

Reading Log / Dialogue:

Reflections on EVIS 202 Readings

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Abstract

This is a collection of reading logs for EVIS 202. It is a series of small reflective papers based off of the weekly assigned readings. Each entry includes a date and title, a description of the main thesis and significant supporting points, an analysis of its application to arts education and also some questions or thoughts that it has raised in my head. Each entry is followed by a reference of the reading that inspired the reflection.

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Thinking With Water

January 8, 2015

Thesis and Main Ideas

This is an interesting read that encourages the reader to think about, and with, water in a broader sense than we are used to. It recognizes that in the dominant cultures of the world, water has been reduced to, and thought of as, nothing more than a resource. And that we only think of water in regards to how we can use or benefit from it. We often take water for granted and forget that it is cardinal to all life on this planet. We also forget that water is a very powerful force in our world with incredible destructive potential. This piece of writing encourages us to expand our awareness of water and *all* of its unique: properties, relationships and symbolic/metaphorical value. By doing so, we can begin to start thinking *with* water. If we do this, we will begin to interact more responsibly with the environment and hopefully start to see water as more than just a resource.

The text uses the phrase: “habitual instrumentalizations of water” (p. 3) to describe our tendencies to only think of water as something that is to be used by us. The reading brings into light the immense amount of connections and relations water has with everything on this planet. Water and its issues are bigger than what we see in our everyday lives; water permeates every part of our existence on this planet. Some examples of water’s relationships with our world include: life – all living organisms are mostly made up of water; we all need it to survive; it surrounds us and affects our lives through the weather; it plays a big role in the economy and politics; it shapes the land and geography we inhabit; and water plays a huge role in culture and

spiritual practices. Another idea that is brought to our attention is water's place in our language and how we use metaphors of water in much of our speech. We also cannot forget that we are on the edge of a "global water crisis." If we start to realize how immense the role water plays in every aspect of our lives, hopefully we will change the way we think and act politically and culturally. This is crucial if we are to overcome the impending "global water crisis."

Where Does this Fit Into Visual Arts Education?

This article is a good example of a social issue that needs attention. One of the best ways to bring an issue like this into the spotlight is through the arts. Not just visual art, even though it is a great tool because it allows for people to see and understand through images, but all of the arts. The reading talks about the role that media and story plays in expanding our sense of community and connection to waters. I think it is good for our class to look at these issues and interact with them. By interacting with them and making art about them, we will be better versed in how to use art to confront contemporary issues of significant importance. Learning to use the arts to bring these issues into public perception, we will be able to pass our knowledge on to our students so they too can use art to highlight issues that are important to them.

I am starting to think about what would be the best way for us to move from here, in terms of making art. I think for one we should make some art that draws attention to this issue, and two, we should explore ways as a class of educating students of how we can get art out there. If we can figure out ways to get our art out there to the public, we will be better able to help our student's art be seen. And if we can get our students to see the value in using art to raise awareness, and share their voices with audiences, we stand a better chance of making a

difference. I think that is one of the greatest values of art –it brings issues that have been forgotten in the background to the foreground.

Thoughts for Class Discussion:

One thing that really interested me in this article was the section titled “Water as Language and Material Metaphor.” I like how it talked about how water permeates our language use. We always use water metaphors in our language (e.g. the word “permeates” that I just used). One thing that this made me think of was not so much how water words are found in our language, but it made me analyse what words we have for water and what that says about how we see water. I think of a story I heard about Cree people (I think, I can’t remember exactly. My Cree teacher told me the story though) and how different languages do not always translate word for word from one to another. The reason for this being, is because the cultures behind the languages have different views of the world and the language they use, reflects their worldviews. So for example, the First Nations community that my teacher told me about apparently has over 50 words for the different kinds of snow. This is incredible! It goes to show how connected they are to water in that state. Thinking of this causes me to analyse my own language use.

Other Personal Thoughts

Reading this paper makes me feel bad about what is happening to our water. The amount of pollution and damage we as a species has caused to water is overwhelming. It is even more unnerving to think that much of the destruction has all been for money; and at the expense of other people. Its as if we are butchering our planet and our waterways. I believe we are connected to the earth and everything in it –what we breath in, the trees breath out and vice-versa– and when we hurt the earth and water, we are simultaneously hurting ourselves. I

think we are in need of a paradigm shift. I hope I am not giving off the vibe that “I think I know all the answers and am some kind of saint and everyone else is living wrong.” That’s not what I am saying, for I too am guilty of taking water for granted and abusing it. When we grow up in a the society that we do –one where we enjoy as much clean water from a tap in our own homes– it is easy to forget that other people are dying of thirst. I wonder what will become of our water; I wonder if we will be able to change the way we view and abuse our water. I think one way that we can start to change peoples perceptions though, is through the arts. The arts are a fantastic tool that can bring these issues, that we so often brush off to the side, to centre stage.

Additional Reading Notes:

Note: These are my personal notes that I wrote while going through the reading to help myself understand it (it was a really wordy read) and are not intended to be read for marks. But, I included them just in case you were curious about more of my thoughts and understanding of the reading. But I do not expect you to read them if you feel that what I have written above is sufficient enough to show my interaction with the text.

An Aqueous Ecopolitics

- We need to realize we all need water and should work together to approach the “global water crisis.”
- People are being displaced for rich people to get richer
- We need to move away from resolving problems by conquest.
- Calls western/dominant/Eurocentric people to move out of their comfort zone

Situating Waters

- Situating ourselves with all of our relations with water and being aware of other peoples relations with water and how our relations are similar.
- Media can be used to increase our sense of community and relations to waters that would have otherwise never been touched. But on the other hand, we probably won't really care until it directly influences our lives.
- Stories can be used as a voice for water and it’s connections. Empathy.
- Media could also be used to blind us.

Water as Language and Material Metaphor

- “Just as water animates our bodies and economics, so it also permeates the ways we think” (10).
- We use words that are related to water all the time for metaphors.
- Our relationships with water determines our language use of water.
- Language can be used for good or evil.
- Even though water metaphors are useful, sometimes they can be too much and can take away from the meaning of what you are trying to say.

Relational Waters

- People are starting to think more relationally
- We can be dangerous and there needs to be accountability
- There are limits to our understanding
- Water cannot be contained
- We need to attempt to understand it but we must also accept that we will never have the perfect words to explain it, nor the ears to perceive it.
- We can attempt to better understand the connection between water as a material and its meaning in our theories of watery things and also in politics of water.

