone, to be truly human, must be able to respond to the subtle messages only the arts can adequately convey. We cannot define beauty any more satisfactorily than we can adequately define the arts. Yet all of us can recognize it when we see or hear it, and the more we experience it, the more sensitive we become to its appeal.

Art education, then, is basic because it extends our language—enlarges the store of the images we use—it makes our understanding discriminating and comprehensive. Music, dance,
and the visual arts are languages that reach all people at their deepest and most essential human level. Thus, aesthetic literacy is as basic as linguistic literacy.

Ironically, although many schools undervalue the arts, dictators recognize the power of nonverbal symbols in shaping attitudes and values. Tyrants who seek to control the hearts and minds of men not only censor speech but music, dance, and the visual arts. Hitler destroyed books and controlled speech. But he also outlawed the arts that did not fit his twisted view of life. Stalin exiled Russia's splendid poets but he also suppressed new forms of art.

The point is this: Artists, moved by the world's events, can use their symbols powerfully to convey feelings and ideas. Thus, when Picasso confronts the unspeakable agonies of war—the dismembered child, the scream of the bereft mother, the shattered home—and puts them on a huge canvas called Guernica, he makes a stunning statement about destruction that words cannot convey.

Our twentieth century has seen a crippling of the human spirit. Fragmentation abounds. Students are directed to one narrow branch of knowledge and they lose a larger vision. Even the arts have so separated themselves that those studying music, or painting, or literature do not see connections. Humanities students specialize in "periods"—renaissance, baroque, 18th century, modern—hardly conversant with traditions outside those little boxes.

The time has come for education to reaffirm the breadth and richness of our language, to rejoice in both verbal and nonverbal symbols, too. From birth on, the human mind is both stocked and stoked with images from all our senses. Although it is not clear how the process works, we do know that every style we receive evokes layers and shades of meaning. The meaning of idioms, such as "we worked around the clock," depends on complicated combinations of images, culture bound. But Dalí's painting The Persistence of Memory can be universally understood by those haunted by the notion of inevitable changes with time. And art is perhaps humanity's most essential, most universal language.

The arts are not a frill. They are an essential part of language. Indeed, the quality of civilization can be measured by the breadth of the symbols that are used. And beyond words we also need music, dance, and the visual arts to give expression to the profound urgings of the human spirit.

Now more than ever, all people need to see clearly, hear acutely, and feel sensitively through the arts. These languages are no longer just desirable. They are essential if we are to convey adequately our deepest feelings and survive with civility and joy.

Prepared for the Getty Center for Education in the Arts
Dr. Ernest Boyer
August 1984
WHY ART IN EDUCATION AND WHY ART EDUCATION?

When a nation is at risk, when from all sides we hear of the vast number of functional illiterates leaving our schools, when remedial courses are over-subscribed at even our most selective colleges, the thought of making the case for so seemingly a marginal subject as art in our schools is especially daunting. How can one recommend that the schools' most precious resource—time—be directed from what is truly basic in education to the "luxury" of studying art? How can one propose that teachers divert their attention from the skills that are fundamental to economic well-being to an area of study that "properly" comes after basic educational needs have been met? How can one propose a broad course of study when the schools have apparently been failing at their more narrowly defined tasks?

It is the case for art and art education I wish to present. This case rests upon three major arguments. First, work in the arts develops unique and important mental skills. Second, the arts represent the highest of human achievements to which students should have access. Third, the school is the primary public institution that can make such access possible for the vast majority of students in our nation.

It is tempting to reduce the possibilities of education to simple aspirations, to simplify complex problems so that they seem amenable to quick solutions, to embrace images of schooling that harken back to simpler, more rose-colored times. But such visions of the past are inadequate educational fare for the present. The so-called basics—the Three Rs—were never adequate in the education of free men and women. They are even less adequate today.

The ability to experience the arts of our culture is not an automatic consequence of maturation. What children are able to think about, what they are able to experience, the distance their imaginative life allows them to travel are shaped by the kind of educational lives they have had an opportunity to lead. For children and adolescents, schooling defines a major portion of their lives. Being compelled by law to devote forty or more weeks per year to school creates for them a culture of opportunities—or of opportunities forgone. It is we, the adults who created the policies that define the educational environment in which so much of their time is spent, who influence the kinds of minds children and adolescents will have an opportunity to develop. It is the curriculum of the school and the quality and amount of time devoted to its various parts that define the opportunities students will have to become "literate" in various fields that animate and give substance to our culture. In this sense it can be reasonably argued that the school's curriculum is a mind-altering device.

Our educational policies are designed to shape the minds of the young. Of course, we do not define these policies with such aims in mind; our conceptions of what we do are seldom so ambitious. Yet the effect of our choices, the nature of our priorities, the messages we give to teachers, school administrators, and not least of all, students, do precisely this. Through the curricular choices we make we tell the young what we believe is important for them to learn. We tell teachers what they should devote their attention to. And we convey to principals in countless ways how their schools, hence how they, will be evaluated.

In this scheme of things the arts are seldom in the mainstream of our values. We treat them as outside the core of schooling. Yet we do this at the same time that our culture regards the arts as among the highest of human achievements: We build palaces we call museums to display the fruits of artistic inquiry and construct concert halls to experience the heights we
can reach through music. In effect, we recognize as a culture that the arts represent the apotheosis of human achievement yet, paradoxically, we provide little place for them in our schools.

The results of such neglect are clear. Only a small percentage of our population visits our museums or attends concert halls. For most people, the achievements presented in such places are other people's delights. Yet through taxation all citizens pay for them. All of us underwrite what a small minority can appreciate and enjoy.

If the arts had no unique qualities, if the achievements of great artists were of no more consequence than any program randomly selected from daytime television, the loss would not be significant. Great art has something unique to provide. The ability to experience such art enlightens in a special way and stretches the mind in the process. The arts present to the competent eye those facets of feeling and insight that only artistic form can reveal. There is no verbal equivalent of Bach's Mass in B Minor. Words cannot convey what the music expresses. But the messages in these works are not there simply for the taking. They must, so to speak, be recovered. They must be read. The works themselves must be unwrapped to be experienced. School programs that do not provide adequate time and attention to the arts deny students access to a stunning part of their culture. Such students simply are unable to read our most profound forms of human achievement.

I intentionally used the word "read" in the previous sentence. Visual and musical forms are patterned forms. They are forms that reflect a history. They are forms influenced by purpose, shaped by technology, and possessing the signature of their authors. To recover the meanings these forms possess requires an ability to read the language they use. It requires one to understand, for example, that Monet would paint the very same haystack four times during the same day, not because he was interested in haystacks but because he was interested in the way light illuminated them at different times. One profits from understanding De Chirico's interest in revealing the world of the unconscious by juxtaposing trains, clock towers, and huge artichokes. Artists have purposes and their purposes differ. The experience of art is enhanced by understanding what artists have wanted to accomplish.

We do, of course, recognize that in the study of history Thomas Jefferson's particular vision of democracy is related to our understanding of the Declaration of Independence. We teach children about President Wilson's desire to create a worldwide deliberative body—a League of Nations—and that his efforts are relevant for understanding the period after World War I. Indeed, it would be a shallow historical understanding—or no understanding at all—to neglect such features of the past. The fine arts require no less.

The argument thus far is straightforward. When, through our policies and priorities, we define the school curriculum, we define what students will have an opportunity to learn. The opportunities they have to learn influence the character of their mental life.

Even though they represent the highest levels of human achievement in our culture, the fine arts are now afforded little place in the school curriculum. At the elementary school level they command less than 3 percent of the instructional time per week, and at the secondary level approximately 80 percent of all high school students never enroll in a fine arts course during the four years they are in attendance. Less than 3 percent of all school districts require study in one of the fine arts as a condition for graduation.

The result of access denied is a program of education that leaves most students unable to participate in the arts; the great museums and concert halls that populate the nation are the resources of a small minority of our citizens. Artistic literacy is a rare educational commodity.
Thus far the major argument I have advanced focuses upon access to what might be called "cultural capital." There is, however, another line of argument that I believe to be equally compelling. This argument is that particular kinds of mental processes are elicited and developed by work in the arts.

If one examines the character of what is taught in schools, particularly elementary schools, it becomes apparent that for the most part the tasks that students confront are characterized by a highly rule-governed structure. For example, arithmetic problems require that children learn the four basic operations and how these operations apply to the treatment of numerals. To be correct in arithmetic is to know the right way to perform a particular operation. If a student is in doubt, the student can prove the answer by performing the appropriate operation.

In learning to spell, there is a correct and an incorrect way to arrange the letters that constitute words in the English language. The spelling of words, like the problems children encounter in arithmetic, are either correct or incorrect. Similarly, in punctuation, there tends to be a correct and an incorrect way to evaluate the sentences children are asked to write. In learning to write there are models that children are asked to copy so that their letters can be read. Even in early reading there are correct meanings to the sentences and paragraphs children are asked to read. In short, the vast majority of academic tasks young children encounter in school are driven by a rule-governed system that provides little space for personal interpretation; right and wrong are a part of the lexicon that elementary school children are taught to internalize.

What do such tasks mean for students? What does it mean to children to have a curriculum in which fealty to rule is a pervasive feature? Such conditions can lead to a population of rule followers. One of the greatest of educational fallacies, John Dewey once said, is the belief that children learn only what they are taught. Children learn the covert lessons as well. The school’s curriculum is currently heavily weighted toward a rule-governed view of learning; there is a correct and an incorrect answer to each question raised, the teacher knows the correct answer, and the student’s task is to get it right.

In the arts no comparable “comforts” exist. There is no single correct answer to an artistic problem; there are many. There is no procedure to tell the student with certainty that his or her solution is correct. There is no algorithm that one can use to solve an artistic problem; one must depend upon that most exquisite of human capacities—judgment.

The exercise of judgment in the making of artistic images or in their appreciation depends upon the ability to cope with ambiguity, to experience nuance, and to weigh the trade-offs among alternative courses of action. These skills represent not only the mind operating in its finest hour, but are precisely the skills that characterize our most complex adult life tasks. The problems that perplex us as adults are not those that can be treated by algorithms and verified by proof. School programs that inadvertently teach children there is a correct answer to each important problem they encounter mis-teach children in serious ways. The cultivation of judgment and the ability to be flexibly purposive are best achieved when the tasks and content children encounter in school provide the space for such skills to operate. When the arts are well taught such skills have an essential place.

There is yet another aspect of mental development that effective teaching in the arts fosters. Ironically, it is an aspect of human development that in our culture we regard as distinct from mind. I speak of the cultivation of the senses. Since Plato’s time, the senses have been regarded as separate from mental life; they are considered lower in the hierarchy of human capacities. We typically separate feeling from thinking, emotion from thought, the head from
the hand, and the mind from the body. This view is mistaken. The eye is a part of the mind, and the ability to read the qualitative world in which we live is the major avenue through which those forms we call thoughts are constructed. All thinking requires a content, and that content emanates from our contact with the world. It is our sensory system that first provides the "material" we experience, reflect upon, and eventually manipulate. It is our capacity to create images from the world we are able to experience that feeds our imagination. When our sensibilities are dulled or ill-developed, the content for reflection and imagination is itself limited. The sensibilities, wrote Herbert Read, are the sources of our consciousness. Learning to see and hear are therefore the avenues through which our awareness is raised. To learn to see and to hear is to achieve a realization of some aspect of the world; it is to the ability to achieve this realization that the arts contribute so importantly. They call attention to the qualities of the world, they direct us to its subtleties, they distill and present those qualities in vivid and stable form. We can eventually see the geometries of the city through a painting by Charles Sheeler or its loneliness through one by Edward Hopper. We begin to discover what fields of color can do through the work of Josef Albers, or how the power of line can shape our feeling through the images of Franz Kline. Our senses yield sensation and from sensation we ascend to the aesthetic. The aesthetic gives rise to feeling. Unlike the anaesthetic, which dulls it, art functions in the service of feeling by reestablishing the connection between mind and the senses.

