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**An Artist-Educator's Role in Community Arts:
Integrating People of Diverse Backgrounds and Ages**

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A Thesis

in

The Department

of

Art Education

**Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
for the Degree of Master of Arts
at Concordia University
Montreal, Quebec, Canada**

July 2001

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ABSTRACT

An Artist-Educator's Role in Community Arts: Integrating People of Diverse Backgrounds and Ages

Misako Okuyama

This research focuses on teaching methods in community arts programs and projects integrating diverse people through collaborative work. Through giving “Art of Japanese Calligraphy” Workshops, I developed my teaching method focusing on creativity of personal expression through collaborative work. The documentary video of the project shows the active process of the participants’ personal creations. The participants were children and adults, some with and some without disabilities. Three workshops were held at L’Atelier d’Artisanat du Centre-Ville Inc. in Montreal, and the participants expressed themselves in their collage artworks with Japanese calligraphy. In the first and second workshop, they recreated their names and the natural environment by using the letters, paper and other materials on three pieces of large papers. In the third workshop, the participants collaborated with each other to add details to each other’s artwork. In having two types of collaboration, I found that different benefits were achieved. However, enabling people to communicate through art in both approaches allowed them to learn to respect and to honour each individual’s idea.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I wish to express my sincere gratitude to those who supported me throughout my research. These include my supervisor, Dr. Elizabeth J. Sacca, Dr. David Pariser and Dr. Paul Langdon, the other members of my thesis committee; Claudine Ascher and Juliet Dunphy who helped me edit my paper; SangEun Lee, who was responsible for videotaping the artistic activities; Francine Cousineau, a coordinator of L'Atelier d'Artisanat du Centre-Ville Inc.; and finally, the workshop participants who contributed greatly to the success of this project.

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Introduction

In our modern society, especially in cities, where we do not always have opportunities to communicate with people of diverse backgrounds and ages, some people recognize the value of art as a medium to connect people within a community. Chalmers (1971), for example, believes in art as cultural communication. Involving people in community art activities has been seen as a way to accomplish many different goals, both communicative and creative. In some societies, community arts programs and projects are organized to involve diverse community members; these have the purpose of drawing out the people's creativity through arts activities. Some societies promote the arts by attempting to break the barrier between people with differences. More specifically, in Britain, the community arts movement has developed since the late 1960's to give all people opportunities to access the arts (Owen, 1984). A similar process is beginning in Japan (Shepard, 1998). In South Australia, involvement in community arts activities is considered valuable for all people (Brokensha & Tonks, 1986). In Wales, community arts projects provide various art forms for all people (The Art Council of Wales, 2001, April 23); while in Canada, community arts programs are starting to recognize the importance of involving people with disabilities (Brown, 1995). In 1997, the Ontario Arts Council held the conference "Vital Links – Enriching Communities through Art and Art through Communities" which provided opportunities for many artists, community organizations and participants from countries, such as Canada, the United States, Great Britain and Australia to discuss community arts (Ontario Arts Council, 1998).

Community arts programs and projects can be valuable in developing strong

integrated communities. Through my involvement in community arts programs, I recognized the benefits of programs and projects which integrated different art forms, visual arts, music and performing arts, and involved people of different ages or cultures, as well as those who have mental and physical disabilities. Enabling people to communicate through art allows them to learn to respect and to honour the differences among them. At the same time, people are able to learn through others and to be aware of others' needs.

In order to develop and to improve people's lives, they should be encouraged to become familiar with the people who make up their own communities. The arts can help them communicate with each other even as they express their own ideas and experience pleasure. COMPAS, an organization in Minnesota, strengthens communities through the arts by "Creating opportunities for people to express issues within communities and providing people with a variety of ways to communicate their ideas and beliefs" (Minnesota, 2001, March 16).