Reference

Chen, C., MacLeod, J., & Neimanis, A. (2013). Introduction: Toward a hydrological turn? In. C.

Chen, J. MacLeod, A. Neimanis (Eds.), *Thinking with water* (pp. 3-14). Montreal, CA:

McGill/Queens University Press.

Breaking The Grip: Drawing Beyond Anxiety and Visual Realism

January 19, 2015

Thesis, Main Ideas and Application to Arts Class

This chapter from *StARTing With* 2nd edition is all about breaking away from the idea of good drawing being exclusive to realism in the classroom. It says that many adults and teenagers grow up thinking they are not artists and have no artistic ability because they think good art is art that looks realistic. Believing they are not good at art is caused by two things 1) visual art teachers who have told them they are not good at art and 2) the beliefs we hold as a culture about good that good art is only art that looks realistic. This belief that they are not good at art causes adults and adolescents to feel a sense of anxiety with drawing. They are hesitant to draw because they do not think they can. According to the author, this needs to be combated. One of the first ways is to simply encourage the students to push their boundaries and comfort zones. But there is more that is suggested.

There is another thing that adds to the sense of anxiety while drawing and that is the performative aspect of it. When we make a drawing, we put ourselves out there. Making a drawing requires work, effort, and thought. When we put all of these elements into something, that thing becomes reflective of ourselves in a sense. So now a drawing is not longer just a drawing, it is a small part of us, and it is going to be viewed. That is a nerve racking idea. All of our time, effort, work and ideas are put up on display to be analysed, and possibly scrutinized. That's a scary thought for some.

The author proposes that we as educators look back upon our time being young impressionable students to figure out what did and did not work for us. By looking back on our past art classes and teachers, find can find out what we believe the role of an art teacher to be. Then, we can reflect upon, and hopefully improve, our own teaching methods –we can avoid the nasty things our past teachers may have done, and do more of the things that they could have done to make us feel better. This is one way we can help ensure our students do not get scared away from art.

Another way that the author suggests we remove some of the anxiety from young artists is to encourage the other aspects of art besides aesthetics. Art is a big world, and we all know that the value of art runs deeper than the aesthetic appeal. The author encourages us to make activities that “value, engage and incorporate the communicative, social, fictional, private, narrative, gestural, multicultural, reflective, embodied, metaphor, sensory, autobiographical, kinesthetic, critical and evocative” (p. 47) aspects of art. We need to break away from this idea of good art being solely realistic and make activities that make room for the other parts of art. Art is valuable because it allows for self expression, reflection, it gives students a voice and helps them build/construct understanding. We need to make sure we teach our students these values of art and provide them with activities that will nurture them.

Personal Ideas

Once upon a time, not so long ago, I believed the only value in art was it’s aesthetic appeal. Not necessarily hyper realism, but realistic, rich, fantastic and even detailed macabre art is what drew my attention and admiration. Detailed monster drawings/paintings were my favourite to look at as far back as I can remember. So not necessarily realism, as in the world as

it is, but detail and skill depicting a fantastic world with realistic techniques is what really got me going.

I used to think this way all the way up until arts history class in my first year at the U of R. Even then, I kicked and screamed against the notion of conceptual art being valuable art. To this day, I still hold a slight bias (and probably will to the day I die) and have inner conflict because of it. On one hand, I really value the technical virtuosity of artists and respect it, but on the other hand I have come to beg the question: what is the value of a realistic drawing if it is without content? I have come to a personal conclusion that they are married. I will not try and push this belief on another person, but if they wish to hear my reasoning, I will gladly oblige. I understand that content is cardinal to art, but I also cannot forget that at one point, the aesthetics of art was of the utmost importance (ancient Greece for example).

I am on the same page as the author by thinking that it is wrong to tell students that the only way to draw good is to draw realistically. But I get the sense from this piece of writing that the author is biased against realism and that they would rather minimize realistic content in an art classroom. This is where we differ. I totally believe we should teach and allow for other genres and values of drawing besides realism, but I do not think we should divorce the skill that comes with realism. Maybe not so much the “skill,” but more so the practice and hard work that goes into achieving realism should be retained.

I sincerely believe everyone can become skilled drawers and all it takes is practice. If you can see a mistake in a piece of art, you have the ability to use your eraser to change it. I see it as a process. None of the pieces that I am proud of, did I draw fast. It takes a long time to make a piece of art that I am satisfied with. But I do get faster. The more I draw, the better I get at it. The

same is for anything in life that you want to get good at. So instead of telling students they can forget about realism and skill, I think we should encourage them both in content and skill building. Because if we tell them, “no, no you don’t need to worry about making it look good, as long as you have what you want to express on the page that is good enough,” I believe that’s a lie. I think art is supposed to be meaningful *and* beautiful.

On top of that, if we dismiss the hard part of art, what does that say about us and what we value? I believe that hard work builds character, and if we dismiss realism from art, we will create a generation of people who are ok with just getting the idea on the page. We will create a generation that does not value hard work and the polishing and refining of a piece. This could have an effect in other parts of their lives too! Now I realize this could be considered somewhat of an exaggeration, but it *is* a possibility and I think it is worth keeping in mind.

Some Other Important Ideas I Got From the Reading

- How can people overcome their anxieties and draw anyways? (My own question)
 - We need to realize that art is always in the context of culture.
 - We need to be aware of the context of the art assignments we give and the hidden curriculum.
- Perspective for example is not valued the same in Egyptian cultures as it is in European ones.

Reference

- Kalin, N. (2005). Breaking the grip: Drawing beyond anxiety and visual realism. In K. Grauer, & R. L. Irwin (Eds.), *StARTing with* (second edition) (pp. 43-50). Toronto, ON: Canadian Society for Education through Art.
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In the Grey: Finding Beauty Without Labels

January 27, 2015

Thesis and Significant Ideas

In the Grey is an art series by Barbara Stout, made up of a series of larger than life portraits with very ambiguous gender features. It is impossible to determine the gender of the subjects in the pieces. The purpose of the piece is “to celebrate the human spirit beyond gender roles and to raise questions about societal attitudes towards gender assignment in the process” (p. 187). Its all about beauty and gender neutrality and forging a new place for beauty outside of gender stereotypes. Stout said what she hoped people would take from the show is the idea: “why not let the gender rest in ambiguity? Why not let these faces (and our own) have their own place? And why don’t we forge a new place for them to exist?” (p. 190). Stout states that the initial inspiration for the piece was to bring attention to the plight of babies born with both male and female attributes who undergo surgery, which she likens to genital mutilation, before they are old enough to decide what they identify with.

