

Ingenuity



Newsletter of the Conceptual Foundations Network of the National Association for Gifted Children

Volume 1 Number 1

Fall 2009

Pushing the Envelope with Poise and Grace

From the Chair

Can you believe that convention time is upon us again? It seems only a couple of days ago that we were in Tampa, and soon, we'll be in St. Louis. We hope that you'll be able to join us there.

This year, the Arts Network will sponsor about two dozen sessions – high quality presentations from real pros and leaders in the field. If you're planning on being in St. Louis, be sure to catch a few of the sessions, and please plan to join us for our business meeting and work session on Friday from 11:30am-1:15pm in Room 100 of the Convention Center. Remember, all convention session and meeting times, locations, and content/presenter information is available online for your advance planning needs via the NAGC website www.nagc.org, and of course, will be part of your registration packet when you arrive.

If you're unable to join us this year at convention, check out the online opportunities from the convention! This year, for members who aren't able to attend the convention because of the investment of time/resources necessary to be there, NAGC has created the Live Learning Center. It's a great way to stay in touch with what's happening in the organization, and a super way to catch some great sessions, even if you can't travel this year. Each catalogued presentation is available with audio, powerpoint slides, and even pdf handouts. It really **IS** the next best thing to being there! More information on the online convention

program is also available from NAGC at the website.

Even aside from the convention, this year is important for our Arts Network. We've chosen a new chair-elect who took office in September, and who in 2010 will move into the Network Chair. I'm excited to have the opportunity to work with Stephen Schroth then. He brings with him a focus on excellence in arts and the role of the arts in the lives of gifted learners, as well as an enthusiasm about our network, and we look forward to his hand at the tiller. If you'd like to meet Stephen at the convention and welcome him, he will be with us for the Business/Work Session, and he and his associate Jason Helfer will be presenting Sunday morning at 8:45. (Did I mention that we save our best for Sunday morning?) Special thanks to Jason Helfer, who has volunteered to edit this newsletter, as well as to our two Arts Network colleagues who contributed articles to this newsletter. We thank Rick Olenchak and Joan Franklin Smutney for sharing some of their work with us, and we hope you'll find it informative and helpful. At the same time we hope that you'll remember that your insights, short articles, and even quick anecdotes about what has worked for you in your setting are also important to share with others, and the network newsletter is often the ideal place to do so. Don't hide your best stuff! Share it with others!

Folks, as a Network, Arts has lots of good "stuff" that we can be contributing. There are some fantastic opportunities to make a

difference, both at conference, and during the intervening 11½ months every year. But it won't happen with only a few of us. We need you – your energy, your ideas, and a little of your most precious commodity, your time. Please, if you can help us grow this network, if you can help us think about a convention event or evening, if you can help us advance the cause of the arts in gifted education in even the smallest of ways, let us know. We have a dedicated e-mail account where you can reach us, and we encourage you to do so. That address is artsnetworknagc@gmail.com. Will I see you in St. Louis? I hope so! But if not, let me hear from you if you've got any ideas about how we can make this little network of ours the best in NAGC.

Lou Lloyd-Zannini

From the Chair-Elect

There has never been a more exciting time for those interested in arts education for gifted children. Many might question the sanity of this statement. Certainly gifted education is under attack from many quarters, as is arts education in general. Budget cuts, a gloomy economic situation, and attacks on the field have left many dispirited and discouraged. In reality, those most passionate about gifted education and the arts rise to the challenge. Indeed, the best advocates for gifted education and the arts are those whose fervor is grounded in love for the field and an almost missionary zeal for promoting arts education for these children.

Arts education has too long been seen as an add-on to the general education curriculum. Certainly it is convenient to leave visual art, music, dance, and theatre instruction to specialists who work with children once or twice a week. This setup, however, frequently changes in times of budgetary cutbacks. While unfortunate, weekly sessions with special teachers also ignore that gifted students need exposure to the fine arts *all* the time, not just during

selected sessions. Although the optimal situation allows special teachers time to plan and implement arts instruction with regular classroom teachers and gifted education specialists, this does not have to happen for arts instruction to occur. Many aspects of the curriculum, including English/language arts, mathematics, social studies, and science, can be augmented and improved through inclusion of the arts.

The many fine sessions offered by the Arts Network this year attest to the many ways that arts instruction can be incorporated into the daily curriculum. From ways of identifying artistically and musically talented children, strategies to include the arts in language arts and mathematics instruction, and research documenting the value of arts instruction, the Arts Network is providing an abundance of valuable and rich information that can help gifted education classrooms and programs nationally. Kudos to Bess Worley for her fine job in putting together such a comprehensive and wide-ranging program of sessions.