However, in the area of art education, theoretical and practical art teaching methods in community settings have not been thoroughly documented or investigated. Degge (1987) argues that:

As a field, art education does not embrace the non-school population and has virtually ignored public interest and participation in the arts. The ways cultural programming may influence aesthetic values and cultural policy, and thus attitudes about art and art education, have been ignored, particularly in teaching pedagogy. (p. 164-165)

For future education, artist-educators should prepare some of these teaching

methods aimed at integrating all people. The Ontario Arts Council (1998) identifies four principles related to community arts, such as "Mutual Respect," "Process and Consensus," "Inclusion" and "Generosity of Spirit." Regarding mutual respect, they write:

The very nature of community arts — the working relationship between artist and community collaborating on an artistic project — demands that this principle be upheld at all stages of a project. Methods which allow for mutual change of skills, knowledge, enthusiasm, inspiration and satisfaction among participants need to be recognized and carried out for community arts project to be successful. (p.9)

They mention that process and consensus are important as the product or outcome of a community arts project. Although each project has a different approach, successful community arts programs and projects aspire to integrate all community members in the creative process. Collaborative artistic process and vision occur only when a collective spirit is created among participants. Gibans (1982) mentions that "Artists as individuals are just discovering the potential of their roles, rights, and impact on the community — and even on the world" (p.251).

This research paper investigates my role as an artist-educator in community arts programs and projects by examining examples of community arts projects and describing my teaching methods.

Research Question

In what ways can workshop leaders assist diverse people to communicate with each other through collaborative work on community arts projects?

I will discuss this question in relation to the following subjects:

- How to integrate different kinds of people in community arts programs and projects.
- How to teach people to focus on creativity and personal expression.
- The kinds of benefits people can obtain through collaborative work.

Reasons for the research question

Having been involved in community arts programs and projects in Japan, I recognized their value and the benefits for all people: adults, children, seniors and those who have disabilities. These programs and projects included various visual arts, music, and performing arts activities. By expressing their ideas in an environment that promoted interaction and collaboration, participants were able to communicate and learn from each other. For instance, the dance workshop of Wolfgang Stange integrating people with disabilities a very important influence on me has had. Because of his method of leading people with disabilities to express their own ideas he has become my model as a teacher.

Since coming to Canada, I have continued to develop my interest in this field. Through observing Spiral Garden, one of the community arts programs in Canada, I have recognized the benefits of programs integrating different kinds of arts and people. Spiral Garden is held every summer in the garden at the Bloorview-MacMillan

Centre in Toronto. It acts as a bridge back into the community for some of the children with disabilities at the center.

I also pursued this interest by documenting the activities of the “Art of Japanese Calligraphy Workshop” that I hold once a week for a French Canadian student. In this process, I became aware of some cultural differences between Japan and Canada. I also recognized that arts give us opportunities to express our ideas and communicate our pleasure in them. Through documentation of the activities involving both my student and me, I was able to investigate and show this active process to others. My student reports that she learned not only the techniques of Japanese calligraphy, but also something about the Japanese philosophy of life.

Relying on my experiences of community arts programs and projects, I investigated how the workshop leaders may guide diverse people to communicate with each other through collaborative artwork.

Definition of key concepts according to the literature

In the literature, community arts programs and projects are defined in several ways. Shepard (1998) writes:

It is a way of sharing the making process so that it involves the whole community, an attempt to integrate art into people's daily lives and awaken the artist in everyone. In this approach, the artist plays a new role. That is he or she is the person who enables other people to discover their own talent, whatever their level of experience or ability. (p.8)

And he adds that:

Everyone collaborates in all aspects of decision-making and the process of arriving at any outcome or art fact is held to be as important as the product created. (p.8)

The most important aspect of community arts programs and projects for me is the integration of diverse people into the community through creativity and collaboration.

The Ontario Art Council (1998) also writes:

It is not simply about an artist working in or with a community. All participants in community arts activity should possess a strong desire to strengthen community through a collaborative, collective, creative process. (p.10)

Trent, Dwyer, Hammock, Myers, and Webb. (1998) describe a positive aspect of collaboration: "Collaboration keeps minds open by allowing individuals to imagine expanded possibilities"(p.35).