Stout suggests that we develop arts activities where students create an “androgynous looking portrayal of themselves” (190). This would create a doorway for a whole plethora of gender related issues to be discussed in class. Another activity she suggests is a writing one in which the students create a fictional piece where the main character’s gender is never identified.

Why This Topic is Important to Arts Education

This topic is important in arts education for three reasons. 1) Art gives students a voice to express things they may not otherwise be able to express. 2) Addressing issues of social

significance is one of the productive benefits of the arts. 3) Gender issues, identity, and sense of self worth are important and relevant to students and have a direct effect on their wellbeing. This is a touchy subject and requires an analysis of personal pedagogy. Different educators will have different views on this. For example, one educator who sees the transfer of objective knowledge as the only purpose for education would not likely be interested in this issue. However, an educator who sees school as a place where we try and equip students with not only the objective knowledge necessary to function in society, but also as a place where we try and foster qualities in them which will be beneficial to their own, and others, sense of wellbeing would be concerned with an issue like this. I identify with the later.

This debate of pedagogy and how far an educator should/can go in trying to foster these qualities in students is a slippery slope. The answer is subjective and can be found in an educators individual beliefs of ontology, epistemology and axiology. For the sake of time and word count, I will not go into explaining my personal stances at this time; I will, however, say that I believe education is a holistic pursuit where the students identity, and self worth are valuable. That being said, I think expanding upon students idea of identity and beauty should be expanded upon beyond the societal gender stereotypes is a worthy endeavour.

All too often people somehow associate *self worth* with superficial outward appearances. We see it everyday, and we are guilty of it ourselves. We check our facebook, and instagrams religiously monitoring the likes on our photos (speaking from experience). We base our value on what society has taught us to consider attractive to the opposite sex. It is tragic because we are so much more than how broad our shoulders are or how robust our breasts are. Seeing our beauty, and value based upon these superficial aesthetic qualities in ourselves is damaging and

dangerous. If we think that we are valuable only if we look a certain way then we will spend our time worrying about and trying to achieve an unobtainable definition of beauty. We will not be able to fully commit to self actualization, and we will not be able to make a meaningful contribution to the rest of humanity. That is why I believe gender issues are an important issue to address in arts education. I think it is valuable because it makes us analyse ourselves and the traits we value in ourselves that go beyond appearance.

Some Questions or Observations that *Would Have Been* Used to Contribute to Class Discussion

Traditional Indigenous knowledge systems recognize the differences between genders and celebrate them. They also recognize that people can be two spirited (posses both male and female spirits). Stereotypes everywhere. Some even are validation. For example: mothers could be stereotyped as being loving and fathers could be stereotyped as being protective. We could assume that most parents possess these traits. However, it is absurd to assume because you are a mother you cannot be protective and as a father you cannot be loving. We cannot label every single person based on their outward appearance and make assumptions about who they are as a person. Nor should we label ourselves based on our outward appearance. Instead we should spend time getting to really know what traits make a person beautiful. This includes traits associated with male and female. I think we are all possess two spirits. Then again, maybe instead of two spirits, we all possess human spirit.

Reference

Stout, B. (2011). In the Grey: Finding beauty without labels. In B. Beyerbach & R. D. Davis, *Activist art in social justice pedagogy: Engaging students in glocal issues through the arts* (pages 186-192). New York, NY: P. Lang.

Issues of Gender in the Art Curriculum

January 27, 2015

Thesis and Supporting Points

There are stereotypes regarding artists and artistic value based on gender that have been perpetuated throughout history. These stereotypes ultimately derive from the traditional narrative of Western arts history. Female students (and male students) feel that they cannot become successful artists because of the “exclu[sion] [of] female artists and artistic concerns” (p. 109). It is necessary that the view that the fine arts are only for men is dismantled so that female artists see that they can achieve a successful career as artists. This can be done by using a curriculum that encourages: aesthetic openness –realizing that men and women may have different aesthetic tastes; moves toward empowerment –teaches the history and suppression of feminine artists and aesthetics in the art world in the past; and moves towards critical awareness –students become aware of the innumerable conceptual focuses that can inspire great art. This can be achieved through teaching the students about feminine artists/art, spending time studying contemporary art and galleries, and learning about the history of art and how it marginalized women and their views in the past.

Why This Topic is Important to Arts Education:

This topic is important to both male and female artists. It is important because the young people we call our students should know that they can become artists if they want to. Because of the stereotypes about what makes good art and who can be a successful artist, many students feel they cannot become artists. In the text we learn that students believed: “that the only legitimate

art forms or purposes were those that had been validated by tradition or authority... Second was the assumption that successful artists only live and work in remote metropolitan centers and have little time for personal and domestic concerns” (p. 108). By educating students that they can be great artists, we can empower them with the ability to realize that potential in themselves.

Reference

Calvert, A. & Legard, K. (2007). Issues of gender in the art curriculum. In R.L. Irwin, K. Grauer & M. J. Emme (Eds.) *ReVisions: Readings in Canadian Art Teacher Education* (3rd ed., pages 98-109). London, Ont.: Canadian Society for Education through Art.

The Forms of Water: in the land and in the soul

February 4, 2015

Author Note: I read the other articles for class, but decided I wanted to write my response on this article after class.

Thesis

Jeff Malpas writes: “Who and what we are is fundamentally determined by the places in which we live” (p. 1). Throughout this piece of writing Malpas illustrates how we are connected to water. He explains the ways how our lives are connected to our places and how our places are connected to, and affected by, the different forms of water. Therefore we are inherently connected to water and it directly affects and largely determines our lives.

Significant ideas raised

Aboriginal and Indigenous cultures share the view that we are connected to the land. This view is not just an Aboriginal and Indigenous view though, it is fact. The immediate possibilities of our lives is directly dependent upon the places we inhabit – “what we are depends on what we can do, and what we can do depends on where we are situated” (p. 2).

Place is explained through narrative –explicit and implicit (implicit narrative of place is narrative that can be assumed and understood through observation); borders and tracks; and ‘features’ or ‘elements’ of place. Water plays a big role in the characterization of places. Since water is fluid we can also assume that the places we live are a state of fluidity to a certain extent.

Different bodies of water have different characteristics and affect our lives differently. Inland water (rivers, ponds, lakes, ect.), the seas and oceans, and the water in the sky all affect our lives in different ways. These characteristics are understood through their different actions.

They “are also articulated through narrative, story, myth, metaphor and image” (p. 4). Water in all of its forms not only affects the land, but also directly affects our experience of life. We feel water through all of our senses.