In schools these connections are seldom recognized. The environment of schooling is often aesthetically barren—think of the places where soft surfaces exist in schools. It is a difficult task. Formica desks occupying a right-angled environment are easier to recall. To the extent the arts balance the environmental picture, to the extent they cultivate those aspects of mental life that are now neglected in the schools, they give the young an opportunity to realize their human potential. The absence of the arts in the schools is not only a denial of access to the jewels of our culture, it is a denial of the opportunity to cultivate the mental potential children possess.

Why arts in the school? As content, the arts represent man's best work. Our children ought to have access to such work, and they should know that we care that they do. When we define our school curricula, we not only provide children with access to the intellectual and artistic capital of our culture, we also tell the young what we value for them. Surely the arts are among the things we ought to care about.

The arts are important not only because of what they represent; they are important because of the ways in which they engage and develop human intellectual ability. To learn to see and to make visual form are complex and subtle tasks. The child needs to learn how to look, not simply to assign a label to what is seen, but to experience the qualities he attends. Artistic tasks, unlike so much of what is now taught in schools, develop the ability to judge, to assess, to experience a range of meanings that exceed what we are able to say in words. The limits of language are not the limits of our consciousness. The arts, more than any other area of human endeavor, exploit this important human capacity.

Even if we were to argue that the arts can make exquisite contributions to the quality of our lives, it would not follow automatically that they should be taught in the schools. It takes no great leap of imagination to recognize that the achievements about which I have written do not occur on their own. One does not acquire subtle and complex appreciations of complicated forms simply by getting older. What the culture in general provides—particularly in the arts—cultivates only a small fraction of what children are capable of achieving. Not to provide for an effective program in arts education in the schools is to teach children we do not care
about the arts and that it is unimportant that they learn to read them. If these are not the messages we wish to convey, then programs must be provided, time must be made available, and teachers must acquire the skills to teach the arts in substantive and meaningful ways. Without a program, adequate time, and skilled teaching, our aspirations in this area, as in any other, are no more than empty hopes.

Why arts education? Because without it the vast majority of our children will be denied access to the arts and to the opportunities to develop the mental skills that work in the arts makes possible. We can choose to restrict our program and deny our children their cultural legacy or we can give them the opportunity to participate in the artistic wealth our culture possesses. What kind of children and what kind of culture do we want?

Elliot W. Eisner
Stanford University
1984
PREFACE

This report compiles the case reports of seven sites selected for an in-depth examination of art education programs that include art production, art history, and art criticism. The research was supported by the Getty Center for Education in the Arts, an operating entity of the J. Paul Getty Trust. The Getty invited five educators with research experience in art education to write case reports illuminating the characteristics of their programs and the contexts in which they occur. This report is published by The Rand Corporation as part of a larger study of visual arts education. Two other volumes in this series are:


INTRODUCTION AND SUMMARY

America is concerned about her schools. Education is front page news as at least nine major national reports on the status of education sound alarms about the quality of teachers and their professional preparation, the content of the school curriculum, the time devoted to academic tasks, and the level of support and leadership afforded the public schools. (For a review of these reports, see Griesemer and Butler, 1983.)

The relative neglect of the arts and the generally peripheral status of the arts in the nation’s public schools is described and decried in at least two of these reports. Ernest Boyer is eloquent in High School, arguing, “The arts are an essential part of the human experience. They are not a frill” (Boyer, 1983, p. 98). Yet he finds little evidence of arts being given priority or even adequate attention in the schools. Similarly, John Goodlad, in A Place Called School, finds that students at all levels rate the arts as “relatively unimportant” (Goodlad, 1984, p. 219).

The general failure of the public, policymakers, and educators to see art as important to a balanced curriculum results in large measure from the way art is often taught. The activities that constitute art education in most of the nation’s classrooms do little to advance art’s position as a necessary or legitimate subject. The visual arts education experienced by most elementary school students is often little more than involvement in “crafty” projects that have scant claim to systematic, disciplined instruction. Further, few art programs go beyond studio-based activities to incorporate heritage, history, criticism, or aesthetics. Goodlad (1984, p. 220) summarized the state of art education in his massive study of schooling by saying, “the impression I get of the arts programs in the schools studied is that they go little beyond coloring, polishing and playing. . . . What does not come through in our data is much of any indication that the arts were being perceived as central to personal satisfaction in a world rich in art forms, processes and products.” L. Chapman (1982, p. xiii) calls this state of affairs Instant Art, Instant Culture:

Instant art, like many other instant products in our lives, makes few demands on all who participate in it. It requires minimum skill, little or no knowledge, the least possible effort, and practically no investment of time. Instant art is a sham, but it has become the standard fare American schools offer to most of our young people. It is one manifestation of our national ambivalence about the role of art in public education.

Two somewhat different attitudes reinforce this point of view about art education. One is that art per se is seen as not vital to a youngster’s education. Art, in this view, has an ancillary position in the curriculum as a “fun” or therapeutic activity. (See Chapman, 1982; Eisner, 1972, chap. 2.) The second is the view that the visual arts are not properly an “educational” activity—that “the arts, with few exceptions, can be experienced, comprehended, and created with little or no formal education” (Chapman, 1982, p. 4). Talent for the making of art, in this view, is intuitive and God-given; and appreciation is described by the “I know what I like” school of thought. Valuable educational resources are not required.

Although on the whole the arts do not figure prominently in the national reports assessing the condition of education and in recommendations for curricular change, the advocacy for reexamining art education and its place in the instructional program that emerges from these assessments is influential. The College Board’s report, Academic Preparation for College: What Students Need to Know and Be Able to Do, includes the arts among what it considers the
basic academic subjects. Boyer (1983, p. 98) underscores the critical contribution of the arts to education and human experience:

We recommend that all students study the arts to discover how human beings use nonverbal symbols and communicate not only with words but through music, dance, and the visual arts. . . . Now, more than ever, all people need to see clearly, hear acutely, and feel sensitively through the arts. These skills are no longer just desirable. They are essential if we are to survive together with civility and joy.

Goodlad's (1984, p. 220) conclusions about the importance of art reinforce this view: "To grow up without the opportunity to develop ... sophistication in arts appreciation is to grow up deprived." As a result of these public admonishments to attend to the arts, many school administrators and teachers are beginning to reassess their notions of a well-rounded education. While acknowledging the importance of language, mathematics, science, and computer literacy, many educators also wish to balance the curriculum by including subjects that nurture creative thought and expression, develop understanding of diverse cultural values, and foster the ability to communicate nonverbally. The discussions generated by these recent studies of schooling give policymakers an opportunity to consider how education in the arts can be made more substantive, rigorous, and intellectually meaningful.

The J. Paul Getty Trust, a private operating foundation, saw these discussions as an opportunity to work with school personnel and the arts communities to improve the quality of arts education.1 The Trust's commitment to this goal was manifested in 1982 with the creation of the Getty Center for Education in the Arts.2

Two important premises guide the activities of the Getty Center. First, because the arts are a repository of culture, study of the arts is a principal means of understanding human experience and transmitting cultural values; a human being is never adequately educated without having studied the arts. Second, if we want to change the way the arts are perceived by the public and taught in the schools, we need a more comprehensive understanding of how to translate theories of art education into practice.

STUDY PREMISE

The perspective adopted by the Getty Center and embraced by this study is that a substantive arts program should help children understand the historical and cultural contexts in which art has been created. It should help them to perceive aesthetic qualities in nature, in the man-made environment, and in works of art. It should provide them with opportunities to create their own works. And it should encourage them to describe, analyze, and interpret works of art. All of these components are necessary to achieve a more comprehensive, rigorous approach to the arts in school.

Appreciating art, making art, and understanding art all require instruction. As with any subject in which formal instruction is necessary, a body of expertise, scholarship, and exemplary works exists that should form the core of study. Education in the visual arts is no exception. It should be approached as a serious subject with a sequential curriculum that balances

1Adapted from Duke, 1984.

2The Center is one of several operating entities of the J. Paul Getty Trust. The Trust's other operating entities include: The J. Paul Getty Museum; the Getty Center for the History of Art and the Humanities; the Getty Conservation Institute; the Art History Information Program; the Metropolitan Museum/Getty Program for Art on Film; and the Museum Management Institute.
and integrates instruction in four domains: art history, criticism, studio production, and aesthetics.

This perspective about what should constitute an education in the visual arts reflects a viewpoint leading art educators have advocated for the last 20 years. Yet there are few examples today of teaching practices that reflect this perspective. To understand why, one of the first activities the Getty Center undertook was this study of public schools' visual arts education programs.

STUDY PURPOSE

The purpose of this study is to try to answer two major questions. First, what are the factors that generate support for a strong, substantive art education program in a district's curriculum? Second, what factors influence the willingness and ability of school districts and teachers to carry out and maintain a discipline-based art education that strives for balance among the historical, critical, and productive domains of the visual arts? To our knowledge, this research effort is the first attempt to examine public school programs that are trying to provide well-rounded instruction in the visual arts. The Getty selected five educators with experience in evaluating art programs to analyze and develop case reports of the programs chosen for study. The educators selected seven sites for study after a nationwide search. This report presents the case studies of these seven sites.3

STUDY DESIGN AND SITE SELECTION

Experts from the fields of art, art education, and education were asked to nominate districts with promising programs attending to art history, art criticism, and art production. In particular, the Getty Center was looking for districtwide programs rather than school- or classroom-level programs bearing these attributes. Since that time the thinking of the Getty Center has evolved to include four domains—separating the discipline of aesthetics from that of art history, art criticism, and art production. (Aesthetics means the study of the nature and value of art and its role in society.) However, this study addresses only the three domains; it did not systematically examine whether students in classrooms were exposed to aesthetics.

Rand Corporation personnel contacted and interviewed over 100 experts in state departments of education, universities, art and art education organizations, and local school districts across the country and collected program materials from school districts nominated as promising by the experts. For the most part, these program materials consisted of art curriculum guides, statements of philosophical approach, and descriptions of special components, such as joint museum-school programs. The five case study researchers reviewed these program materials, looking for evidence of the three domains, an approach to art education that was compatible with the Getty Center's perspective, and special programs that might inform certain aspects of art education in particular. The goal was to select four sites for in-depth study,

3The Getty Center also contracted with analysts at The Rand Corporation to undertake a study of change and development across the programs selected for study. This cross-site analysis aims to identify and elaborate the similarities and differences among the programs at these seven sites and to assess particular factors associated with sustaining art education programs in view of declining enrollments, shrinking budgets, and the continuing emphasis on basic reading and computational skills. This analysis can be found in Vol. I of this series (Milbrey Wallin McLaughlin and Margaret A. Thomas, Art History, Art Criticism, and Art Production: An Examination of Art Education in Selected School Districts, Vol. I. Comparing the Process of Change Across Districts, The Rand Corporation, R-3161/1-JPG, December 1984).
representing a cross-section in terms of district size, socioeconomic and ethnic makeup of the community, and geographical location.

From the nominations and review of program materials, the case study researchers selected 12 school districts for preliminary site visits. One or two case study researchers visited each site for one to two days. During these visits, the researchers interviewed art and other central office administrators concerning their art program, observed art classes, and spoke with art teachers in the schools. The purpose of these site visits was to determine how much each site attended to the three domains and could contribute to the field’s understanding of the factors that constrain and enhance comprehensive instruction in visual arts education.