My research interest focuses on three key concepts of community arts programs and projects: 1) developing an approach by which to provide people with opportunities to communicate with diverse group of people, that is with people of different ages, cultures and those who have disabilities, 2) examining teaching methods focused on creativity and personal expression, and 3) analyzing the attempts to build a sense of community.

One of the key concepts dealt with in literature about community arts programs is providing diverse people with opportunities to communicate with each other. According to the Community Development Foundation (1992), the quality of community arts programs depends on the integration of different people, as well as on adequate provision of financing and resources, including administrative resources.

The policy is to reach the widest social range, encouraging creative participation and appreciation in the arts within the larger community, among elderly and those with disabilities, children, parents, people who are in hospital and those with special needs.
(p.30)

In order to develop and expand the community arts programs and projects, we should integrate people with different cultural values, perspectives, abilities, knowledge and resources. For instance, Brown (1995) suggests that community arts programs and projects should involve knowledgeable seniors who are great resources, especially for the young.

Most arts organizations have outreach programs. These programs, however, are focused on the young. Such programs need to be extended to seniors who will soon be a sizeable percentage of the

population. (p.28)

Each culture and individual has different values and traditions. One should respect these differences by acknowledging that one's view is not the only view. Mitias (1985) argues for difference while maintaining subcultures and respect:

It is through a diversity of cultural values, traditions, and achievements that we will all be enriched. Differences must remain as part of creative power. Differences are to be recognized and respected. A unified humanity is not a uniform culture. Different peoples will be able to have their own subculture, but all peoples will have the culture of humanity. (p.106)

The value of each individual's ideas and culture in community arts programs and projects should be recognized and respected. In this way, participants will be able to communicate more effectively with each other.

An examination of teaching methods focused on creativity and personal expression is another important key concept in all the literature about community arts programs. According to the study of Degge (1987), most art teachers in community settings believe that students need creative expression.

Mitias also mentions the creativity of personal expression:

Creatively acting, the body is freed from being an animate thing obedient to biophysical law. We become creators. The laws of nature serve the dictates of our inner life. Our hands are the servants of a soul. The body takes hold of nature and makes it bear the sign of the soul. The soul makes the body embody the soul in some thing of substance. Thus, creativity is a triumph over the thinghood of the self. It is selfassertion through body in testimony of soul. Therein

lies the importance of creativity as expression. The object made speaks of values, forms, choices that arise within the person. But creativity requires the embodiment which is the breakthrough into the world by the inner person. What is expressed is made. (p.99)

Creative expression is a natural human action. One expresses oneself by using one's ideas, senses and experiences. Brown (1995) discusses this role of arts in our lives:

The arts are the soul of our community in a number of ways. They are the soul in the sense that they may represent the link to internal, central thinking processes, and as such may be responsible for greater awareness in terms of emotional expression and consciousness of the individual. They are in the colloquial sense mind-widening and mind-bending. (p.39)

Through arts, we are able to express ourselves and recognize each other.

This idea relates to the key concept of attempting to build community. The Community Development Foundation (1992) mentions how arts are essential for all people:

Arts in the community are concerned particularly with the circumstances and opportunity for expression of social minorities, whether for the elderly to enrich retirement, for people with disabilities to strengthen communication and expression, for people with disadvantages to express their needs, for minority groups to sustain and reinterpret their cultures or for young people to make sense of experiences they suffer or enjoy. The arts are essential vehicles for personal and collective improvement. All groups of people today face a future in which accepted areas of employment, continuity of work, traditions of care are changing along with changing patterns of work and leisure. This phenomenon is transnational. Our inquiry shows an urgent need for the arts to

make their contribution to social adaptation and equality of opportunity. (p.7)

Brown also discusses the role of the arts in life:

The Arts in the community are far more than opportunities for enjoyment, pleasure or relaxation, though they may indeed serve these needs. (p.37)

It is clear that arts give all people opportunities to express their own ideas and needs, and improve their social situation and their community.