Water is common to all of us. Quoting the Bolivians, the author points out: “Water belongs to the earth and all species and is sacred to life” (p. 6). When speaking of commonality, he points out that he uses the term in the sense of “that *to which* we belong” (p. 8).

Why This Topic is Important to Arts Education

This topic is important to arts education because complex ideas like these can be hard to write/talk about and the arts gives us an alternative form to illustrate them. Further, interacting with these ideas in the arts will help us better understand them and help give us words to talk about them. So, by interacting with ideas about water and our connection to it through place, through the arts, we can increase our understanding of these concepts. If we increase our understanding of these concepts and the importance of them, we will be better equipped to bring issues that are related to water to public awareness. The arts play an important role in driving positive social change.

Reference

Malpas, J. (2006). The forms of water in the land and in the soul. *Transforming Cultures* eJournal, 1(2).

Public Art

February 9, 2015

Thesis and Significant Ideas Raised

Public art provides artists with the opportunity to publicly share their art and its content. It gives artists a way to demonstrate how they see the world and a voice to express social issues important to specific communities. (McCoubrey 2007) says “most public art relates to the issues, history, events, or people of a specific community” (p. 139). Viewing public art provides immense potential for learning in the arts class; “thus, public art curriculum, secondary level, significant opportunity for learning about art is lost” (Russell 2004., p. 19). The class can learn from analysis of the works, and by considering the different reactions they observe of the art in the public spaces. “By exploring the public art in their own communities and in cities around the world, students will learn about the significant events and related social issues behind each work” (McCoubrey 2007., p. 140).

Public art has many different forms. Public art includes the obvious art forms (e.g. murals, 3-D pieces, performance pieces) as well as integrated art, temporary works, and graffiti. Some of these forms can overlap with one another in public art pieces and students should be encouraged to acknowledge these overlaps. An example of a simplification of the different types of public art given by Russell are: 1. Hero-on-a-horse (pre-modernist.) 2. Form-and-Freedom (modernist), which can be broken down into two sub categories; Insight-Serves-Site; and Site-Serves-Insight 3. Collaborate-and-Create (postmodernist) which also has two sub groups; Listen-and-Lead; and Confer-and-Defer. Russell notes that these are over simplifications of

public art but would provide students with a starting point for understanding public art. He provides a list of questions you could ask the students to help them determine where a piece of public art could fit into this typology and says: “students should be encouraged to find exceptions to and overlaps among these orientations for the purpose of viewing and investigating public art, and then move beyond them” (p. 24).

Why this Topic is Important to Arts Education

Public art and understanding public art is important to arts education because it serves as a fertile ground for discussion, it also exemplifies artists and arts ability to be an instrument of social change. A whole boatload of social issues can be studied through public art. Some issues include: poverty, prejudice, homelessness, specific people and their contribution to society, war, reflecting ethnic groups, learning about how society has changed over time, gender, racism, violence, or the suppression of certain groups of people. McCoubrey says: “studying such works and discussion the social issues involved will hopefully facilitate the development of a social conscience and a sense of social responsibility” (p. 141).

Other points for studying and creating public art in the arts education include:

- Public art increases one's awareness of public aesthetics.
- It connects to the curriculum
- Students can learn to collaborate –it’s a social learning experience.
- Demonstrates social responsibility and encourages a sense of belonging
- Students skills will be pushed when they have to create art for a specific community

Questions or Observations that I will use to Contribute to Class Discussion

I think public art is a great way to give students voices to talk about issues that are important to them. Some thoughts and possible queries that I have include, wondering how and where you would get funding and space for students to create public art. I'm sure that the answers will come and be unique to the different teaching situations I am in. I don't think one answer can be given. But I do think that it is good to be equipped with the knowledge about public art and its value so that when the time does come, you will be able to back up your assertions to get students involved in public art.

Reference

- McCoubrey, S. (2007). Learning about social issues through public art. In R.L. Irwin, K. Grauer & M. J. Emme (Eds.) *ReVisions: Readings in Canadian Art Teacher Education* (3rd ed., pages 138-145). London, Ont.: Canadian Society for Education through Art.
- Russell, R. (2004). A beginner's guide to public art. *Art Education* July 2004, (pages 19-24).
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Art Education in Action on the Street

February 23, 2015

Thesis and Main Ideas

The article, *Art Education in Action on the Street*, “emphasizes the connection between classroom learning and community involvement and describes how we engaged art methods students as artist participants in Via Colori, a street painting fundraising event” (p. 47). The main idea of the article is to get students involved in art creation in the streets and community because doing so would benefit both the community and the students. By creating art in the community streets we will be increasing public visibility of the arts so that the public can see the art and discover and support arts education in the schools. As the first sentence of the article says, “[s]howcasing the many forms and functions of art helps to articulate the fundamental importance of art education, whether it is to enhance the child or support society” (p. 46). Taking art into the street provides an opportunity for both the public to learn about the value of art in addition to serving as an effective way to lead students to a deeper understanding of art.

Getting the community to support the arts in school is one of the great goals of street art with students but it is easier said than done. In order to do this we need to show the community how art can benefit everyone in the community. One way that this is achieved is by arts ability to connect people. The article points out that art in the streets builds a sense of community; demonstrates first hand how art can affect peoples lives; and is a great way to give students “real-life” experience with what they are learning in school. Getting students into the streets and creating art provides a great space for student-as-artist and community-member-as-viewer interaction.

Student participation in street art therefore provides great opportunity for discussion between artist and viewer to take place. This provides fertile ground for a lesson in viewing, critiquing, and artist to viewer interaction/relationship. Not only is this connection of artist to viewer being made for students but, the connection of student to community is also being made. Participation in street art plants seeds for students' active future participation in their communities.

Another benefit of street art for students (if it is in a suitable form) is that it allows for connection and interaction between young-student-artists and mature(possibly professional)-artists. This would of course depend on the type of venue. If a class went out solely as a class creating art, this connection may not happen. However, if the venue were one that were organized and promoted by the school or community in the form of a community street art festival of sorts, then this would invite artists from all walks of life. As the article says, "[t]hrough the street art festival, the CHS facilitates a social networking opportunity for local artists to connect with one another and to meet with the public, a dynamic scene rarely seen in a conventional art viewing setting" (p.48). Having a street art festival and having many artists and student artists interacting with, and creating alongside, one another would also provide further learning for students.