Ultimately, the Getty Trust chose seven diverse sites for the study. These seven sites were selected not necessarily because their art education programs were judged exemplary, but because there was evidence that each one was attempting to develop and carry out districtwide art education programs that encompassed the three domains. The extent to which these sites are more or less successful at accomplishing their goals for art education forms the basis for this study.

The seven sites range from blue collar suburbia to an urban inner city and are located in California, Illinois, Minnesota, New York, Ohio, Virginia, and Wisconsin. The school districts range in size from 3100 to 85,000 students, and from 6 to 142 schools; they use generalist or specialist teachers, or a combination of both, to teach art.

DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS

The five case study researchers were assigned to the seven sites based on the size of the school district and the complexity of their art education program, and upon the proximity of the sites to the researchers’ home base. Researchers collected data on the district’s art education program, its place in the district curriculum, and the factors that contributed to its development and should affect its future development at each of the seven sites over an 18-month period covering at least one full academic year. The five researchers spoke with past and present art supervisors and central office art specialists; district superintendents, and other district administrators under whose aegis the programs were fostered and supported; school board members; the classroom teachers responsible for art in each district; and other teachers whose classes intersected with the districts’ art classes, students, parents, and community members interested and engaged in art education in the schools.4 The researchers observed instruction in the classroom and in other locations such as museums and shopping centers. They attended art shows and curriculum and planning meetings, and toured both the school and larger community facilities available to and used by the districts’ art education programs.

From the data collected during these site visits, the researchers developed case reports, the purpose of which is to convey an in-depth picture of the art education program at each site and the context in which it operates. Each case study reflects the distinctive features of the school district and its art program. Moreover, each case study derives depth from the varied perspectives and concerns of the researchers.5 Marjorie Wilson’s study emphasizes the social processes and human networks that constitute the art curriculum. Michael Day brings rich references to aesthetic theory to his observations, providing a philosophical context for all the studies. Elliot Eisner situates the art curriculum within the rest of the school curriculum as well as within national educational priorities and ideologies. Robert Stake subordinates

---

4Depending on district size and the program complexity, the five art education researchers spent between 20 and 75 days collecting data at each of their sites.

5Madeline Grumet provided this assessment of the perspectives and concerns reflected in the case studies.
description to portrayal. His text emphasizes the presentational rather than the representational capacity of art by bringing the rhythms of conversation, photographs, and the presence of things and events into the text that evaluates them. Brent Wilson uses survey data to describe the attitudes toward art and responses to art education held by participating teachers and students.

**SUMMARY**

Despite the rich variety and the unique presentational styles that characterize the case studies, as the reader takes a journey through these cases, common themes and issues emerge and persist across sites.

The journey begins in Whitehall, Ohio, where art education is a tradition. There a determined staff of elementary and junior high art teachers are developing a comprehensive art education program encompassing the three domains. Throughout this developmental process, the art teachers serve as vocal advocates for the program, keeping art at the forefront of the school and district administration’s and the community’s agenda. Some important themes that surface in this case report are the relationships between university and school and between the theorist and practitioner.

These themes surface again in the Hopkins, Minnesota, case study. Unlike Whitehall, where art education is a tradition, the Hopkins story is of a school district’s attempt to design a new K-12 discipline-based art education program. Here we see an art program that encompasses the three domains being implemented by elementary classroom teachers, who are supported by a prescriptive program of art instruction, an itinerant elementary art specialist, and a program of mandatory in-service training. Besides the importance of the theorist-practitioner relationship, some important themes emerging from the Hopkins case include the changing role of the elementary art specialist to curriculum implementor and support professional, the importance of central office commitment to art education, and the perceived conflict at the secondary level between the role of the artist and of the classroom teacher confronted with a curriculum.

Yet another model of using elementary classroom teachers to deliver a prescribed art curriculum is portrayed in the Palo Alto, California, case report. It provides an example of a program that has potential in a community where individuals with a background in art and art education reside and are willing to teach part-time. Lay community artists are trained by the district’s Art Consultant to serve as demonstrators and modelers and, in turn, trainers of the elementary classroom teacher. At the secondary level, the Palo Alto case once again shows the contradiction between the role of artist and teacher. And, as in Whitehall, the Palo Alto case demonstrates the critical role of the art advocate who in this case, as the district Art Consultant, was able to keep art highly visible in a system that values basic skills.

In Decatur and Champaign, Illinois, we see yet another model of the lay community’s involvement with school art programs in an educational environment where the emphasis is on the basics and testing. In this case, the source of the effort to upgrade the art program is in the community. Project HEART, an outside agency, serves the role of both service center and staff development specialists for volunteer teachers within the school system who wish to learn

---

For this study, discipline-based art education means to center art education content on three areas of study inherent in the discipline of art: art production, art history, and art criticism. Its aim is to enable all youngsters, whatever their innate abilities, to acquire the skills, knowledge, and attitudes appropriate for making or encountering works of art as an educated adult.
a new approach to the teaching of the visual and performing arts. Project HEART staff, together with a minority of committed volunteer school staff in these two sites, are attempting to develop a conceptual approach to art that embodies the three domains. In this attempt the importance of the theorist-practitioner relationship is again demonstrated.

Similar to many of the other study sites, Brooklyn District 15 emphasizes the basics. Nevertheless, there is an immersion in art throughout the system because of the cultural influences of New York City, the efforts of the district’s Cultural Arts Supervisor as an advocate for the arts, and strong support for the arts by the district’s administration. In Brooklyn 15, the district’s Art Supervisor worked to instill her vision of art education in each of the district’s 25 schools by seeking the designation of at least one classroom teacher at each school as an art cluster teacher, securing outside grants for the program, making possible the utilization of outside resources, and sponsoring art shows that kept art highly visible throughout the community. Conspicuously absent in the Brooklyn case is the theorist-practitioner link and a recognizable curriculum that communicates shared purposes and strategies to the classroom teachers in this highly decentralized district.

The Milwaukee Public Schools case report embodies many of the themes that have been expressed in the other case reports and, in particular, Brooklyn. Milwaukee, too, has a long and honored tradition of art education and a wealth of nearby cultural facilities. It also contains an articulate arts advocate who is able to secure and utilize outside resources for art education. The Milwaukee district emphasizes basic skills, but there is strong support for art at the administrative level. Unlike Brooklyn, Milwaukee has a sequential and shared curriculum that provides the framework through which the program’s goals and concepts are communicated to the many classroom and specialist teachers in the system who are responsible for art education. And in so doing it provides the framework for confidently continuing the district’s art education program.

The Virginia Beach case study is another example of a school system that has in place the structure by which its art education program can become self-perpetuating. Virginia Beach has a highly articulated art curriculum with a support structure that ensures its continued review and revitalization. Art specialists provide art education in Virginia Beach. This specialist mode, together with review procedures, supports an integrated, carefully sequenced K-12 discipline-based art education curriculum. Throughout Virginia Beach there is a strong adherence to a common art curriculum and to the belief that art is a discipline, with academic status equal to all the other educational disciplines.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

College Board, Academic Preparation for College: What Students Need to Know and Be Able to Do, New York, 1983.
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

A study of this magnitude would not be possible without the cooperation of many people. In particular, we are indebted to the school district staffs in the study sites for responding so openly and fully to our inquiries. Only parsimony prevents us from acknowledging every respondent by name. We would like to thank several key respondents in each site, however, for this study would not have been possible without their assistance: Dr. Newman Walker, Superintendent, Mr. John Martin, Assistant Superintendent, and Ms. Kay Alexander, Art Specialist, Palo Alto, California; Dr. Eldon Gleichman, Superintendent, and Ms. Michele Olsen, Art Specialist, Champaign, Illinois; Mr. Robert Oaks, Superintendent, and Ms. Nancy Roucher, Director, Project HEART, Decatur, Illinois; Dr. Arthur Bruning, Superintendent, Dr. Frank Brendemuehl, Director of Curriculum and Instruction, Ms. Carol Sirrine, Fine Arts Specialist, and Ms. Nancy Pauly, Elementary Art Specialist, Hopkins, Minnesota; Dr. Jerrold Glassman, Superintendent, and Ms. Aileen Golden, Cultural Arts Supervisor, Brooklyn, New York; Mr. Robert Zimpfer, Superintendent, Ms. Janice Plank and Ms. Elizabeth Katz, Art Specialists, Whitehall, Ohio; Dr. E. E. Brickell, Superintendent, Ms. Stephana Runyar, Art Supervisor, Virginia Beach, Virginia; Dr. Lee McMurrin, Superintendent, and Mr. Kent Anderson, Curriculum Specialist for Art, Milwaukee, Wisconsin.

We extend very special thanks to Ms. Leilani Lattin Duke, Director of the Getty Center for Education in the Arts. In her capacity as the Getty Trust’s Project Officer, she served as an inspiration to us all. We were fortunate to have her active involvement and guidance throughout the study’s duration.

Thanks are also given to our technical reviewers, who made many useful suggestions for improvements on earlier drafts of this report: Dr. Richard Shavelson of The Rand Corporation; Dr. Robert Saunders, Art Consultant, Connecticut State Department of Education; Dr. Madeleine Grumet, Professor of Education, Hobart and William Smith Colleges; Dr. James Mason, Dean of College of Fine Arts, Brigham Young University; and Dr. D. Jack Davis, Professor of Art and Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs, North Texas State University.

Finally, we would like to thank the many people who helped get this report published: Louise McLaurin, who took rough copy and graciously turned it into typed copy—again and again; Helen Turin, who from a hospital bed performed editorial miracles on earlier drafts; Sally Kostal, who kept track of everything and kept it all moving into production; Peg Schumacher, who along with other very competent professionals in The Rand Publications Department—to too numerous to mention—turned the bits and pieces into a finished product.

All of these people made this study possible and substantially improved the result. They are, of course, in no way responsible for any shortcomings it may contain.
CONTENTS

FOREWORD ................................................................. iii
THE ARTS, LANGUAGE, AND THE SCHOOLS ........................... vii
WHY ART IN EDUCATION AND WHY ART EDUCATION? .......... ix
PREFACE ................................................................. xv
INTRODUCTION AND SUMMARY ....................................... xvii
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS ...................................................... xxiii

Part
I. THEORY INTO PRACTICE: THE WHITEHALL STORY
   by Marjorie Wilson ................................................... 1-1

II. THE DISTRICT THAT COULD: ART CURRICULUM IMPLEMENTATION
    IN HOPKINS, MINNESOTA
   by Michael Day .................................................... 2-1

III. ART EDUCATION IN THE PALO ALTO PUBLIC SCHOOLS
    by Elliot W. Eisner ................................................ 3-1

IV. AN ILLINOIS PAIR: A CASE STUDY OF SCHOOL ART IN CHAMPAIGN
    AND DECATUR
    by Robert E. Stake ............................................... 4-1

V. ANOTHER VIEW FROM THE BRIDGE: SCHOOL ART PROGRAMS IN
    BROOKLYN DISTRICT 15
    by Marjorie Wilson .............................................. 5-1

VI. DIVERSITY AND INNOVATION: ART EDUCATION IN THE MILWAUKEE
    PUBLIC SCHOOLS
    by Michael Day .................................................. 6-1

VII. TIGHT STRUCTURE, DISCIPLINE, AND QUALITY: ART EDUCATION
    IN VIRGINIA BEACH
    by Brent Wilson .................................................. 7-1
Part I

THEORY INTO PRACTICE
The Whitehall Story

Marjorie Wilson
Art Education Consultant
CONTENTS

Section
1. ORIGINS ......................................................... 1-1
   Tradition ................................................. 1-2
   New Life .................................................. 1-3

2. THE CURRICULUM .............................................. 1-5
   The Beginnings ........................................... 1-5
   Package vs. Concepts .................................... 1-6
   The Process .............................................. 1-6
   Why Whitehall? .......................................... 1-7
   Effects ................................................... 1-13

3. THE CURRICULUM IN ACTION ................................. 1-15
   The Art Classrooms ....................................... 1-15
   Instructional Activities: Studio ....................... 1-16
   Instructional Activities: History and Criticism ...... 1-18
   Other Art-Related Activities ......................... 1-23
   Evaluation .............................................. 1-24

4. CONCLUSIONS .................................................. 1-25

5. POSTLUDE ..................................................... 1-27
1. ORIGINS

Marco Polo describes a bridge, stone by stone.