The study of Matarasso (1997) shows the impact of the participation of individuals.

Participatory arts projects can contribute to social cohesion in several ways. At a basic level, they bring people together, and provide neutral spaces in which friendships can develop. They encourage partnership and co-operation. Some projects, like Portsmouth's home festival, promote intercultural understanding and help recognize the contribution of all section of the community. (p.6-7)

Taking part in community arts activity produces a wide range of positive benefits.

Methodology

In this research, I analyze and criticize the community arts programs and projects in which I have participated and which I have observed and taught. To investigate my methods of teaching art workshops in a community art program, I held the "Art of Japanese Calligraphy Workshops" for diverse groups, integrating children, adults, seniors and those with mental health issues, as well as those who have disabilities. Each workshop involved small mixed groups of people, lasted for two hours per session and were held once a week for three weeks at L'Atelier d'Artisanat du Centre-Ville in Montreal.

I documented the activities and the artwork produced during the "Art of Japanese Calligraphy Workshops" while the participants and I were interacting. I used a digital video camera: a Sony Handicam and a two-hour Hi-8 videotape for each session. One of my classmates, SangEun Lee helped me with the documentation. I documented in this way during the workshops held on March 30, April 6 and April 20, 2001.

At the end of the "Art of Japanese Calligraphy Workshops," I interviewed the participants using questions that I had prepared. I asked them what they learned through the "Art of Japanese Calligraphy Workshops," what role art plays in their lives, what they think about the relationship between instructors and students and if they think they could communicate with each other through the art activities.

In order to gain the participants' trust, I explained to them how I would document, use and analyze the information, and discuss it with them. Each participant signed the consent form. Following the study, I presented them with my research

through the edited videotape and research papers. I also gave them the photographs of their collaborative artworks.

The photographs of their artworks and the edited videotape are included in this thesis.

Outline of procedure and data analysis

To gather information, I looked for information related to my ideas about the role of art, integrated arts education, and the relationship between instructors and students in the available literature. The data that I used was taken from a variety of sources originating in the United States, Britain, Ireland, Australia, Canada and Japan. I then used this information to support my ideas.

Using the videotapes, I analyzed the activities of the “Art of Japanese Calligraphy Workshops.” I analyzed the participants’ expressions and their artworks, as well as my teaching methods. I then chose the segments and edited them by computer: using Adobe Premiere and Matrox programs. I also analyzed the participants’ opinions.

Examples of Community Arts Projects

I discuss examples of community arts projects in two countries: Japan and Canada where I worked or observed. These community arts programs integrate diverse people and aim to assist them to express their own ideas and communicate with others.

Japan

In Japan, community arts programs and projects are organized throughout the country and in many settings. However, community arts activities which integrate diverse people are limited. Examples of these are the projects organized by the Creative Art Executive Committee, in which I was involved from 1996 to 1998. This organization organizes many innovative community arts education programs and projects for all people.

The Summer Art School, one of the Creative Art Executive Committee's projects, was comprised of various art workshops and was held for three weeks every summer in Tokyo. The project involved diverse people: participants were children, adults and seniors. Some having disabilities; the participants also came from different parts of Japan. The instructors had experience working with diverse people and they were not only from Japan but also from other countries, such as Britain, Finland and Mexico. They offered various art workshops, such as Computer Graphic Art, Clay, Calligraphy Ink Art, Dance, Music and Sign Mime. The Summer Art School focused on creativity, emphasizing the participants' own expression and encouraging an awareness of and respect for their differences.

I participated in or helped: The Clay, The Calligraphy Ink Art, Dance and Music workshops.

The two-day Clay Workshop was held at Azabu Craft Museum. Some of the participants were visually impaired. The participants who were not visually impaired wore eye masks. In this way, the workshop encouraged the participants to create sculptures beyond vision; they were able to create art objects by using clay with their sense of touch. Music stimulated their imaginations. The instructor, Yohei Nishimura was an artist and had been teaching children's art and craft classes at Chiba School for the blind. He assisted the participants in developing their artworks; for instance, he cut their sculptures in two and placed the halves next to each other, back-to-back, in order to show their insides. In this way, the participants were able to get new ideas and expand their images.