For example the article points out, "[w]hen artists took breaks, they also seized the opportunity to converse with each other to share artistic techniques and ideas. This type of meandering opened up many learning opportunities for students and professional artists about different ways of executing creative ideas" (p. 49). In addition to inviting mature artists, a street

art festival would also invite less “mature” artists. Having artists from all walks of life would help students see that anyone could be an artist.

Finally, another reason why street art would be a good idea is because it provides an opportunity for teachers to be in the same shoes that our students will be in. Us as teachers could also participate in art making in/at a festival. This would help us be better able to guide our students in a similar process because we will be aware of some of the things (issues, fears, joys, and/or thoughts) about an activity like this that students would experience. It is also good because “it [is] important for [our] school children to know that their art teacher [is] actively involved with activities related to what they [are] being taught in class” (p.51). This quote makes me think of the phrase “monkey see monkey do.” Pedagogically, I think it is good for us teachers to practice, or at least try, the things we ask our students do. When students see and know that we go through the same motions that we put them through I believe it raises the students respect for us as art teachers because we actually practice what we preach. More importantly, though, I think it would also make us seem more human and approachable. This is because the students would see us out and about doing things like creating art that often is not seen in the art classroom (at least in my experience).

How Does this Fit Into Visual Arts Education

All of these things sound awesome for students, teachers, and even community. However, this may not be realistic because a street art *festival* may not be an option in our cities or schools for whatever reasons. This is a dilemma, but this does not mean that students can’t still learn about street art or participate in it on a smaller scale than a festival. In addition to this, if creating street art is not an option whatsoever, we could at least study street art and artists in the class.

Even though this is not as good as having the students actually be a part of the active creation and participation of street art, at the very least some of the lessons could still be taught via classroom lesson. These even serves as a doorway for a unit plan.

If the creating art in the street *is* an option, lessons in the class could still be developed. A lesson in class would include drafting/sketching of ideas; in class critique lesson and refinement of sketches and artist statements; and a reflection assignment at the end of the experience.

Reference

Chung, S. K., & Ortiz, C. (2011). Art education in action on the street. *Art Education*, 64(3), 46-52. Retrieved from <http://search.proquest.com/docview/875953339?accountid=13480>

Is it Easy Being Green? Eco Art Initiatives for You and Your Classroom

March 3, 2015

Thesis and Main Ideas

This article is was all about ways to integrate eco-friendly initiatives in our art classrooms. One of the main points raised is that “learning to live in nature in a sustainable way is a cultural challenge to our very sense of who we are and what we should aspire to become (Hicks & King, 2007, p. 332)” (p. 16). The article begs the question: If we chose to adopt green initiatives, what does that mean for art making? The article provides many options to “green” our classrooms. One of the first suggestions is that we need to stop using the term “green” and “explicitly address growing issues regarding environmental concerns, we eliminate the facade and begin building consciousness” (p. 16). By taking other initiatives that relate to our classroom content and the materials we use we can effectively make our classrooms more eco-friendly. At the same time, we can raise awareness in our students and even colleagues.

The article suggests that “[s]mall acts, starting in our classrooms, that begin to build consciousness of growing ecological concerns can change apathetic attitudes and move student understanding beyond the surface level and towards more profound understanding” (p. 16). The main way the article focusses on relates to our use and selection of materials in the arts classroom. In terms of resources to obtain eco-friendly material, the article offers two ideas: 1) raw materials from the natural environments and 2) discarded and degraded manufactured material. The latter is the focal point of the article. The article points out that using secondhand materials “is budget conscious; it does not necessarily require educators to change regularly used materials; and invites social action by students, teachers, and the school community” (p. 17). If

finding materials were difficult, the article offers a list of places where reusable materials can be found. We can find discarded and degraded materials from:

- established secondhand retail stores
- ephemeral secondhand shopping
- online forums
- local manufacturers
- closing businesses
- locations of informal and formal material disposal
- creative reuse centres (CRCs)

If these places are unavailable, the article suggests we start taking initiative.

Gaining parental support; speaking with the school board or principal; starting reuse bins in schools/classrooms; or asking community groups and organizations for donations of used materials to schools instead of second hand retailers are all ways that we can take initiative at our schools. Even further, we could ask administrators in our school division about space that can be used to store second hand materials that could be volunteer run. One more way that we can be eco-conscious in our classrooms is by the disposal of materials in an ecologically conscious way. Besides being conscious of our use of materials, we can also be conscious of our classroom content.

A great way to raise awareness in students is to have them study artists who practice eco-art and also getting the students themselves to participate in creating eco art. The article points out that “[w]orks by eco artists provide students an opportunity to encounter environmental concerns in ways that expands notions of how art can be created and begins a

critical dialogue about our relationship to nature. Once this dialogue begins and we start designing eco art projects that funnel the creativity of our students and help alleviate some problems faced by our ecosystems, we can only win (ibid)” (p. 17). Viewing and studying artists is a great way to initiate exploration. A list of artists featured in the article that practice eco-art are:

- El Anatsui
- Brian Jungen
- Karyl Sisson
- Chu Yun

Besides studying eco artists, students can also create their own eco art. The article suggests explore living plants, microbes, and animals as another way to introduce students to eco art. Class discussion based on these assignments and artist studies are also beneficial. As the article points out, “[w]hen we begin to talk about environmental concerns in our classrooms we should acknowledge that students benefit from receiving an education addressing predicaments and crises critical to their own well-being and to the future if new generations (Weintraub, 2012).” (p. 19).

Very rich conversation and inquiry can result through eco art. The article identifies a number of questions that are raised through eco art. When we get students to either study or participate in eco art, we ask them to think critically about their actions:

- “Why are manufactured items so disposable?
- What are other options instead of sending this item to a landfill?
- Who benefits from discarding and repurchasing materials we could just reus?

- Where can we implement other recycling strategies in our school?” (p. 22).

The concluding paragraph of the article sums it up very nicely:

“When we tap into our students conscious we can change environmental indifference into action and in the arts we have a unique opportunity. Artists can position themselves to affect environmental changes because they can synthesize new ideas and communicate connections (ibid.). As artists, one of our jobs is to turn abstract ideas, complex emotions, and difficult concepts into visual objects from which materializes questions or concerns about the world we live in. By framing the art our students make around ecological concerns and our environments, we are initiating the first step towards social action. At the end of the day, we are trying to build responsible and conscientious citizens and what better way to start than by looking at our own practice and asking ourselves what we ask of our students.” (p. 22)

Other Personal Thoughts?