"But which is the stone that supports the bridge?" Kublai Khan asks.

"The bridge is not supported by one stone or another."

Marco answers, "but by the line of the arch that they form."

Kublai Khan remains silent, reflecting. Then he adds:

"Why do you speak to me of stones? It is only the arch that matters to me."

Polo answers: "Without stones there is no arch."\(^1\)

Whitehall, Ohio, is a small community south and east of the city of Columbus. My guide informs me that the area is considered to be the paradigm American consumer community, a marketing research center for the midwest, and serves as a testing ground for fast food of all kinds. The first shopping mall in the country lies close to the northern edge of Whitehall.

The blue-collar community itself, tucked behind and between used car lots and shopping centers, consists mostly of rows of nearly identical houses.

The schools—four elementary schools with populations that range from approximately 700 in the largest to 300 in the smallest, a junior high, and a high school—are also typical of a middle-American school architecture. The low brick buildings open to reveal mazelike corridors with slick, institution-grey floors and tile walls, displaying a succession of duplicate doors leading to duplicate rooms, the austerity broken only by some bright decoration, the sign of a child’s presence, written papers hanging on the walls, and children’s artwork.

An article in Columbus Monthly states:

Whitehall may be Franklin County’s prototypical blue-collar high school. Only about 20 percent of the graduates go on to four-year colleges, another 10 percent or so to technical programs. For the rest Whitehall High School may be the final step in the educational process.\(^2\)

The article also puts the median household income for Whitehall at $13,087, and reports that the district “has more than its share of unemployment.” According to one of the teachers who came to the district 12 years ago, the population was almost entirely white at that time. Now, however, there is a small percentage of Orientals and an even smaller percentage of Blacks.

What, then, is there about the homogeneous, typically blue-collar, uncosmopolitan, middle-America community of Whitehall that would single it out from other more affluent, culturally aware communities across the country for its art program?

Just as Marco Polo, in Italo Calvino’s mythical traverse of Kublai Khan’s empire, Invisible Cities, found it essential to describe a bridge in terms of individual stones, without which “there is no [supporting] arch,” so it is necessary to describe the art program [bridge] in the Whitehall City Schools not only in terms of its curriculum [arch], but of the multiplicity of elements [stones] from which its form and strength derive. Energy, enthusiasm, and commitment, as well as encouragement, support, tradition, and roots, are building blocks of the firm foundation upon which the program stands.


TRADITION

When Robert Zimpfer assumed the post of Superintendent of the Whitehall City Schools early in 1982, he was greeted by two large yellow, red, and blue billboards (the space had been donated to the Whitehall Education Association), one on the north side of Whitehall, one on the south. The first, designed by an Etna Road Elementary School fourth grader, read: “GET HOOKED ON A GOOD EDUCATION”; and the second, adapted by Jan Plank from an earlier billboard designed by a fifth grader at Beechwood, read: “WELCOME TO WHITEHALL MR. ZIMPFER, SUPERINTENDENT, WHITEHALL CITY SCHOOLS.” The billboards were not only a sign of welcome from the students and faculty, but also a sign that art was alive and well in the Whitehall schools, and a force to be reckoned with.

At that time the district employed four elementary art specialists, one junior high and two high school art teachers. For a small district whose more affluent neighbors—including a majority of Columbus schools—had few art teachers, it was unusual to find an art teacher in each of the elementary schools, and to find, as well, that when one of the teachers left to get married, Jan Plank was asked to interview a replacement art teacher. Each art teacher had an art room, and the typical schedule called for her to teach the fifth and sixth grades for two 40-minute periods, or 80 minutes a week, and grades one through four for an hour a week. In one school art was taught to developmentally handicapped students for 45 minutes per week. In addition, art was taught to five EACH (Enrichment and Acceleration for CHildren) classes of specially selected gifted children, one at each elementary school and one at the junior high school. Two of the art teachers, one elementary and one junior high, also taught an art and music appreciation class in conjunction with the music teacher in their individual schools. Whitehall had had art and other specialist teachers for as long as anyone could remember (at least 27 years), and at a time when more affluent neighboring communities had none.5

To what could this emphasis be attributed? Was some early superintendent, perhaps, particularly attuned to art and other specializations? According to one of the teachers, who has the longest tenure in the school district, art is something that has “always been part of the Whitehall position,” and each succeeding administrator simply “inherited it.” Because of this, she felt that the various administrators and principals, in her 16 years as an art teacher in the district, had always supported the program. Even when Mr. Zimpfer was reportedly hired because of his back-to-basics philosophy, she had not felt threatened.

Superintendent Zimpfer’s secretary agreed with the inheritance hypothesis, adding that her own children, the eldest of whom was 36, had attended Whitehall schools and had taken art classes with an art specialist starting in the first grade—“we always had very good art teachers.” This secretary had seen the program expand under Zimpfer’s predecessor, Mr. Johnson, adding another art teacher to the high school ten years or so ago; but she speculated that the expansion might have been because of an enlarged enrollment. Certainly, at that time, when it was the norm to employ art teachers at the elementary level, Whitehall was running with the pack. But times have changed. Etna Road Elementary, a school that once accommodated 1400 children and was compelled to add an annex, has torn down those accessory buildings, and now houses less than half the number of students. Unemployment and inflation are up; enrollment and funding for special programs are down.

In the spring of 1983, Superintendent Zimpfer, faced with the problems of funding and dwindling enrollment plaguing most school districts at this time, was forced to non-renew the

---

5For more information about the Whitehall art program, contact Superintendent Robert Zimpfer, Whitehall City School District, 625 South Yearling, Whitehall, Ohio 43213.
recently hired art teacher in the smallest of the elementary buildings for the school year 1983–1984. But because of the commitment to the art program of both the board and the administration, to assure that the 300 children at Robinwood Elementary would still be able to engage in art activities with an art specialist, they cut back on the amount of time for art in the other three schools so that the classes could be covered by the remaining specialists. Although other art teachers, especially those who faced the prospect of travelling, saw this as a step backward, the art teacher was only one of several teachers to be cut from that school, and further prospects of redistributing the Robinwood students among the three larger schools would conceivably restore art to its former preferred status.

The teachers had been informed by an administrator that such cuts from the areas of art, music, and physical education had been on the drawing board for three years, but because of the work of Elizabeth Katz and Jan Plank and the recognition they had brought to the district, these measures had been put off.

At the same time at which these cutback measures were taking place, a local newspaper article pointed out with pride:

Whitehall is one of the few systems in central Ohio that still maintains art, music, and physical education programs utilizing specialized teachers in the elementary schools. All elementary students meet in each special area at least once a week.

Long before it was popular to maintain art, music, and physical education programs utilizing specialized teachers in the elementary schools, Whitehall had them, and they have continued to exist, weathering the demise of similar programs in the face of economic pressures and school population decline. But the Whitehall art program cannot be simply attributed to habit or tradition—it's energy extends not only to teachers, parents, and students, but to principals, the superintendent, the board of education, the art supervisor for the state of Ohio, members of the Ohio State University faculty, some 32 inquiring school districts from one coast of the United States to the other, and from South America to Canada.

Indeed, it is enthusiasm for, commitment to, and promotion of the curriculum that is both the source of the energy and the body through which the energy is transmitted. Arthur Efland of Ohio State University accounts for the Whitehall phenomenon in this way:

The curriculum is a political instrument; when a school district endorses the curriculum, then they have to support it. But teachers have to promote it.

The effects of the promotion by the district's art teachers, and in particular Elizabeth Katz and Jan Plank, cannot be taken lightly; without this momentum, the entire curriculum would crumble, just as "without stones, there is no arch."

NEW LIFE

In building curricula, as in building bridges, the construction arises from a need or a desire to traverse from one place to another, from one time to another, for a connection, a union, a bond, or for progress, a new life. In this case, the key to the renewal and revitalization of the Whitehall art program is held by Austin Peale, the now-retired assistant superintendent in charge of curriculum. In 1976, he propitiously encouraged the art teachers to develop a program. The previous year, Jan Plank, a graduate of Indiana University, young, energetic, and enthusiastic, arrived at Beechwood Elementary School and felt that above all, Whitehall needed to build an art program. She was disappointed that they were not unified as a department: "I felt that I was the one who was off the track." Peale's motives have
variously been explained: by Elizabeth Katz, the junior high school art teacher, that “Times were rapidly approaching for our program where funds were going to be cut unless we could better justify what we were doing”; by Peale’s secretary, “Everybody had to have a curriculum”; by the superintendent’s secretary, “Each program in each school was [autonomous].... Perhaps he wanted to tie the program together.... He needed more cooperation among the teachers. Also there were some teachers who had been there for a long time, and perhaps he felt that they needed to bend with the times.” But whatever his motives, he set into motion a movement that involved every teacher at the elementary and junior high school levels—in varying degree and kind—to be on the track, and Jan Plank and Elizabeth Katz were in the forefront.

As secretary to the superintendent for 27 years, Grace Ducey has been in a position to see a great many changes, not only in terms of personnel, but philosophy and policy as well. She says, “It [art] has always been there, and it has always been a good program but ... the quality of the program has improved over the past few years.” Her gauge of quality: community support for the program; more public exposure—newspaper coverage, programs for the public to attend; displays at the administration building; art shows accompanied by musical performances in conjunction with board meetings; and the letters that continually cross Superintendent Zimpfer’s desk requesting copies of the Whitehall curriculum.

As a result of the initial meeting with Austin Peale, some other very important things happened, not the least of which was the conception and subsequent formalized documentation of the program, henceforth known as “the curriculum.”
2. THE CURRICULUM

The Whitehall, Ohio, curriculum is embodied in a neat, attractively designed, ever-present plexiglass box. Designed for openness and flexibility, the cards upon which the encounters, or lessons, have been printed can be arranged and rearranged. An ongoing project, of approximately six years’ duration, the solid base upon which the curriculum purports to rest is a document entitled Planning Art Education in the Middle/Secondary Schools of Ohio.4

The body of the Whitehall curriculum, however, is merely a decorative box filled with cards. It is the spirit that makes this particular curriculum unique rather than the body or even the model from which it was derived.

In order to understand the spirit of the curriculum, it is not only necessary to trace its conception and birth, but to look at life and practice both “before the curriculum” and “after.”