To participants who were visually impaired, the workshop was valuable because it provided them with an occasion to do art with others. One of the participants participated in not only the Summer Art School but also in the Clay Workshop held regularly once a month in the museum. While he studied clay at an atelier in Kyoto, he liked to participate in this interactive workshop in order to get some inspiration and ideas. Another participant regularly traveled a long distance to participate in the Clay Workshop. It was only the workshop that provided people who were visually impaired with an opportunity to make art objects by using their own imagination in the company of other people. My role was to help them visit the gallery in Tokyo, where exceptionally, they were able to touch the sculptures, before they started the Clay Workshop. It was rare that the gallery allowed people to touch the

artwork.

The Clay Workshop also gave another participant who was visually impaired an opportunity to draw pictures. This participant sometimes presented me with his pictures, made in a way of drawing he had invented: he used his sense of touch, imagination and visual memories. He had some visual memories because he lost his vision only when he was a child. Booth, Krockover and Woods (1982) mention, "The person who becomes blind retains some visual memory, recollections of what he has seen prior to his blindness" (p. 111). In order that other people who were visually impaired could understand the pictures with their sense of touch, he stuck coloured papers on the lines and the shapes that he drew. I was interested in the way he presented objects viewed from different angles. His drawing was original.

The Calligraphy Ink Art Workshop was held for three days at the community center in Niiza, which is near the West side of Tokyo. The instructor, Kouhei Okamoto, was a Japanese calligraphy artist who taught at Kumazawa Design Institute. He assisted the participants to draw lines freely, without traditional techniques and forms. For materials, there were brushes, including ones handmade from plants and ropes that participants brought, three principal water colours (red, yellow and blue), calligraphy ink, and calligraphy rice paper.

The Calligraphy Ink Art Workshop was held in a large room. There were two large black felt desk pads placed on the floor. Most participants drew lines freely on papers placed on top of the pad. Some participants continued drawing beyond the edge of the papers, or over and over the same line until the paper tore. Some participants, who were in wheelchairs, drew on the long desk. Other participants helped them

manipulate the materials. I also helped a female participant in a wheelchair; assisting her by washing brushes, putting colours in the pots, putting the brush into her mouth and holding papers. She only used short quick movements to put colours on the papers with a handmade brush constructed from weeds. Each time when she applied the colours, she moved her neck and head. She represented her ideas and feelings by using all her energy through this art activity. I felt her strong spirit through both her art making process and art pieces.

Besides doing the ink art individually, there was a collaborative activity in which the participants expressed their own ideas on large pieces of calligraphy rice papers. To block their vision and take them beyond it, they put on eye masks. When a participant drew on the paper, the others watched and helped him/her. In this way, the participants were able to see, be aware of and respect others' original expressions.

The Dance Workshop was held in a gym or a hall of the community center in Tokyo for three days and five days. We invited the dance workshop leader, Wolfgang Stange from Britain, twice a year for ten years. His dance company, Amici, established in 1980, is best known as an integrated company of dancers and musicians, staging the work of able and disabled choreographers in Britain. They received the Digital Award in 1990 (Community Development Foundations, 1992). The Dance Workshop was so popular; most of the participants were regulars. There were usually forty participants; divided half and half between children and adults. The dance workshop leader did not teach the principal techniques of dance, but rather lead the participants to create their own dances. As well, he started the workshop by having the participants noticing each others' movements and copying these movements in order to recognize each other. He

led the participants to expand their movement gradually, working in small groups. He used different kinds of music, Japanese traditional, Spanish and opera, and different kinds of materials, such as masks, scarves, ribbons and fans. At the end of each session, he allowed the participants to lie down to recall their expressions and thoughts.