One of the quotes from one of the artists featured in the article really stood out to me. This is what El Anatsui said when speaking about his relationship with his reused material –“Media which come with history, meaning, with something, mean something to me... I would rather go for something people have used. Then there is a link between me and the other people who have touched that piece (Pritchard, 2012)” (p. 20). I thought this was a cool idea. Exploring others’ connection with our materials and our then our connection to those others is an interesting place for inquiry.

Reference

Folnovic, E. (2014). Is it easy being green? Eco art initiatives for you and your classroom. In Canadian Art Teacher 12(2). p. 16-22.

The Role of Art in Reducing Poverty

March 9, 2015

Thesis and Main Ideas

This article was all about theatre and drama but some of its points are transferable to visual arts. The article focused on drama's ability to influence the issue of poverty in Africa in a positive way. The author believes that they (most everyone) have diagnosed the problem of poverty wrongly and that "the real problem is loss of culture. This has weakened people mentally and made them maladjusted" (p. 12). He also states that "ignorance leads to poverty" (p. 11), and that their art (drama) fights ignorance. Throughout the article the author also explains his process for combating ignorance with the arts in small village communities. The author believes that "it is by raising awareness, through art, that we can train people to fight the battle against poverty" (p. 12).

The author points out that art in Africa created by the locals is always connected to practicality and is used as a way to enhance daily life. For example, art is painted *onto* a wall opposed to being painted on a canvas and being hung on the wall. This is because "hanging a picture on a wall and admiring it is something [they] do not do. The wall is first and foremost a functional surface, but it can also be made to be aesthetically pleasing" (p. 9). He also says that drama appears in two forms in Africa, classical drama and social intervention drama. The classical dramas are produced in urban centres and "will not help... to reach the people in the villages" (p. 10). Contrary to classical drama, social intervention drama and drama debates "are called 'useful drama' because of their usefulness in increasing people's awareness of various

issues... It creates a bridge between art and developmental issues, and is performed in the national language, covering topics that are relevant to the local people” (p. 10).

Speaking of the power of art and the issue of poverty in Africa the author writes: “Art transforms mentalities, and I believe that poverty in Africa is linked much more to the mental aptitudes of men and women than to the lack of wealth... art can transform people’s mentality and encourage them to regain a certain quality of life” (p. 9). The author goes on to explain a process that they and their colleagues went through in order to change peoples ideas of female circumcision in Africa. They say that reaching and changing the villagers minds was done in three steps. First they said they agreed with what they were doing, second they introduced the concept that maybe what they were doing was wrong, and thirdly, through dialogue and reasoning they explained that it was wrong and changed their opinions. The author points out that they “have to build a certain level of trust and intimacy with [the] people to understand their problems fully and influence their behaviour” (p. 11). Another tactic used to ensure that the drama production has a large effect, they play loud music and prepare a meal to gather a crowd. They say that “It is essential that all the audience’s questions are answered and that a consensus is reached at the end of the show. This is the only way that these new ideas and new behaviour can become topics of conversation at work or within family relationships” (p. 12). I think this same process of persuasion could be used in most every social issue and art form.

How Does it Fit into Visual Art Education?

Now although this article is based around the art form of drama and theatre I still think some things are applicable to visual art. The idea of ignorance being one of the causes of poverty is one that I think merits some truth. Also, the authors view that art fights ignorance is another

one that I really agree with. Getting the students to explore this idea of poverty and studying the process he goes through to get his message across is another valuable takeaway from this article. I think practicing a similar process outlined in the third paragraph would be a good way to address and approach social issues. Besides his three steps to persuasion, I also think that loud music and food would be a great way to gather a crowd at a school or in a community to raise awareness of an issue.

Reference

Guingané, J. D. (2010). The Role of Art in Reducing Poverty. *Museum International*, 62(3), 9-12. doi:10.1111/j.1468-0033.2010.01736.x

A Spiritual Ecology: Finding the Heart of Art Education
March 29, 2015

Thesis and Main Ideas

The article *A Spiritual Ecology: Finding the Heart of Art Education* by Sally Gradle was a very intriguing and thought provoking read. In Gradle's own words, in the introduction of the article she writes

what I wish to convey are four essential understandings about spirituality that might assist us in forming an ecology, and by this I mean an awareness of the organizational patterns that connect us to a more metaphorically spiritual heart of art education. (p. 73)

This is her main thesis, and it is quite a mouthful that requires some unpacking. For this reason, I have provided a list of definitions as described by Gradle that are used in her article that I think are important for our interpretation of her main points.

Definitions:

Art Education:

a program of study which provides both visual and verbal languages as tools, and simultaneously develops the interpersonal skills necessary to address issues of ultimate concern through art making and viewing. Giving life to an idea so that it is visible to others is not negated in this focus on a spiritual ecology of art, but is supported here as being an essential purpose of being human. (p. 72)

The last sentence of this definition is one that I think deserves some attention. Art creation could be perceived as the act of "[g]iving life to an idea so that it is visible to others" and this "is an essential purpose of being human." I firmly agree with this definition; perhaps not definitively but I think it is one of the better ones I have stumbled upon.

Spirituality, according to Gradle:

is an orientation to life that is whole, non-divisive... [It] is grounded in daily experiences that allow for reflection, metaphoric connections, and transformation to occur, without necessarily leaving the here-and-now... [It] is a sacramental orientation to life; the sacred is immanent in all creation and encompasses real, daily phenomena as well as the less frequent experiences of mystical transcendence. (p. 73)

In laymans terms (or my own words) I think this means that spirituality is the awareness of the interconnectedness of all of creation. When I say *creation* I am referring to the whole of reality. Beyond this, spirituality is also the awareness –or worldview– that every part of creation is sacred.

Gradle's use of the term *ecology* also merits some explanation. According to the dictionary, ecology refers to the branch of biology that deals with the relations and interactions of an organism with its environment and other organisms. Gradle points out however that

***Ecology** here is not meant to convey a reductive view of environmentalism. Rather my use of the term ecology of spirit is one that includes all relationships with the natural world, most certainly; as well as (a) insights gleaned from sustainable education; (b) deep ecology's strengths of inter-relational dependencies, eco-feminist philosophy, and embodied knowing; (c) [I]ndigenous orientations to learning; and (d) the contributions of re-mythologizing culture with metaphor in art. (p. 73)*

It is these four points, ([a] sustainable education; [b] deep ecology with eco-feminism and embodied knowing; [c] Indigenous orientations to learning; and [d] re-mythologizing culture with metaphor in art) that are the four spiritual understandings that Gradle wishes to express to

us through the article in order to help us come closer to realizing the heart of arts education. Very briefly (at least as briefly as I can), I will explain my interpretation of these four understandings as Gradle presents them.