THE BEGINNINGS

One would have to characterize the start of the curriculum, and even the reasons for it, as hardly momentous. It began with Austin Peale. He started the teachers thinking about ways in which they might become more visible and ways of working together as a group; Elizabeth Katz recalls that she was particularly concerned with the idea of devising a document as justification for the continued existence of the art program. Jan Plank, too, had been disturbed that the district had no written curriculum. After a year of faltering attempts, it was only natural that Elizabeth Katz sought the assistance of Jerry Tollifson at the Ohio Department of Education, particularly as he had been her junior high school art teacher (and her art-teacher-as-model). Tollifson was a graduate of Ohio State University and a student of Manuel Barkan, whose theories of the troika of art studio, art history, and art criticism were the basis for Planning Art Education in the Middle/Secondary Schools of Ohio. As art supervisor for the state of Ohio, Tollifson was also heavily involved in the development and production of the Ohio guide. He recalls that the teachers were enthusiastic and not only “bought into” the idea of such a curriculum, but they immediately proceeded to design and produce their own curriculum package.

At this point one needs to ask several questions:

1. What did the Whitehall teachers “buy,” the packaging or the concepts of the Ohio guide?
2. Of all the districts in the state to whom Tollifson had made the same presentation, why was Whitehall one of the few to accept the Ohio concept? Was there something in the education of the teachers that caused them to accept the concepts? Was it the early student/teacher relationship between Elizabeth Katz and Tollifson? Were they simply ready to change their present practice?
3. How has Whitehall been able to maintain the support, financial and otherwise, of principals, the board of education, and the superintendent in the face of rising costs and dwindling enrollments?
4. Why is the Whitehall curriculum seen as important, both throughout the state and nationally?

PACKAGE VS. CONCEPTS

According to Jerry Tollifson, his first meeting with the Whitehall teachers consisted of a description of the major parts of the structure theory, but what seemed to click with the teachers was the idea of using cards so that individual teachers could organize them to suit their own needs. Elizabeth Katz indicated that it was the package that they had bought initially:

The packaging was exciting . . . the idea also that the curriculum could take other forms [than a bound document]. I was intrigued that there were novel ways to approach it; we had been bogged down with the old ways. Teachers could retain their personal styles; it protected the individual.

So ironically it was the package, the box and cards, presented to the board a month later that brought the funding that enabled the teachers to further develop the curriculum.

The early package, according to Elizabeth Katz, started out as an elaborate "how to," that Tollifson thought was oriented too much toward studio. He suggested that they include more history and criticism. Jan Plank believes that this was the only way they could have begun the task of incorporating art history and criticism in their practice. She felt that the Ohio guide was too overwhelming for the average art teacher, just as she felt that if she was teaching history and criticism in her elementary classes, "I had better not tell anybody."

I knew if we focused on history and criticism, we would have lost many of the seven teachers, so we had to start with what they were comfortable with, which was the studio . . . and then my hope was that eventually we would be able to move to parity.

At this time, too, Ed Houston, who had recently come from the high school principalship to the position of assistant superintendent, requested that the art teachers write a course of study to meet new state requirements. But, as Tollifson recalls, "They thought that was what they had." Only then did the teachers begin to develop their own goals and objectives. It has been an evolving process that has seen at least three major revisions and, with the growth of the teachers' understanding and knowledge, continues to expand and develop. Although Jan Plank feels that this process may have temporarily put a halt to the more creative writing that was being generated, it involved more teachers and made them more aware of what they were doing, what they should be doing, and why.

THE PROCESS

Upon the presentation of the package, the board voted to provide the funds for after-school and summer workshops, during which all of the art teachers would be involved in writing the curriculum. The high school teachers' participation extended only as far as the design of the plexiglass box and the cards upon which the lessons had been printed. But the other teachers approached the task with varying degrees of attention. Jan Plank and Elizabeth Katz took the lead and the others considered the curriculum to be Jan Plank and Elizabeth Katz's baby, but the content of the cards reflects favorite lessons of each of the teachers involved.

Even after several years, however, the cards still bear a greater resemblance to the early prototype than to the Ohio model. In many of the art classes, there is some evidence that the teachers have assimilated the theory in their practice, but not in the written materials, except in a superficial and supplementary manner.

The teachers now have a sense that the materials developed in the past year—but remaining, due to the state and country-hopping proselytizing activities of Whitehall's active
ambassadors, either handwritten on cards, on scratch paper in collected notes, or in a conceptual state—are by far the most valuable and reflective of the utilization of history, criticism, and studio. Elizabeth Katz believes that these new materials reflect “a leap in thinking” and that most of what stands as the curriculum was written before they knew the theory, or reflects at the very most an incomplete understanding of the theories. Jan Plank would like to take a year off and simply write all of the newer ideas on cards, and go through the existing cards to do some weeding out. Although the curriculum is not yet what the teachers hope that it could be, the curriculum was submitted for award consideration to the same NAEA committee that was judging its parent document, the Ohio guide. Although Whitehall’s curriculum did not win an NAEA award, the importance of the curriculum lies in those things the committee could not see. In the case of Whitehall, at least, it is not the physical materials—the box, the cards, or even written documentation—that make up the curriculum. Jan Plank says, “It’s not the package; it’s not the curriculum. It’s a group of people motivating other people.” In addition to organizing the art department, helping it to gain strength and momentum, the curriculum gave the teachers the opportunity to develop other programs, such as the EACH program; to earn the support of the community and the administration; to share ideas with teachers throughout the country; to grow and develop; and, most importantly, to better serve the children that they teach.

WHY WHITEHALL?

As art supervisor for the state of Ohio, Jerry Tollifson had presented the same materials to many school districts within the state; why did Whitehall choose to run with the ball? Austin Peale’s request was seen in retrospect by the teachers as nonthreatening, almost benevolent, and surely not reason enough to grasp at the first curriculum straw proffered. But it was a very special straw. The Ohio Guide satisfied Jan Plank’s proclivity toward art history and her desire for a unified department, and offered her the substance she required in her teaching; it “reinforced my thinking... gave me the opportunity to do what I had always done.” But had Elizabeth Katz not been appointed chair, or felt a need for a written document in addition to other public relations activities, or recognized Jerry Tollifson’s name on the Ohio document that had been sent to the school district and proceeded to contact him, there might not now be a Whitehall story worth telling. And very important to that story is the early student/teacher relationship between Elizabeth Katz and Tollifson. Eiland speculated about the Whitehall teachers’ ready acceptance of the Ohio guide:

The Secondary guide was a hard piece of theory for most teachers to swallow... I don’t know what there was about it that grabbed them. It really turned them on. It’s always a problem of ownership. What makes a particular teacher sense that, “Yeah. I own this; I can make it work for me. I like those ideas and they mean something for me.” And I don’t know what they saw in it. Maybe it was Jerry.

From the time that she had entered college, Elizabeth Katz had wanted to be an art teacher, “and that began with Jerry... There was something that [Jerry] did in the classroom [he was dynamic] that drove [the desire to teach] home to me.” When the teachers showed the first prototype to Tollifson, he was delighted, and Elizabeth took pleasure in his pleasure. She feels, “We would not be anywhere without Jerry.”

No less important to the Whitehall story than Elizabeth Katz’s motivation for ownership is Jan Plank’s own persona. She had always been drawn by the energy and excitement that is generated around certain people; a self-described gutsy opportunist, she had been anxious to
encounter SHAPE

activity

MONDRIAN DESIGNS

Present and discuss slides of artwork by Mondrian. What types of shapes does he use to create his pictures? How are these shapes created? (By use of lines) Discuss with the class how the intersecting and connecting lines form these shapes. How does color or lack of color affect the shapes? Do some of the shapes appear to be more important than others? What if all of the shapes were exactly alike?

The student will create a "Mondrian" picture using black strips of construction paper for lines. Move the strips over the drawing paper until rectangles or squares are formed in a pleasing design. The strips should form large and small shapes. Some of the strips may be cut to form certain shapes within the design. Glue the strips to the drawing paper after the design is complete.

Use several colors of crayon to color selected shapes within the design. The colored shapes should balance the composition.

resources • materials

Slides of art by Mondrian
12 x 18 White drawing paper
Black strips of construction paper (in ¼" widths)
Crayons
Glue
Scissors
encounter

activity

SEPARATION OF SPACE

This project is a challenge for students to deal with the amount of negative space an object can possess when fragmented. The class will also be aware of how negative space can create a sense of motion in design.

Give each student a large paper geometric shape or a shape that suggests a realistic object. Ask the class to analyze the shape and decide how to separate the form with scissors.

After the shape has been fragmented, the student should glue the paper pieces to a sheet of paper of contrasting color. Some of the pieces should be close together and some should be farther apart to create a sense of motion. The negative space between the pieces should allow the viewer's eye to move across the shape.

Variation:
After completion of the design, use crayons, markers of pencils to apply lines, shapes and textures to the negative spaces.

resources · materials

Various paper shapes
Construction paper (contrasting colors)
Scissors
Glue
Crayons, markers or pencils
encounter
activity

OP-ART ACTION FIGURES

Begin the activity by discussing optical art, its properties and how it affects the eye. Use slides or books to illustrate to the class how deceiving optical lines can be. Why do the lines appear to move? Why does one line appear shorter and another seem to be longer? Allow the students to look up the word "illusion" in the dictionary and discuss its meaning and how it applies to the visuals. Review the line directions (horizontal, vertical, diagonal).

Have the students begin their artwork by selecting a person in motion from a sport or fashion magazine. Cut the contour of the person out with scissors. Place the figure on the white drawing paper and trace its outline with a barely visible pencil line. Repeat this process across the paper by overlapping the figure. This will also create a sense of movement.

Using a fine-tip marker, draw vertical lines within one figure without allowing them to overlap. In the next figure repeat the process using horizontal lines, then diagonal lines. Each figure should be filled with one of the line directions. A piece of cardboard or ruler may be used to maintain straight lines.

Then divide the background into large shapes. Fill the interior of those shapes with vertical, horizontal or diagonal lines also. Erase the pencil lines.

resources · materials

Sport or fashion magazines
Scissors
Black fine-tip marker
Pencil
Ruler or straight edged cardboard
Optical illusion visuals
encounter

activity

SHISHKEBAB SHAPES

Present several slides of painting by Vassily Kandinsky. Discuss the type of shapes he used in his design. How does he balance his composition with the shapes? What is important role does the use of line play in his work? What kinds of lines are used? Discuss his use of informal balance and use of negative space. Have the class observe his use of overlapping shapes. Why does Kandinsky use black lines in his compositions?

The students should each select one geometric shape for their composition. Using a drawing pencil and 9 x 12 drawing paper, they should draw a variety of sizes of that one shape. Stress arranging that composition in an informal balance, but one that is pleasing to the eye. Many of the shapes should be overlapped. Then, using a ruler "skewer" the shapes with a drawn line. Several lines must be used to pierce all of the shapes in a shishkebab fashion.

Use India ink and pen or black fine marker to trace over the entire design. Color in areas of the shapes with marker, crayon or pencil. Complete the project by cutting out the design (leave a small margin of white paper around the lines and shape) and gluing it to a sheet of black 9 x 12 paper.

Variation: Limit the color to one or two shades but allow a variety of mediums to be used.

resources · materials

9 x 12 White drawing paper
9 x 12 Black construction paper
Pencils, markers, crayons
Scissors and glue
Rulers
Kandinsky slides
encounter

activity

PICASSO PORTRAIT SCULPTURE
The students are introduced to distortion of the face and figure by the work of Pablo Picasso and his cubist style. Discuss with the class why Picasso distorts and shifts the planes of the face. Is he expressing a feeling or an emotion through the use of lines, shapes and colors? How does Picasso use color to express an emotion?

Give each student a piece of 12 x 18 cardboard (with four slits...one on each side) on which to paint their cubist portrait. The students use tempa paint and a ruler to present all viewpoints of the face in the frontal pose. They should use contrasting colors to create planes within the face. Masking tape may be used to keep a straight edge. They may paint the back of their portrait black.