Advocating for arts education, or gifted education, is potentially scary. It is, however, also rewarding, worthwhile, and ultimately best left in the hands of those who care about it passionately and are willing to do so without fee or other remuneration. The chair of the Arts Network, Lou Lloyd-Zannini, is an exemplar of this. His dedication, drive, and devotion to providing all gifted children access to the arts is a testament to what a single individual can do. If all members of the Arts Network advocate for their charges even half as well as Lou, we can transform gifted education programs to provide multiple portals for artistic creation and appreciation. As a subject matter, art, even as defined by content standards, allows teachers and their charges the possibility of transformation. Art allows the learner to “envisage things as if they

could be otherwise and posits alternatives to mere passivity” (Greene, 1988, p. 16). A curriculum can be crafted that explores art in a manner that is appropriate for learner needs while also being true to the discipline’s finer tenets. We must do this, at every opportunity and to the best of our abilities. The children we serve deserve nothing less.

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Works in Progress – Studying Identity Formation of Artistically Gifted Adolescents: Why Bother?

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Identity Development in the Arts

One area of service that is often undervalued by schools is the arts. In fact, an examination of school programs that are most likely to be reduced or eliminated in the face of fiscal exigency places the arts at or near the top (Hershenson, 1991; U.S. Department of Education, 2007). Understandably, as educational budgets teeter on red ink, decisions must be made about ways to keep the school doors open. What is not as clear is how those decisions are made, particularly given that schools which have reduced or curtailed arts services seldom target other kinds of programs for reduction or elimination. Students with interest in and potential and/or

demonstrated talent in the arts could suddenly find themselves in a predicament in which their domain of giftedness is dramatically devalued by their school to the point of program service reduction or destruction.

Although empirical studies of the effects of such actions on artistically talented students’ affective and cognitive development could not be located, it can be hypothesized that they would inevitably take a significant toll. However, it can be conjectured that, when schools pay special attention to particular areas of talent and exclude the arts, there is probably some effect on how the overall society of students perceives and accepts artistic giftedness. More critical is how artistically talented students, as well as those who might possess artistic talent, themselves may come to undervalue or to devalue their own abilities. In other words, logic infers that the nature and degree of emphasis a school places on artistic talent as evinced through services accorded to the development of such ability can have impact on artistic students’ level of acceptance by the general student population and on artistic students’ self-acceptance. It is indeed difficult to pursue something in school in the face of adversity, but when obstacles take the form of shallow or altogether missing support extended by the school through instructional and curricular services and by peers through their acceptance, the emergence of identity development concerns seems likely.

Underlying concerns associated with identity development such as the way in which the school and peers view the arts undoubtedly also play a role. Gender role issues in which it is perhaps seen as more masculine or feminine to pursue some types of artistic paths in high schools have been shown to have an impact on development of one’s identity

(Mullin, 2001; Salomone, 2003), and features such as ego orientation, moral reasoning, and psychological intensity individually and collectively influence identity formation among those with exceptional abilities in the arts and other domains of giftedness and talent (Dai, 2000; Dai, Moon, & Feldhusen, 1998; Dweck, C.S., 2000; Howard-Hamilton & Franks, 1995; Neihart, 2002).

Because artistically talented persons are creative, the impact of one's creative bent is also of important consideration in contemplating identity development among young people with artistic giftedness. While there is no known research addressing creativity among artistically gifted youth, at least seven different research studies (see Neihart and Olenchak, 2002) exist that have concluded that, particularly among adults who are gifted visual artists, there is a significantly higher incidence of mood disorders and suicide than among the typical population (Neihart & Olenchak, 2002). Further, ethnographic research completed by Csikszentmihalyi (1996) emphasized that two features of creativity likely make artistically gifted adolescents more psychologically vulnerable than would be expected among typical adolescents.

First, Csikszentmihalyi's work indicates that the pursuit of high creative achievement among adolescents is likely to result in reduced peer popularity and perhaps may lead to increased social marginalization or alienation. "Creatively gifted adolescents may appear particularly odd to their peers when they have interests and passions that differ from the mainstream and a proclivity for unique thinking and self-expression" (Neihart & Olenchak, 2002, p. 169). Second, Csikszentmihalyi concluded that the development of creative talent frequently requires greater amounts of time spent alone than is typical for most teens, and

the amount of time allocated to mental play appears to inhibit sexual awareness and independence. Taken together, these two points yield a population of adolescents who are at risk for social rejection and whose effective interactions with peers may well inhibit rather than enhance identity development.