Sustainable Education

Gradle speaks of sustainability in two senses in this article. In addition to speaking of sustainability in the sense that is related to environmental concerns, she also speaks of sustainability in the sense of education that sustains our students' ability to continue to learn. Gradle calls for a paradigm shift in the *purpose* of education saying that it should not merely be a system that passes on knowledge. Instead, education should be "a system that uses knowledge as one of many tools to transform the learner and the education system itself (Sterling, 2001)" (p. 74, 75). Sustainable education is one that enables and empowers our students to continue to learn, function, and apply their knowledge to positively affect the world. Gradle summarizes this multidimensional understanding of sustainability by stating that "sustainability is comprised of complex social justice concerns, ecological values, and personal needs" (p. 74). With this understanding of sustainability, Gradle asserts that

[b]eing fully engaged in a sustainable education should offer lifelong opportunities to be in relationship where education becomes the means to further awareness and compassion, aesthetic and intuitive perceptions, and mindfulness of a 'greater-than-autonomous-human' reality of life. (p. 74)

This phrase 'greater-than-autonomous-human' serves as a relevant segway to the next spiritual understanding Gradle addresses: *deep ecology*.

Deep Ecology and Community

The phrase ‘greater-than-autonomous-human’ can be interpreted a number of ways. One of the main ways presented in the article is the idea of humans not being separate from, and unaffected by, their environments. The environment includes all the plants, animals, and elements. *Deep* ecology opposed to *shallow* ecology sees humans as not being greater or separate from the rest of creation but merely one small knot inside of the immense web of creation. We are a part of the land and whatever we do to the land we do to ourselves as well since we are connected to it. We are in community with all of creation.

This idea of community and connectivity is cardinal to finding the heart of art education. Gradle says, “It seems an essential aspect of spiritual ecology in art education should further discovery of cultural and personal values through relational knowing, whether be that with images, actions taken in the community, or even in the larger-than-human sphere of activities” (p. 78). *Through relational knowing*—being aware in one way or another of all of our relations—we can encourage discovery of cultural and personal values. “These relationships should connect individuals, and circulate ideas, beliefs, and values. This sort of multiple origin, multiple outcome thinking that brings us closer to the heart of art education” (p. 78). An awareness of these relationships informs our thoughts and ideas. Being aware of the interconnectedness that we are a part of provides fertile ground for meaningful creation. The next ideas Gradle presents is that: “Intelligence is both a process and an outcome of so many kinds of relationships” (p. 78). Our intelligence informs how we act and create. This view of intelligence and even creation as being informed by our relationships is one that is held by Indigenous cultures and spirituality.

Indigenous Cultures and Spirituality

There are general orientations to spiritual ecology that are held by all Indigenous cultures. “First Kinship Relations, community, the value of ancestral teachings, and responsible actions toward the land, the creatures that inhabit it, and the extended family or group seem essential” (p. 80). Another idea worth exploring here is the idea of the artist being merely a participant, or a translator of ideas, in the creation of art. Since our intelligence is determined by our relationships with the environment, then our artistic creations are also merely products of these relationships. The ‘participatory mode’ of art making is the view “in which the meaning in an art form is constructed from interaction and no longer resides solely in the artist or viewer or even the piece itself” (p. 84). This is an interesting and new idea for myself, but it makes sense. Everything I create is a reflection of my thoughts which are informed by my understanding of my relationships with the rest of the world. This for me was a humbling and intriguing idea.

The Indigenous artist recognizes the process, inspiration, and history of art creation. This view more results in a change in thought processes and metacognition of the artist that affects the heart and therefore, the outward expression. By becoming this way we see “that there is a radically differing locus for creativity than the imagination of the individual. Creativity is seen as an interrelational transformation, a dance of great magnitude between people, processes, and things themselves” (p. 83). This view breaks down the ego of the artist and is humbling because we realize, we (artists) are like antennas broadcasting the input of our universes through the screen of art. For myself, this makes me wonder what the limitations of our art creation are.

Re-Mythologizing and Metaphor in Art Education

The last section in Gradle's writing points to a need to re-mythologize and use metaphor in art. Gradle points out that myths and metaphors serve as a means to express deep human truths through stories and images. In today's day in age, myths are thought of as old fairy tales. But Gradle points out that "[m]ythology approximates what is true and real with story. The personas of these stories do not negate our experience, but support our lives by revealing a reality that is translucent through the actions of the story" (p. 85). They provide us with a means to make these truths accessible, "the arts provide the distinctive metaphors and technical means for reflecting the invisible life of human experience" (p. 86).

How does this all Fit into Visual Art Education?

I think all of these spiritual understandings are very interesting and have value. I believe that embracing these understandings as a teacher and an artist would be beneficial. With these things in mind very meaningful art could be created. Gradle concludes her article by saying

Teachers and researchers... must encourage the more deeply ecological and spiritual concerns to surface and propel the discipline forward... The heart of art education, and I believe all other sustainable visions of education, is here in the participatory, visionary focus; honed on the spiritual connectivity of humankind with all of life as the most artful composition of all. (p. 88)

While pointing out and advocating for these things, the article does not, however, offer any explicitly clear or concrete ways to integrate these ideas into the classroom. The article seems more like a piece that would benefit an arts classroom if the teacher read it with genuine curiosity and the intent to learn. I feel like many educators could read this and brush off and/or

disregard many of the ideas. Also, some things in the article could be missed or simply misunderstood. For example, I have read this article through many times ever since my group decided upon it and everytime I have done so, I learned something new. Even trying to write these ideas and translate them into my own words after reading it multiple times was perplexing.

Even still, if an educator did come to embrace and entertain these spiritual understandings, the question still remains: How could I teach my students these things? How can I integrate these understandings into my practice? I think the answer, for the teacher, is to meditate on the concepts. The teacher should internalize these things before they can even attempt to pass them on to the students. While developing the unit plan for this assignment, I had a meeting with an elder that affirmed this belief in me.

I went to an Indigenous elder while I my group were developing our unit plan looking for help. I offered him tobacco and I asked him for a story that I could use to introduce the concept of our reciprocal relationship with the land to the students. I explained that we wanted to help the students realize their relation and place in the land. He did not give me a story but he said something to me that really stood out. He said “you have to find yourself before you can even try to help others.” What he meant was that before I can try to teach others to realize and express their connection to the land through art that first I need to discover and do that for myself. He also said that I can try and explain these things to the students but that when I do so I should be patient, and that each student will do this in their own personal way. I know for myself, I am still (and will always be) trying to figure out how I can help myself and my students discover the heart of art education. At the same time, I think that my groups unit plan is a good start.