When the cubist portraits are completed and dry, coat each one with polymer. Then create one large assemblage by hooking the slits together, taking time to balance the sculpture.

resources · materials

Tempa paint and brushes
Masking tape
Rulers
12 x 18 cardboard with four slits
Polymer
Slides and visuals on works of Pablo Picasso
participate in the making of an art education film in college, even though she was appalled at the artsy craftsy content. It was not simply a matter of seeking the limelight, but being where the action was, helping to instigate it, being a part of it. She had always been impressed by people who were highly motivated, who truly enjoyed what they were doing. In addition to the curriculum’s satisfying her needs as a teacher, Jan Plank surely sensed in Jerry Tollifson the kind of highly motivated individual whom she had always admired. She recalls, “Jerry intervened at a time that was very crucial; here was this gentleman from the State Department saying: ‘If you’re going to do something worthwhile, you’ve got to include [history and criticism].’ Everybody else accepted it as gospel from him.” So, perhaps, Efland’s speculation about Tollifson’s creating the impulse for the Whitehall adoption of the Ohio materials was close to the truth. Indeed, to the teachers, he was mentor, teacher, model; he was guide, critic, and benefactor.

The ownership about which Efland spoke may also have some bearing on the degree to which the curriculum is or is not imposed upon the teachers from the outside. He continues:

The last people who need the curriculum [are] the teachers. After a few years, they can pretty much go on doing one lesson after another ... pretty much without consulting the curriculum. But when they work on the curriculum themselves a different sense of ownership develops, and suddenly options open up that they may not be aware of. But it can only happen through working on it. That is, if a supervisor [an unlikely situation] had come and said, “This is a curriculum; do from page 23.” ... The sense that they own it, can control it, make choices around it. ... It becomes a usable tool.

Another theory of Efland’s about the successful implementation of the Whitehall program has to do with charisma.

I’d like to say that it was the intellectual structure and the coherence of ideas that I put together, but I think the thing that makes their program work is a kind of charisma. Obviously the ideas provided something for them. It answered some need that they perceived; it gave them a focal point ... channeled some of their energies. But the fact that they had the energy and utilized it in this direction is a tribute to them ... makes this program stand out.

We might, then, attribute the adoption of Barkan’s concept of the troika of art history, art criticism, and studio by the Whitehall teachers, not only to the ideas themselves, but also to Tollifson, the person who presented those ideas to them; to the personalities and energies of the teachers; and to the feeling of each teacher that he or she had a personal stake in the curriculum.

EFFECTS

Before the Whitehall teachers began the task of curriculum writing, the professional lives of four of the teachers remaining of the original group were quite different. Two had been teaching in Whitehall for 12 and 16 years, had collaborated on several art history projects together, had taken students to museums, had participated in “Artists in the School” programs, and were generally content in their respective schools; Elizabeth Katz had been at the junior high school for almost eight years. She describes it as a time of frustration, disorganization, confusion; she felt uncomfortable and often ill-prepared and cheated by her college preparation. She also needed contact with other art people. She felt isolated from the rest of the school, “a free period.” “Administrators did not understand [art people]; there was no patronage of art shows beyond the principal (who was required to be in the building), no thought of funding.”
Jan Plank, new to the district, felt in speaking to other teachers that she was the one that was off the track, and that if she was teaching art history, she had better not tell anyone. If the curriculum project was to do nothing else, it served as a unifying measure, where, as Jan Plank said, “teachers could in-service teachers.”

At Jerry Tollifson’s invitation, Jan Plank and Elizabeth Katz appeared with him at the state art education conference that first year. They showed their curriculum “box,” and made a presentation to the teachers and art supervisors of Ohio. This was the first of many conferences (state and national) and presentations, with Tollifson and without. The exposure that Katz and Plank have received as a result of Tollifson’s patronage has kept them continually improving. They believe that the questions and criticisms—“experienced practitioners’ critical views of what we have done”—at conferences where presentations have been made have “rounded out [their] own thoughts for the curriculum . . . and [caused them] to go back and rethink.” Katz feels that they have benefited greatly from travelling and speaking: “It has directly influenced the way we think and feel and write about what we do.”

The other art teachers in the district may at first simply have gone along because of the paid workshops or for some other reason, but the continuing energy, enthusiasm, and excitement had given them a sense that something exciting was happening in their programs. And perhaps even the most recalcitrant of the teachers felt that she might have been missing something. The curriculum, then, became the impetus for new and vital energy on the part of all the teachers; the recognition of the value of the teachers’ activities by art educators of note, both in the State of Ohio and nationwide, provided the teachers with the support of principals, superintendent, school board, and community. The publication of an article\(^5\) describing their curriculum has brought inquiries from at least 32 school districts from as far east as Maine and as far west as Utah, and from such diverse places as Saskatchewan, Bahrain, and Peru. The teachers, with such a stake in their baby, continue to set it in the limelight at every opportunity, to inform, to publicize, to teach, and, above all, to see that it grows and flourishes: Indeed, it is the energy generated by and directed toward the dynamic process of curriculum writing and development that continues to charge the teachers, and their own energy and enthusiasm that galvanizes the administration and the board of education to the cause of art in the schools.

Ultimately, it is the student who benefits from this whirlwind of activity. Elizabeth Katz’s testimony says it best:

What I do in the classroom makes sense to me now. The curriculum writing forced me to re-educate myself, to seek [more] formal education, to read, to teach myself, and to want to do it . . . and all because I’ve had to sit down and think concretely about what it is I’m trying to accomplish. It’s not enough to like what you do; you must have a passion for it. . . . I’m excited about what I’m doing and I pass that excitement on to the students. I’m hungry. . . . the curriculum writing has opened up the art world to me.

3. THE CURRICULUM IN ACTION

Interesting and enlightening though these more sociological and psychological factors relating to curriculum development might be, tracing the sources of the formal Whitehall curriculum may hold the greatest value for the field of art education. Just as symbolic world-making begins with worlds at hand, curriculum making begins with curricula at hand. A careful analysis of the process by which these diverse and often contradictory curricula are adopted and adapted, extended, integrated and disintegrated, combined and recombined has the possibility of expanding our understanding of curriculum development and the ways in which art and art teaching change over time.

THE ART CLASSROOMS

Enthusiasm and commitment alone do not guarantee quality in teaching. In our search for quality, we need first to look, not only at what is being taught, but also how and how well, and to begin in the art classrooms. In each of the four elementary and in the junior high school art classrooms, the one prominently displayed constant is the plexiglass box that holds the cards of the written curriculum upon which are printed Whitehall's lesson plans and course of study. Beyond the box, the rooms take on the colorations of their individual inhabitants, the children and the teachers. Nothing about these rooms proclaims: "This is a Whitehall room" and nothing differentiates them from hundreds of other art classrooms in hundreds of other schools. And yet, one or two of the rooms exhibit the unsettling sense of an unresolved dualism. There are displays relating to art historical study and to the uses of art—e.g., a well-conceived and designed bulletin board, "Why People Create" with arrows pointing to "Self-Expression"; "Religion"; "History, Documentation"; "Utility, Useful Items"; and "Ornamentation, Decoration," with appropriate illustrations from the history of art. At the other extreme, there are cute little mass-produced mobiles and animals and figures—e.g., a cross-eyed orange with a tongue sticking out of the slit of a mouth, labelled ORANGE; a bug-eyed worm, labelled GREEN, etc. displayed across the top of the tackboards just beneath the ceiling. The artwork, too, illustrates this same sort of indecision: a drawing lesson working from works of art and a fifth-grade architecture lesson juxtaposed with one window covered with paper birds with cuts and slits that allow the light to shine through. The room was an anomalous amalgam of art, artists, and architecture, with books of information and theory together with how-to books, projects, and visuals.

This particular room possibly best exemplifies the problems that exist with the methods by which the teachers have tried to create a curriculum. First, the teachers bought the idea of the package; then they spent summers developing lessons for the cards, trying to preserve individual integrity and to include their tried-and-true lessons. Thus the practical roots of the Whitehall program go back, possibly as far as the birth of art education itself, and seem to encompass nearly every phase and trend. The course of study and some understanding of the concepts of art history, art criticism, and studio in the Ohio guide came later, and, as teachers attempt to "map onto" familiar routines the newly acquired and not fully assimilated concepts of history and criticism, they do so at the expense of coherence and consequentiality.

This dualism permeates teacher classroom efforts. Robert Motherwell\(^7\) writes of the artist "reinventing himself from scratch." Had the Whitehall teachers reinvented themselves from scratch at the outset, as they had the opportunity to do, they would not now be experiencing so many problems.

Because of the small size of the district, there is a sense of community and communication and cooperation among the teachers in sharing insights and ideas. But each teacher, nevertheless, operates independently, discarding outdated or undesirable elements and adding new ideas and practices at will (one foreseen advantage to the loose cards in the "box"). The curriculum continues to grow and develop mainly through the efforts of the teachers, who are continually seeking and incorporating new ideas, but their efforts alone cannot create a unified curriculum. Conversely, ideas become isolated gems, perpetuated, polished, and refined by the originating teacher; but although ideas are shared, other teachers may have neither the interest nor the wherewithal to bring them off, nor is there any obligation for them to do so.

It is ironic that the box that was the real product the Whitehall teachers bought from Jerry Tollifson may now prove to be a liability. The very reason for its adoption, flexibility, has been the primary deterrent to the curriculum's becoming a more effective and useful document. It is difficult to require that a curriculum be, at one and the same time, flexible and sequential, and structured and unstructured.

**INSTRUCTIONAL ACTIVITIES: STUDIO**

The majority of the studio activities are typical art education fare, not better or worse than most; some are based on sound concepts, many dealing with making art from art (using art historical sources); some are merely artsy-craftsy; others reflect the dualism noted previously.

The problem, once again, can be traced to the way in which the not inconsiderable effort of the teachers was expended on the writing of the curriculum. One of the questions raised earlier in regard to their ready acceptance of the Ohio guide was: "Were the teachers simply ready for a change?" and the answer to that question seems to be "yes and no." Elizabeth Katz and Jan Plank were certainly open and eager for at least a more definite structure, for greater knowledge, and for a positive direction. Other teachers seemed unwilling to give up long held beliefs about the education of children in art, and consequently outmoded or tired, certainly comfortable practices. Manuel Barkan has made a statement that has a great deal of importance to art education and is the essence of the Ohio guide:

\[
\ldots\text{artistic activity anywhere is the same, whether at the frontier of art or in a third-grade classroom. What an artist does in his studio is of the same order as what anybody else does when he is engaged in like activities— if he is to achieve understanding. The difference is in degree not in kind.}^8
\]

Barkan's concern was in returning *art* to art education and establishing that there was a particular subject matter to be taught, that it was as important in the field of art education as in mathematics or science to gain an *understanding* of that subject matter, and to do so through the knowledge of the way in which an artist works to create *art*. The Ohio guide states the following:


The writers of these guidelines make two assumptions about the nature of approaches to study in art:

1. the processes used by artists in making works of art can serve as models for students to use in their artistic activities;
2. the processes used by critics and scholars of art can also serve as models for students to emulate in their encounters with art.\(^9\)

These points are continually stressed through units of instruction that deal with three aspects of the art experience: personal development, artistic heritage, and art in society.

