Apprendre l'image: Recherches et expérimentations en enseignement des arts au Québec.
Edited by Jacques-Albert Wallot, assisted by France Joyal.

Reviewed by Richard Lachapelle


Discovering the Image: Aspects of Art Education in Quebec is both an exhibition catalogue and an anthology of texts on a wide range of topics by various Montreal area art educators. As an exhibition catalogue, this book documents a didactic exhibition by the same name that was held at the gallery of the Université du Québec à Montréal in conjunction with the Research Conference that opened the 1993 INSEA (International Society for Education Through Art) World Congress.

As an anthology, this book presents thirty-nine English and French texts on various subjects organized according to six different themes: “Historical Paradigms”, “Child Art”, “The Learned Image”, “Adolescent Art”, “Sociological and Cultural Perspectives”, and “The Technological Image”. By providing a representative selection of research and practice-related texts, this book successfully contrasts the divergent concerns of its two main groups of authors: university researchers and school educators. As a whole, the texts grounded in teaching practice clearly demonstrate a concern among a number of the contributors for the reconsideration and expansion of traditional conceptions of children’s and adolescents’ artistic development. For example, Réal Dupont (pp. 31-44) proposes a method for the classification of student drawings according to three systems of graphic production: the “gestural”, the “logical” and the “optical”. Nancy Retallack-Lambert (pp. 77-82) takes a different approach to this problem: she suggests that the context of the individual child’s art-making is a long-term creative process in which the child produces, not single and isolated works, but “serials” of related images. Many of the practice-based texts in this anthology also reveal, not surprisingly, a preoccupation with teaching methodology. Numerous articles present the process and outcome of particularly successful art lessons: these explore novel approaches to challenging art making problems from the perspectives of themes, materials, and techniques (M. Legaré-Soler, S. Blouin, H. Duberger-Blouin, F. Gagnon-Bourget, G. Baier, J-E. Fallu, F. Joyal, G. Forest, M. Moureau, D. Perraz, D. Lanouette, N. Bennett and L. Paquette).

There is greater diversity in topics among the research-based texts which address aspects of art education history, theory, or empirical research. Suzanne Lemerise and Leah Sherman (pp. 13-28) have co-authored two texts that draw a parallel between the historical developments in art education in Quebec's French Catholic and English Protestant schools between 1860 and 1960. David Parisier (pp. 99-108) reviews the childhood production of Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec and, by comparing it to Lautrec's creative output as an adult, concludes that the themes, stylistic features, and attitudes characteristic of the juvenile work are also be found in the artist’s mature work. Jacques-Albert Wallot (pp. 113-122) conducts an examination of the various ways in which the interaction of narrative and pictorial elements in high school students’ cartoons results in the creation of a variety of meanings. Finally, an article by Micheline Couture (pp. 195-203) addresses the creative potential of the new information technologies: her text presents and discusses the sequential lesson plans prepared by her art education students for the purpose of using computers as image-making tools in the context of the school art studio.

The preceding examples are but some of the many topics covered in this collection of essays which, for the most part, are well written and informative. This book is well designed and richly illustrated with photographs and reproductions that are carefully chosen to support the points of view presented by the authors. However, the book does have a few shortcomings. First, there is no standardization in regard to the translation of the articles, and this will prove frustrating for unilingual readers. Some
texts are provided only in one language, while others are produced in their entirety in both French and English. Most articles, however, are accompanied with only a brief summary in the second language, English or French. Second, some of the articles included in the anthology were clearly meant principally as wall text to accompany parts of the INSEEA exhibit. These have not been adapted in any way for inclusion in the publication, and they make little sense outside of the context of the exhibition. It would have been preferable, in such cases, to exclude these texts.

*Discovering the Image: Aspects of Art Education in Quebec* offers an excursion into art education research and practice in the province of Quebec that no other single publication can provide. Many readers, therefore, will find this anthology useful. Researchers will value it for its overview of art education in the province. Primary and secondary art teachers will likely find the broad range of topics covered of interest and the many suggestions in the articles of practical use in their teaching. Finally, university students contemplating graduate studies in art education in Montreal will find this book instrumental in identifying university faculty and art education departments whose research interests and general educational orientation concur with their own.

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**The Development of Artistically Gifted Children Selected Case Studies**


Reviewed by Kit Grauer

Golomb introduces *The Development of Artistically Gifted Children: Selected Case Studies* with the acknowledgment that the idea for a book of case studies came from a session at the American Psychological Association annual conference. The lack of publications on gifted child artists and the surprisingly small amount known about development of children gifted in the arts gave rise to this collection of six longitudinal case studies of children who can be variously described as gifted in the visual arts. As well as a forward by Rudolf Arnheim and the introduction by Golomb, the book includes chapters by authors very familiar to art educators.

Diana Korzenik sets the stage with a chapter on the changing conception of artistic giftedness. By providing an historical framework and careful analysis of many of the terms and constructs that appear in the case studies, Korzenik is able to alert the reader to the culturally and historically bound context in which theories of development are situated. She suggests that perceptions of artistic giftedness coincide with conceptions of art of a particular period. Definitions of the terms gifted, child, and artist depend on the connections that people make between their ideas about children and their ideas about making art. As she emphatically states, “Giftedness, like the notion of art itself, keeps propagating the art powerful adults admire. Giftedness, like the term art, coincides with the attitudes of the time.”

The six case studies which follow present the reader with both historical and contemporary analysis of very different gifted artists. The first case is David Pariser’s penetrating analysis of the connection between the juvenile and mature work of the nineteenth century French artist Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec. As with many of the cases, Pariser examines the issues of nature and nurture which contributed to Lautrec’s success. The cases by Haas, Golomb, Milbrath and Zimmerman all deal with children who have been identified as gifted in their childhood, and describe in both images and words the particular characteristics of the environment and the aptitudes of each of the children that contribute to their development. In each case, we gain insight not only into the particular child but also the different perspectives that each author brings to issues of development and artistic giftedness. Lorna Self revisits Nadia, the autistic child whose early drawings challenged many of our assumptions about art and autism. Now an adult in her early twenties, Nadia no longer is interested in drawing. As Self reconsiders and reassess her earlier views on Nadia, we are left with many questions as to why the incredible ability in drawing manifested early in life by this mentally handicapped girl seems to have diminished to the point of extinction.

The final chapter by Ron MacGregor entitled, “Exclusive Profiles: Tentatively Sketching Giftedness,” does what MacGregor does best. Not only does he provide a meta-analysis of the case studies and the idea of giftedness in art, he references his highly crafted and cogent remarks with citations that range from Adams’ *A Hitchhiker’s Guide to the Galaxy* to Levi-Strauss’ *Tristes tropiques*.

The value of this book is that it provides a good read for a wide range of individuals interested in children’s artistic development from