Despite this apparent psychosocial fragility of adolescents who are artistically talented, recent research that is empirical in nature and that explicitly addresses this group is indeed sparse. Among the few studies found were those by: Blake (1997) who examined the effects of gender on success in the visual arts, concluding that both genders were similar in virtually every traits except self-promotion, in which males seemed to have the edge; Piechowski, Silverman, and Falk (1986) who compared Dabrowskian over excitabilities in intellectually and artistically gifted adults and concluded that their artistic sample but not the intellectual sample embodied all five areas of "psychic life" – personal energy, sensuality, pursuit of knowledge and truth, imagination, and emotionality; and Burleson (2005) who explored the "big fish little pond" effect on artistically gifted students who entered first-tier arts schools and found that mostly that effect produced positive outcomes once the first week period of enrollment had been completed.

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Reprinted from the 2008 Illinois Association for Gifted Children Journal.

The Value of Arts Education

Joan Franklin Smutny

It is more common to see the arts presented in the context of creativity rather than, as in this volume, to find them standing on their own. In fact, creativity in education tends to focus more on the cognitive aspect- in particular, models and techniques that help children solve problems and expand thought. This is understandable when we consider that schools need something they can measure and teach with

relative ease. But, as Barbara Clark has observed, “Limiting creativity to a cognitive view... does not capture the complexity or bring understanding to the other dimensions of creativity” (2002, p.77).

The beauty and complexity of the artistic “dimension” is often overlooked, but is a domain that embraces many other models of creative thinking because it is, even as a word, a doing phenomenon. “Art” in the original verbal form literally means “fitting together” or “joining.” E. Paul Torrance, the man considered the “father of Creativity” identified, at a time when few others were, the arts-related behaviors of gifted culturally different children- the improvisational, the inventive, the artistic, the richly expressive (in language and movement), the theatrical, and so on (1977), His research on fluency, flexibility, originality and elaboration, among other processes (1979), relate to art-making at every step. In so many different and even surprising ways, the arts confer their blessings upon the hearts and minds of gifted students, waiting for a new door to open on their world.

Many have discovered innovative methods for using the arts to advance the learning of gifted students in all subject areas, and they have done so in the face of all the usual constraints and pressures that attend today’s schools. In addition, a number of teachers tie arts applications directly to learning goals (and/or curriculum standards), thereby providing parents and future teachers with invaluable guidance on how to challenge gifted students in the arts without letting required content and/or skill practice slip through their fingers.

The many benefits that gifted learners receive from an arts-oriented curriculum can barely be counted. Among those most easily measured are:

- Open-endedness. Gifted students thrive in situations

that allow multiple responses and even inspired, out-of-the-box approaches.

- Divergent thinking. With sufficient exposure to new ideas and arts catalysts, they are able to challenge the conventional.
- Analytical thinking. In arts processes, gifted learners find themselves analyzing issues and problems more rigorously and from multiple viewpoints.
- Intuitiveness. In arts experiences, they find nuances of meaning and subtleties of interpretation beyond the level of understanding they would normally acquire.
- Immersion in the senses. Gifted learners explore their own sensibilities in response to color, sound, feeling, texture, gesture, shape, touch, atmosphere, and so forth.
- Depth of feeling. They gain a rich medium through which they can express feeling, conviction and even vision on a subject they care deeply about.

Perhaps more than all of the above, the freedom to be one’s self is the most precious gift the arts have to offer. Devoting so many hours to fulfilling the demands of the outside world, gifted learners rarely have an opportunity to express their inner world in such an abundant way. And now it was E. Paul Torrance- to whom this issue is dedicated- who was so insistent that gifted students be true to themselves. As a source of

inspiration to all who work with gifted students, I have included his most priceless piece of advice for gifted students (Torrance 1983).

Manifesto for Children

By E. Paul Torrance

1. Don't be afraid to fall in love with something and pursue it with intensity.
2. Know, understand, take pride in, practice, develop, exploit, and enjoy your greatest strengths.
3. Learn to free yourself from the expectations of others and to walk away from the games they impose upon you. Free yourself to play your own game.
4. Find a great teacher or mentor who will help you.
5. Don't waste energy trying to be well rounded.
6. Do what you love and can do well.
7. Learn the skills of interdependence.

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Founder and Director of the Center for Gifted at National-Louis University, **JOAN FRANKLIN SMUTNY** offers programs to thousands of gifted children from all socioeconomic and cultural backgrounds. She has authored, co-authored and edited many books on gifted education, most recently, *Underserved Gifted Populations*, *Designing and Developing Gifted Programs*, *Differentiating for the young Child*, *Acceleration for Gifted Learners, K-5*, and *Strategies for Engaging the creative minds of K-8 Gifted Students: Teachers to Teachers* (in press).

This essay is reprinted from the 2008 Illinois Association for Gifted Children Journal.