Each unit deals with specific behaviors of artists, art critics, and art historians. For example, artists “have problems in discovering ideas or in searching for visual sources for ideas” is translated into a matrix\(^10\) that reads:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT</th>
<th>ARTISTIC HERITAGE</th>
<th>ART IN SOCIETY</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Discovering ideas for art in personal experiences</td>
<td>Learning how artists discover ideas in personal experiences</td>
<td>Learning how society expresses values and beliefs in visual forms</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In this way the concept of using the artist as a model for the students’ artistic activity is carefully and systematically laid out in the document that was described by Jerry Tollifson to the Whitehall teachers on his first visit, and with which they must surely have been familiar. Yet neither the cards that have been written nor the classroom practice reveals an understanding of this major premise.

Basically, the studio classes appear to be learning the traditional skills, the handling of tools and media, the elements and principles of design, and, in some cases, the styles and techniques of particular artists. What is missing is any organization of the subject matter as prescribed in the guide or an understanding on the part of the students—perhaps the teachers as well—of why they are engaging in these activities. Even when emulating a style of painting—e.g., Pointillism—children are hard put to explain the reasons. When fourth grade students were asked why they were using Pointillism, they replied, “When you get away from it, you can’t see the dots,” and to the question of why artists use Pointillism, “Because people think it looks interesting.”

Studio activities received the lion’s share of the art education pie when the teachers were asked to cut it up into three pieces, one each for studio, criticism, and history, with equality for history and studio in a few cases, but with criticism cut pitifully thin. In many cases, studio was taught as an isolated entity, and history was also frequently taught in its own right. But when asked whether they either taught history in the service of studio or studio in the service of history, several of the teachers responded positively to both potentialities. But criticism was still an enigma, and in very few instances was criticism taught for the sake of criticism.

The orientation of the art teachers, as is true of most graduates of art education programs, is toward studio activities. College level art history classes do not prepare them for teaching art history to elementary and middle school students; and there are no readily available practical models upon which teachers can draw. Nor are there critical models, other than

\(^10\)Efland, *Planning Art Education*, p. 43.
the ubiquitous "elements and principles of design." So it is not difficult to understand that they are better able to teach studio than either art history or criticism.

Because their curriculum guide is embryonic, consists of many cute ideas, and offers no firm guidelines, teachers tend to do basically as they have always done. Most do make a genuine effort to work with the three domains, but that effort often leads to both programs and art rooms that reflect a kind of duality of purpose. Some do continually seek and incorporate new ideas, but the range is great from school to school.

What the explicit curriculum seeks to do is to mirror the Ohio guide from which it derives, so that, although it falls short of the mark, the Whitehall curriculum "sounds like" its more sophisticated progenitor. (It uses the same words, phrases, even concepts.) But it looks like the early prototype, most of which still exists on cards in a plexiglass box. One of the reasons for the disparity between the Whitehall program and the Ohio guide lies in the differences between the theoretician and the practitioner, that without the theoretical knowledge to do so these practitioners have taken upon themselves the charge of translating theory into practice. Elizabeth Katz also recognizes these differences; she feels that the teachers needed lessons that they could just pick up and work with, that their own guide comes across as a watered-down version of the original basically because of an incomplete understanding of the theories.

INSTRUCTIONAL ACTIVITIES: HISTORY AND CRITICISM

In Whitehall, the classroom activity in the historical domain is more consistent and thus more easily portrayed, as teachers are able to use prepackaged slides and filmstrips, books, the "Arts and Man" series of art historical activities, and reproductions. Unfortunately the art historical instruction is too often allowed to deteriorate to the point where students just watch a poorly produced filmstrip. The quality and availability of such visuals as reproductions, filmstrips, and slides appear to be a problem. Although one of the teachers has managed to obtain some quite remarkable reproductions, and although both the superintendent and each of the principals support the art program and set aside money for it so that obtaining art studio supplies seems to present no difficulty to any of the teachers, there is little or no budget for the visual materials necessary for a well-designed program of art history and art criticism.

Like most art programs, Whitehall's art historical study is limited to such luminaries as Leonardo, Michelangelo, Klee, Kandinsky, Picasso, Homer, Wyeth, and the like. The explanation for this unfortunate state of affairs is again related more to the availability of slides, reproductions, and "Arts and Man"—a good and varied art history program for schools featuring an artist a month—than to aesthetic or art educational concerns.

Criticism consists of looking at, writing about, and talking about works of art; but often little distinction is made between what is art history and what is criticism. Many students were seen to enjoy looking at and talking about works of art, and although they used the usual vocabulary: line, shape, color, texture, center of interest, and negative space, they also talked about mood, meaning, and subject matter. One of Jan Plank's fifth grade classes showed that they understood the underlying pathos of Wyeth's Christina's World that would certainly have resulted from considerable practice in looking at and interpreting works of art (these are transcriptions from a tape of the students reading papers they had previously written about the work):
[She] looks like she is crippled. She is far from a spooky looking house and bam. The house looks like it is deserted because it is just plain. It seems there was something in the house at one time... but what? The wind is blowing hard like there is something going to happen. The time is about 12 Noon. The house is a mystery to me.

She looks like she wants something but she’s scared to get it.

... but the house is all torn apart and all her dreams went down the drain and she’s all alone crying in the field.

The little girl was thrown off a horse. She hurt her leg. She wants to get to the house so bad but she can’t. She pulls and strains, but she cannot get there.

She’s trying to get water because she has been travelling for days. She can’t make it. She falls, tries to get up but she is just too tired. Finally she falls; all of a sudden she wakes up and all it is is a nightmare.

She’s out in the field thinking of her divorced Mom and Dad. Christina’s world is very sad.

Although these pieces certainly show more insight into the mood and meaning of Wyeth’s work than may be found in a good deal of children’s writing about works of art, the teacher appeared to allow anything that the child said to stand without invoking even Wyeth, or art critical analysis. Teachers teach as they were taught in college art history classes, generally surveys in which the memorization of titles and dates was of prime importance. Teachers have few adequate models for the way in which art criticism may be transmitted to elementary or even secondary students, and, consequently, there is little that helps children to learn about either art history or art criticism. In another art classroom, a discussion about the differences in Romantic and Classical paintings becomes a comparison of terribly faded filmstrips, so that a vivid and exciting Turner is described by a student, not unrealistically—given the reproduction—as dull. And Christina’s World is nearly reduced to the status of the narrative mode of the Picture Study Movement of the early twentieth century or, perhaps, a thematic apperception test.

The results of asking selected students from this one elementary school and the junior high school EACH (gifted) class to respond to and write about works of art were most revealing. It appears that what students are learning may differ measurably from what teachers believe they are teaching. Students are learning to look at works of art; but the indications are that they are not learning how to look at works of art, and what to look for, and most important, why. Moreover, there were no significant differences in the responses to the same work by the two groups. Although the junior high school students have been involved in the program longer, and would be expected to respond differently, the fifth grade students (above) had had more practice in writing about works of art.

But here again, neither the model of the art historian nor the art critic is evoked. The matrix in Planning Art Education dealing with these two scholarly activities:

1. Art scholars develop ways of perceiving works of art and of describing to others what they see.
2. They also develop ways of arriving at their own interpretations of the meanings they find in works of art.

reads:

11Efland, Planning Art Education, p. 43.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT</th>
<th>ARTISTIC HERITAGE</th>
<th>ART IN SOCIETY</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Perceiving and describ-</td>
<td>Learning how critics and historians perceive and describe works of art</td>
<td>Learning how society perceives and recognizes visual images</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ing works of art</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interpreting works of art</td>
<td>Learning how critics and historians interpret works of art</td>
<td>Learning how society interprets visual images</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In spite of this lack of confluence to the presumed model, the Whitehall art teachers generally hold rather high expectations for the learner. Second graders do research and write reports about art and artists; fifth graders identify architectural elements in a series of photographs of buildings of various periods and styles; and junior high school students engage in a dig that incorporates sophisticated archeological, art historical, and critical concepts.

The one pure instance of the teaching of criticism in Whitehall is the activity from which the museum project grew. Upon their return from the Columbus Museum, the fifth graders were asked to select and to write about one work of art that particularly interested them. The discussion that followed the reading of the students’ critical writing focused upon the fact that Whitehall did not possess its own museum or gallery. Students and teacher then deliberated about the steps necessary for the development of a plan to create a (theoretical) museum for the enrichment of the community. And so *The Whitehall Museum Project* was born.

For an entire year the 24 students in one of the fifth grade art classes were involved—with strands that carried over into other classes as well—with the planning and designing of a museum. They alternately played the roles of museum board of directors, city planners, architects, docents, critics, art historians, landscape architects, builders, and public relations persons.

The students entered into the spirit of the project with an enthusiasm that was sustained for the total school year, and into the following year, when, as sixth graders, they kept asking when they would be working on the museums again. And it was the students who decided that the first step would be to choose the paintings before the actual design of the museum could take place. They then began to select works of art. This selection process placed the students in the role of art critic. They not only made judgments about each work considered, but they had to justify their judgments as well. The process involved these steps:

1. Four groups of students were given a different set of ten small reproductions.
2. Each member of the group noted on a form: the name of the work; whether or not they would include it in the final selection; and their reasons—using criteria that had been determined at a previous session.
3. The group then agreed on five of the ten original works to be included in the museum, with each student in the position of having to defend his or her selection.
4. Each group then collectively defended its choices to the others until the final selection was made.
Although the choices were necessarily limited to the small reproductions (packets of which are available to art teachers through the national organization), once the museums were under way, students spoke of including murals, tapestries, ceiling paintings, and sculptures, based upon their experiences both in the art classroom and at the Columbus Museum. Once the selection process was completed, the plans for a museum went full speed ahead. Because this major undertaking was to benefit the entire community, teacher and students saw the necessity to interview community members about their needs and desires concerning such a cultural center in Whitehall. The children began by posing the following questions (which had been predetermined by the class) to family members:

- Have you ever been to an art museum?
- Do you think that the Whitehall community is in need of a museum, or perhaps a gallery?
- What kind of artwork do you like best? What (kinds of works of art) do you think we should have on display in the museum if we should build one?
- Would you support the museum through membership, donations, (participation in) art classes, (attendance at) lectures or fund raisers?

The overwhelmingly positive response to this questionnaire set the project into full swing. The following outline of the museum development unit represents seven months of intensive collaboration between students and community:

**ACTIVITY I Board of Directors**
- students assume the role of Board of Directors of the hypothetical museum
- the Board establishes goals for the solicitation of funds and the hiring of an architect
- a name for the proposed museum is decided upon: Whitehall Museum of Art and Design
- possible sites are examined and analyzed by the Board for accessibility to bus routes, businesses, schools, merchants, etc.
- the Board discusses the cost factors involved in the building of a new structure vs. the renovation of already existing structures, e.g., a former Woolco building.
- paintings and sculptures are selected by the Board

**ACTIVITY II Architects**
- four groups of architects are hired by the board to submit plans for the proposed museum
- site analysis, using maps of Whitehall, produces four possible locations
- architects examine plans and designs of museums in other cities, e.g., the Guggenheim Museum and the Whitney Museum in New York, the Detroit Museum of Art, the Philadelphia Museum, the Cincinnati Museum, and (coincidentally) the Getty Museum in Malibu, California
— a member of the Fire Museum Committee is invited to speak to the architects about
designs and plans in progress for a Fire Museum in the city of Columbus
— architects tape interviews with parents, local merchants, peers, and the general public
— preliminary architectural designs, incorporating data collected from community
resources, are completed
— floor plans are submitted by the four groups

ACTIVITY III Public Relations

— various avenues of publicity are examined to publicize the opening of the Whitehall
Museum, e.g., cable television, billboards, newspapers, etc.
— brochures from both the Columbus Museum and a variety of museums from other
areas of the country are examined and analyzed
— a guest speaker is invited to speak to the class to discuss the preparation of a bro-
chure and to present advertising alternatives
— a brochure is developed for each of the proposed museums
— funds are solicited from community resources for the promotion of the Whitehall
Museum

What had begun as a teacher-directed activity soon became a student-directed activity.
The teacher’s role consisted of making suggestions and giving guidance instead of organizing,
directing, etc. Jan Plank says, “That’s what made the project exciting for me... watching
the kids direct one another and come up with exciting [options] for the creation of their museum.”

