



The Art Odyssey Advisor

"Every child is an artist. The problem is how to remain an artist once we grow up."

Pablo Picasso

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Art Odyssey

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BOARD DEVELOPMENT

Art Odyssey is constantly searching for active, concerned participants for our Board. Please get in touch if you are interested in contributing in any capacity.

Your financial support is needed for aArt Odyssey to continue its work.

Go to:

<http://www.artodyssey.org/contributions.html>

We're on the Web!

www.artodyssey.org

Check out our video on YouTube:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cEz1cdu2eU>

UPCOMING EXHIBITIONS

Art Odyssey is proud to announce that we are working on an exhibit with Perfical Sense Gallery in Evanston, IL in conjunction with Oakton Community College students. Hyun Lee, currently an Oakton student and Art Odyssey Intern is organizing the show. If you are currently an OCC student or may know a student who would like to contribute to this show, we will include an application to the show in our Spring Newsletter and on Facebook.

Art Odyssey is on Facebook! Feel free to 'like' our page
<http://www.facebook.com/EveryChildisanArtist>

You can also follow us on Twitter!
@TheArtOdyssey

BOARD MEMBER NEWS

Art Odyssey is looking for a new board member! If you or someone you know may be interested, please contact us! Board Member status is a great way to help young artists in your community. We require members to contribute to a 1 hour monthly meeting via conference call. Becoming a Board Member is also a great Resume Builder!

Interested? Email your resume to Artodyssey@comcast.net

ART ODYSSEY NEEDS AN INTERN

Art Odyssey needs you! We are looking for High School or College students wanting experience working within a Non Profit Organization, fundraising, and coordinating events. This is the perfect opportunity for any student especially those who may be pursuing a Degree in Marketing, Education, Business, or Fine Arts. An interest in the Arts is preferred. We will fulfill requirements for students seeking internship credits.

The following article is the third in a four part series addressing Children and the Arts.

Excerpts from:

*The Arts, Young Children, and Learning by Susan Wright
Ways of Art*

There is a great deal of confusion currently about where art fits into society and what function it serves beyond that of a salable commodity. Teachers need to consider what it is we are referring to when we speak of art and whether our art programs are designed to produce a certain type of art (e.g., self-expressive, representational, experimental, skilled). As discussed in the previous section, the ways of seeing the child might lead us to provide children with art activities that are, for example, fun, busy, exploratory, messy, highly structured, or completely child-centered—but is it art?

Here is another opportunity for another palimpsest to assist a reflecting on the value of art in young children's lives. As with our views of childhood, some ideas about art persist, some disappear, and others reappear to find favor in a different place or a different time. There are many reasons why art should be a core of the curriculum for young children.

Art is considered by some a fundamental biological need, a need that defines our existence and the human condition (Dissanayake, 1992). Those who hold this view will encourage children to appreciate beauty and aesthetics within their surroundings. Art should be valued "for art's sake" because it is considered an important means for self-expression—spontaneity, imagination, play, experimentation, and lack of inhibition are desirable components of making artworks—and for freedom of expression. Art is also valued as an emotional mode for communicating unconscious things otherwise unsayable (Feldman, 1996) and for enhancing "healthy" personalities. Art also enhances children's cognitive processes, involving children in problem solving, thinking, and using symbol systems to record their thoughts, ideas, and feelings. In many ways, art offers a form of spiritual awareness as well, revealing itself through the heart and intuition (Barthes, 1972) and embodied or somatic ways of learning.

When we view art as a distinct discipline, with a distinct body of knowledge that must be taught and mastered, we are not frightened to teach skills and techniques, as well as appreciation and art history. We will see art as an important discourse that should not be offered only to the special or talented, but as a universal and special way of making and communicating meaning, both at a personal level and in a broader sense as well. Art is viewed by others as an expression of culture, and a means of communicating about and between cultures, through links with the community. Opportunities to read and appreciate the lives of others are possible through art. Some consider art a conduit for understanding self in relation to others, a means for recognizing our interdependence as peoples, and a way for global unity and understanding (Eckersley, 1992). One aspect of teaching art is to bring the child's view, as depicted through their art, to a wider audience.

Our view of teaching art involves applying critical lenses to our ideas of art and teaching. In many ways, the application of critical analysis is similar to coming to grips with postmodern art. Postmodern art depicts life's confusions and fragmentations and subverts our ways of seeing—it makes us look again, to make the familiar appear strange. Our work with young

children is about ways of seeing as well. It requires us to recognize how many influences have shaped our views of art, such as whether we consider art to be therapy, spirituality, a form of individual self-expression, a language, a cultural artifact, a discipline to be mastered, an expression of freedom, and an essential part of being human. Like the numerous views of childhood, each view of art holds truths, and each has implications for how art is best taught. Consequently, the teaching of art should also be viewed in relation to our ways of seeing the teacher and the meaning of teaching.