NAGC 2009 Art Sessions			
Friday, November 6th	Artistic Ways of Knowing - Talent Identification and Development in the Arts		
	Joanne Haroutounian, George Mason University, Fairfax, VA	7:30-8:30 AM	261
	Accelerating and Differentiating Curriculum for Artistically Gifted Students		
	Lynn Carney Blosser, NBCT, Center for Creative Learning, Ellisville, MO	7:30-8:30 AM	Level 2 Lobby
	Opportunities for Promising Young Artists		
	Clar Baldus, University of Iowa, Iowa City, IA	7:30-8:30 AM	Level 2 Lobby
	Reaching Right-Brain Learners Through Tableau		
	Valerie Davis, Englewood Schools, Englewood, CO	7:30-8:30 AM	Level 2 Lobby
	Research and Resources for Infusing the Arts into K-12 Classes		
	Sande Tanner, Douglas County, Greenwood Village, CO	7:30-8:30 AM	106
	100 Years 100 Stories: Engaging Gifted Students in Preserving a Theatre's History		
	Gina Wyckoff, Phelps Center for Gifted Education, Springfield, MO	10:30am-11:30am	261
	Enriching and Accelerating Curriculum Through the Visual Arts		
	Lynn Carney Blosser, NBCT, Center for Creative Learning, Ellisville, MO	10:30am-11:30am	Level 2 Lobby
	Business/Work Session		
		11:30am-1:15pm PM	100
	Getting Started with Arts Integration		
	Hope Wilson, Stephen F. Austin State University , Storrs, CT	11:45 – 12:15 PM	101
	Art Critique		
	Jeanie Goertz, Eastern Kentucky University, Richmond, KY	1:30-2:30 PM	261
The Play's The Thing Outdoors: Leaving No Child Indoors as Gifted Children Perform Classical Theatre			
Gina Wyckoff, Phelps Center for Gifted Education, Springfield, MO	1:30-2:30pm	Level 2 Lobby	
It's all in the details: Elaboration using Comic Strips			
Susan Zimlich, University of Alabama, Tuscaloosa, AL	1:30-2:30pm	Level 2 Lobby	

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Lights, Camera, Action! Film Production Sparks Student Creativity		
Debbie Blum, Howard County Public School System, Columbia, MD	2:45-3:45 PM	261
The Social and Emotional Problems Encountered by Musically Gifted Asian Adolescent Males		
Chen-Yao Kao, National University of Tainan, Tainan	2:45-3:45 PM	Level 2 Lobby
Art That Moves: Kinetic Art, Automata, and Simple Machines		
Mike Beck, Hazelwood School District - Galactic, Florissant, MO	4:30-5:30 PM	261

NAGC 2009 Art Sessions			
Saturday, November 7th	Spicing Up the Arts, Cajun Style		
	Jackie Palka, East Baton Rouge Parish School System, Baton Rouge, LA	10:00-11:00 AM	Level 2 Lobby
	A Model for Assessing Selection Criteria in the Arts		
	Kudbettin Aksoy, University of Houston, Houston, TX	10:00-11:00 AM	261
	Poems from the Summer Institutes: A Multi-Media Qualitative Inquiry		
	Jane Piirto, Ashland University, Ashland, OH	10:00-11:00 AM	106
	Art, Literacy, and Identification through Artsfusion		
	Stephanie Range, Charlotte Mecklenburg Schools, Charlotte, NC	11:15 – 12:15 PM	104
	Using the Arts to Ignite Creativity in the Curriculum for K-5 Gifted Students		
	Joan Smutny, National-Louis University, Wilmette, IL	11:15-12:15 PM	261
	A Service and Resource Guide for Arts Educators of Gifted Students		
	Nicole Williams, Ohio Department of Education, Columbus, OH	1:45-2:45 PM	Level 2 Lobby
	Learning Links: Creating Arts Integrated Lessons that Stimulate Creative Thinking in the Classroom		
	Magdalena Fitzsimmons, Baltimore County Public Schools, Baltimore, MD	1:45-2:45 PM	261
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Nan Hathaway, Rocky Mountain School for the Gifted and Creative, Longmont, CO	3:00-4:00 PM	261	
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Research and Resources for Infusing the Arts into K-12 Classes			
Sande Tanner, Douglas County, Greenwood Village, CO	7:30-8:30 AM	106	

SUNDAY NOVEMBER 8	The Musical Museum: Using Guided Investigations to Teach Music and Social Studies		
	Jason Helfer, Knox College, Galesburg, IL	8:45-9:15 AM	106
	Painting Reality: Using the Visual Arts to Enrich Reading Instruction		
	Stephen Schroth, Knox College, Galesburg, IL	9:15-9:45 AM	106