Throughout the entire seven months during which the fifth graders were engaged in these
activities, their enthusiasm for the project never flagged, and carried over into the general
classroom—it was their own teacher who was the “expert” invited to address the class about
the design of a brochure. Enthusiasm extended to the parents and community—one parent
was interviewed by his son regarding the necessary plumbing for a building the size of a
museum, including lavatories, drinking fountains, etc. Another parent who was involved him-
self in creating a “fire museum” came to the school and spoke to the class, showing his own
plans, and discussing the various steps that had been taken to establish a museum in the com-
munity (he also asked the students to act as consultants for the Columbus Fire Museum). The
principal, superintendent, and board of education were always informed and interested—and
involved when possible.

The students frequently were heard to engage in discussions (sometimes heated) such as
this:

Shouldn’t we put one of those lobbies downstairs, too?
Yeah!! How about a sculpture garden? We need one of them outside.
... put travelling exhibits in this one area ...
admission should be 50 cents and 75 cents.
children should be free.
only on weekends.
yeah, children under 12 and senior citizens.
... what color are we gonna make the doors?
how about brown?
brown and white, brown and white.
o.k., we're gonna have plants all over the ceiling.
that's pretty nice... or like have painting on the ceiling.
o.k., we'll have somebody come in and [paint the ceiling].
o.k., that sounds like a good idea.
where will it be? In the American Art or the travelling art part?
the lobby! It'll be right where you come in.
o.k., in the hallway.
in the lobby; you know like when you open the doors and you come right into the lobby. ...
... one or two ceiling paintings in the whole museum.
we're gonna have to fill the building up; where's your restaurant?
right here; we should have drinking fountains in every hall.
yeah, and little benches if you get tired of walking.
when we draw it bigger, we can get all that stuff in.

The groups also discussed the cost of glass for their museum, the advisability of ramps, restaurant cuisine and menus, whether an arcade in a museum would be an asset—to allow parents to view the art without the responsibility of children, "without worrying about the kids"—or a liability—as a distraction for children from the main purpose of the museum, viewing the art. (When it came to a vote, this idea was soundly vetoed.)

Probably the one most remarkable aspect of this project, at least to those teachers who believe that children both want and need a tangible product to take away from the art class, is that the only artwork in which the children engaged during these seven months had been the floor-plan and elevation drawings that were the culminating activity. The real products of the project, however, were cognitive, and are almost numberless. The students not only learned about the history of art, engaged in critical activities with works of art, and dealt with the problems of architects and the commercial artist; the students also gained practical knowledge about such matters as plumbing, publicity, and public relations, economics and engineering. And they thoroughly enjoyed what they were doing, anxiously awaited art class, and sometimes even accosted interested visitors in the hall to share their activities and enthusiasm.

Although this activity could certainly serve as a model for similar activities in other schools in the district, my intuition is that it will remain an isolated instance of a rare experience, and may serve to propel Jan Plank alone on to even more exciting realms of study and activity.

OTHER ART-RELATED ACTIVITIES

Every art teacher uses the resources of the Columbus Museum of Art. Some utilize the docent's program, through which the museum sends a docent to the school to orient the students to the museum and to the collections. The director of the education department of the Columbus Museum reported that Whitehall uses the museum more than any other of the outlying districts; the docents report that the Whitehall students are better informed and more responsive than most; that Whitehall is the only system that asks to sketch in the museum.
"Artists in the Schools," another program provided by the Ohio Arts Council and originally entirely funded by the board of education (the expense is currently shared jointly with the individual school), generally entails demonstrations by artists and craftspeople, performing groups, and some hands-on experiences. One school was chosen initially as a pilot for this program some years ago, and it continues to function as the program's key school. The art teacher serves yearly as organizer and facilitator for the school, wherein every classroom devotes an entire week to these visiting artists. Other teachers and schools use the program on a more limited basis. In addition to more arts (performance) oriented activities, the teachers regularly visit Columbus College of Art and Design, artists' studios, etc. The individual schools also hold yearly arts fairs and festivals, generally involving participation by community members in the demonstration of local arts and crafts; and in at least one elementary school, one student traditionally dresses as an artist, playing the role of that artist for the day.

EVALUATION

Although the Ohio guide strongly emphasizes the evaluative aspects of the art program (in all domains), Whitehall has no formal mechanisms for assessment of either student performance or program outcomes. The omission of evaluation criteria was even noted by two student observers from the Art Education Department of Ohio State, impressed that the Whitehall teachers were teaching as Efland (et al.) had prescribed in their classes. Informally, however, student performance is assessed by each individual teacher according to her own criteria.

Despite the foregoing critical analyses, the art program in Whitehall is a vital, growing, and, because of the enthusiasm of the teachers, an exciting program. The students are interested and excited about art and artists, about the advanced projects in the E.A.C.H. classes in which more time is devoted to art historical study and the "Art and Man" series, and special projects that give them insights into the practical aspects of designing a museum or obtaining cultural perspectives through an archeological dig. They share their enthusiasm with their parents, who frequently become involved in art-related activities. The teachers work very hard at keeping the public informed about special activities and events; and they keep the board up to date on the latest happenings, notably those things that put the teachers and the district in the limelight. As a result, students, parents, teachers, and administrators seem to share a pride and a belief in the efficacy of Whitehall's art program.
4. CONCLUSIONS

In an earlier publication of the state of Ohio, *Guidelines for Planning Art Instruction in the Elementary Schools of Ohio*,12 Arthur Efland acknowledges a debt to Barkan, and although many of the theories in both Ohio guides have been derived from Barkan’s work,13 Barkan’s primary influence appears to stem from his early paper,14 in which Barkan not only challenges the prevalent icons of art education philosophy and practice and attacks “favored assumptions,” but he anticipates:

There is a very strong probability that in the next several years, we will witness renewed and energetic attention to the teaching of insightful observation of works of art... this renewed energy will be apparent in the creative development of teaching materials and courses in art history and criticism.

From examples of activities such as the museum project, it is evident that the Whitehall teachers are very much aware of the fact that history and criticism are essential elements in the implementation of the guidelines in the Ohio document, but few appear to have a conception of the way in which to approach them. Given their willingness and commitment to the concepts, why do they search for models from outside sources rather than attempt to utilize materials such as those illustrated from the Ohio document? The answer lies in the ability—or lack of it—of teachers to translate theory into practice. What appears to make the difference in ability to translate theory into practice is the level of knowledge (particularly of the theoretical base) and of experience.

Although Tollifson credited the teachers with the ability to translate the theory into practice because “they were not unfamiliar with [the theory],” familiarity alone amounts to very little. This leads me to ask again: “Was there something in the education of the teachers that caused them to accept the concepts?” One teacher claimed that she had a strong reaction against her university education, “I was taught to be a teacher or an artist, but not an art teacher”; therefore she was anxious to find something that would add to her knowledge and experience as an art teacher. A second had taken some of Barkan’s classes but said that he was not easily understood. Another had, at some time, taken courses in curriculum at Ohio State but she was not willing to accept any new ideas that would upset the status quo. A fourth felt that her background had helped her in the writing of the curriculum, although her university orientation had been quite different.

We might conclude that, even if they were not unfamiliar with the theory, the teachers had no preparation for applying that theory—though they might be willing, even anxious to do so—or for the task of translating theory into practice. The situation therefore presents a dilemma, not only for the teachers of Whitehall, but for teachers in general who seek to adopt such theoretical concepts.

The questions that are raised by the findings of the Whitehall site point to the major issue and problem of translating theory into practice. In the best of all possible worlds, is it


realistic to leave it to the practitioners to translate theory into practice? If, as the evidence seems to show, the practitioner, however diligent, enthusiastic, and committed, is ill-equipped to make this translation, what are the alternatives? Is the theoretician any better equipped to translate theory into practice? If so, why has no viable model emerged? Does there need to be a cooperative alliance between practitioner and theoretician, or perhaps a facilitator who is able to move between the two realms of theory and of practice? The answers to these questions are of the utmost importance to the field of art education.
5. POSTLUDE

The metaphor with which this report began described a bridge, the line of the supporting arch, and the stones without which there can be no arch. The report then systematically proceeded to build the arch qua Whitehall curriculum stone by stone, revealing weaknesses as well as strengths. But the whole bridge is more than the sum of its parts. In spite of the fact that the building blocks of the Whitehall curriculum are not all of a piece, the structure is a strong one, and one that continues to gain strength; and although the psychological and sociological effects may, in this view, outweigh the practical, my judgment is that the energy, enthusiasm, and commitment have spurred and will continue to spur the teachers on to even greater practical accomplishments.

A recent letter from Elizabeth Katz reads:15

You remember my statement, “if you could see us now!”? Well, I have been very busy redecorating and reorganizing the art room at the Jr. High. I am going to photograph my bulletin boards (based on Ernie’s books)16 and send you the pictures. The boards are interesting productions, and provided the impetus for a different aspect of student learning I hadn’t tapped of late. I have always put up reproductions, but the interest wasn’t there on the part of the students. These little “productions” have sparked a desire in me to expand my scope of presentational methodology to include “whetting the visual appetite,” and encouraging student initiated learning. Certainly a plus for visual absorption! It’s nice to hear stimulated voices asking, “Oh neat! What’s that big eyeball on the tree for? (Peaceable Kingdom) Or, “Hey, I didn’t know artwork got put on postage stamps!” (Washington Crossing the Delaware) Such queries as (while looking at American Gothic), “Hey, Mrs. Katz, what’s wrong with those two?” can give me a terrific 20-minute soap box! I can get kids to jump for the information and actually anticipate the lectures—discussions. Most of all, I can’t believe how fired up I’ve gotten. I haunt used book stores for old art books and reproductions to hang up. (I found a terrific one on the north side that has great stuff.) I found three different versions of Hicks’ Peaceable Kingdom and placed them side by side on one bulletin board. After we read Ernie’s book, we will have a grand time speculating about the differences. When I get rolling like this, I can’t imagine how any art teacher can find the time or the excuses to burn out! There is a real love affair between me and the world of art and I hope I can communicate this, as well as light the fire!

The payoff of the Whitehall teachers’ considerable efforts at curriculum development cannot be minimized. As Elizabeth Katz has said, and as her letter illustrates:

The curriculum writing forced me to re-educate myself, to seek (more) formal education, to read, to teach myself, and to want to do it . . . and all because I’ve had to sit down and think concretely about what it is I’m trying to accomplish . . . . I’m hungry . . . . It [the curriculum writing] has opened up the art world to me.

And herein lies the key. Here are teachers who have the motivation, energy, commitment, and reinforcement to continue to seek new sources and resources, new ways of teaching art history and criticism, and quality in their studio teaching, as well as new ways of moving toward parity. Elizabeth Katz and Jan Plank have both enrolled in a graduate program in art education at Ohio State University and have worked with Arthur Efland and other architects of the guide from which their own efforts emanate. They continue to rally other teachers, parents, and administration to the cause of art education, both conceptually and monetarily. They continue

15Personal communication, February 1984.
16E. Goldstein, Let’s Get Lost in a Painting, Garrard, Champaign, 1982.
to further their own cause and the use of the Ohio guide, which stresses the troika of studio, history, and criticism by art programs statewide and nationwide.