Reference

Gradle, S. (2007). A spiritual ecology: Finding the heart of art education. *Journal of the Canadian Association for Curriculum Studies*, 5(1) Retrieved from <http://search.proquest.com/docview/1367089949?accountid=13480>

Moving Forward, Never Forgetting

March 29, 2015

Thesis and Main Ideas

“Moving Forward, Never Forgetting offers a gathering space for creative conciliation where Indigenous and non- Indigenous artists, friends, and communities meet to understand and overcome systemic oppression through art- making and conversation.”

From my understanding, the content of the pieces in the gallery addressed issues of assimilation and colonization on the Indigenous people of Canada. During our tour we were paired up with a high school student to look at the works with one another. After viewing time, we had an opportunity to meet with an Indigenous Story Keeper and we shared our thoughts on the exhibit. At the very end we had an opportunity to create artwork. The art work we created was based on: where we are and where we will be going. I thought that the whole experience was thoroughly enjoyable.

The two pieces of art that stood out the most to me were Adrian Stimson's piece *Sick and Tired* and Michael Belmore's *Smoulder*. I feel like I did not have enough time to view and interact with every piece as long as I wish I could have. I plan on returning to the exhibit soon and spending more time with each piece. Adrian Stinson's *Sick and Tired* was one piece that really caught my attention and was one I spent the most time contemplating.

It is an installation piece which is placed in a small walled off area with dim lighting. The piece consists of authentic residential school windows and bed frame. The windows are placed on the wall behind the head of the bed and they are filled with feathers that would have come

from the mattress that would have been on the bed frame. On the bed frame there is a buffalo hide (I am unsure whether or not it is authentic as I did not have a chance to read the whole plaque explaining some of the work) that is rolled up in the shape of a body. This piece is full of symbolism.

I am unsure as to why the feathers were in the windows, but behind them there were lights. Because the feathers were in the window frames, though, you could not see through them and the light shining through was distorted. I think the artists did this with the purpose of trying to express the fact that living inside these residential schools was like being trapped. You are unable to see clearly what would be on the outside and the light that does filter through the feathers is gloomy and depressing. The buffalo hide was the most powerful aspect of the piece in my opinion though.

Having the buffalo hide in the shape of a body gives the installation space a very eerie atmosphere. It connotes a dead body. Knowing the importance of the buffalo to Indigenous people heightens the impact of this scene. Many Indigenous people saw the buffalo as extensions of themselves because they relied so heavily upon it¹. The buffalo was a huge part of their way of life—a huge part of their culture. Now it is lying lifelessly on the bed frame from a residential school. When we know this, then, seeing the buffalo on the bed frame as a dead body is a testament of death, sickness, and damage done by residential schools and colonization both physically and culturally to the Indigenous people of Canada.

Stinson's piece definitely speaks to the *Never Forgetting* part of the exhibition while I think Belmore's *Smoulder* piece represents more of the *Moving Forward* aspect of the

¹ This is knowledge I have gained through verbal stories I have heard from Indigenous storytellers and elders.

exhibition. The storyteller explained to us some of Belmore's vision for that piece. She explained that Belmore was referencing to the fire's place in sharing stories. When people gather around a fire, they share stories with one another. And once a fire goes out, and is left smouldering, the people around the fire are left with the stories that have been shared burning inside of them.

We ended our tour at *Smoulder* and I thought that was very appropriate. We sat in a circle around the piece and spent time sharing what we liked best from the exhibition. I can not help but think of our viewing of the exhibition being similar to being around a fire and hearing stories. The exhibition allowed us to hear various stories from various different artists and their interpretations of the history of colonization and assimilation in Canada and there, at the end of the tour, sitting around *Smoulder*, the stories were still burning and being processed in our heads. The act of sitting in a circle and sharing our thoughts and impressions from the exhibit was very fitting for the piece and the whole exhibit. It provided us a great space to *Never Forget* as well as *Move Forward*.

Why is this Topic Important to Arts Ed?

I feel that the ideas and issues presented in the exhibition are important to arts ed because they are relevant to us all as Canadians and because I believe one of the purposes of art is to share ideas, knowledges, and stories. I say the issues of colonialism and assimilation are relevant to every Canadian because whether you are Indigenous or not, the land you live on and the people who surround you are all products of these things in one way or another. Every indian² (myself included) on reserve, in the city, traditional or contemporary are affected by colonialism.

² I am aware of the objections of the use of the term "Indian" but that is the term I, and many others I know, self identify with and that is why I use it freely in my writing. I do not find it offensive and when I meet people who do, I usually defend my stance.

I do not know my original language because my grandparents were too afraid to teach it to my father and aunts and uncles because of what happened to them and their relatives for speaking it. The indian who practices a tradition lifestyle practices only a fragmented version because so much of the traditional ways have been lost.

Non-Indigenous people also feel the affects of this. Because of the traumatic and residual effects of assimilation and residential schools, not one Indigenous Canadian is unaffected. The effects have been overwhelmingly negative as well. Being taken from their parents has left many elders and older Indigenous people unable to teach and raise their own kids properly with the traditional values and knowledge systems because that was stolen from them. Now many are angry and/or afraid of the white man because of what was done to them even though no living white person was responsible for what happened. So now, the strong and mutually respectful and reciprocal relationship that could have been is virtually non-existent. The indians don't want relationship because they are angry at the white man and the white man does not relationship because they are afraid of or disgusted by what their ancestors have caused the indian to become.

Art is one of the only ways to get these messages across and raise awareness of these issues. Louis Riel said before he died that "my people will sleep for one hundred years, but when they awake, it will be the artists who give them back their spirit" and I believe this to be true. Louis Riel was Metis, therefore he is half Indian and half European, therefore "his people" are both Indian and white, and both need to be woken up.

Other Personal Thoughts

- I wish I had more time at the gallery. I plan on going back.

- During the storytelling time around *Smoulder* one of the high school students said “my names is _____ and nothing stood out to me.” This was shocking and surprising to me. Now I could have misinterpreted his body language and intention but I feel like he was not moved at all by the art work. It reminds me that not everyone cares for these issues. This saddens and disappoints me. I am not disappointed in the student, he is not responsible for the way he was raised, I am disappointed and discouraged that the art work and education he received was not successful in getting through to him. I wonder why/how this happens and how we as arts educators can combat this?