The Music Workshop was held in a large space of community center in Tokyo in sessions of three or four days. Each year, different music instructors came from various countries. Their instructions allowed the participants to create music through collaborative work with their own voices and hands, and with instruments. For instance, the participants sang or clapped their hands while others listened to them closely. After recognizing each voice and claps, they gradually created music, developing a collaborative work.

Most of the instructors of the workshops of the Summer Art School did not give technical instructions, rather they assisted the participants to express their own ideas and to create their artwork through collaborative activities.

Canada

The Spiral Garden is one of the community arts projects held in Canada. I observed the project in July 2000, for two weeks, through the participation of my son, Makoto.

The Spiral Garden workshops are held every summer, from July to August, in the garden at the Blooview-MacMillian Centre in Toronto. Each art workshop session lasts for two weeks. Participants include children who live at the center, as well as

their siblings. These children are disabled and non-disabled from the neighborhood community, as well as groups of children coming for specialized care programs: the Day Patient Program, the Cyberkids and Supper Bears' camp. The children are between five and twelve years old. There are about seventy children per day. Community members are also involved as volunteers and staff, including adolescents (Fountain of Youth,) some of whom were previously participants. The Spiral Garden does its duty to act as a bridge back into the community for some of these children:

One of the driving forces behind the creation of the Garden was the desire to create a place where children who had special needs and had to be cared for in a pediatric institution could interact with children from the local community. In recent years, with the move of all in-patients to the Bloorview site, keeping a balance of special needs and able-bodied children has become more and more of a challenge. (Spiral Garden Annual Report, 1999, p.9)

The Spiral Garden provides people with a space to work together, a factor that is important in order to build a community.

Building community and working as a team...each child (adult) has both the sense of being valued as an individual as well as belonging to the whole, we have put many supports in place. (Spiral Garden Annual Report, 1999, p.11)

The concept of the Spiral Garden is as follows:

We celebrate their interdependence with the natural world as a context for healing our children, ourselves and the earth...Through arts activities and gardening in a natural setting, the children are enabled to share their spirit of creativity and compassion. They

come to understand and recognize nature and their place in this world. Different aspects of all people — physical, emotional, spiritual, rational and intuitive — are integrated into the process.
(p.2)

Through arts activities, gardening and playing, the children explore their ideas and understand nature in a free atmosphere where they are able to choose the activities they wish and to move on freely one after another. Stories are used to bring these elements together.

According to Goldberg (1997),

Much of education involves the telling and creating of stories of our global culture. Stories are told through the spoken word, artwork, music, dance, poetry—all these languages are essential as they transmit culture both within various cultures and to people outside of the culture. It is when we begin to tell other people's stories that we must take the utmost care and respect so that our actions adequately reflect the complexities to the culture. (p.12)

Through the creation and the telling of on-going stories, the participants are able to understand and recognize their own place in the world, in different cultures, and in the natural world surrounding them.

For instance, one of the past projects, the children made a boat to send to the sister program in Sri Lanka. They brought things that they wanted to put in the boat. One girl brought a pencil, and the organizer, Jan MacKie told her that it would be a good idea as most children in Sri Lanka do not have pencils. The girl was very surprised, as if she could not imagine the issue as most children in North America can

easily get pencils. At this time, she learned about a world different from hers. Through learning new things, the children become aware that there is more for them to learn. Their curiosity is developed by what they experience (Holt, 1967).

In another example, according to Jan MacKie, there was a boy who asked to a blind participant, "Can you see my artwork?" The blind boy said, "No, I can not see it." The boy asked him, "You can see me, can't you?" The blind boy then said, "No, I can not see you." The boy could not believe that there were some people who were not able to see anything. So Jan covered his eyes with her hands and told him, "You see, this is his situation. He can not see anything." The boy then understood that his world was different from the boy's.

Also, I was very fascinated when two children in wheelchairs were given a chance to express their ideas and creativity in the Spiral Garden. They told their stories at the festival as part of one of the activities. They told their stories by using their bodies and imaginations. They dramatically narrated the stories that they had created in the garden — with rhythmical voices and incorporating crow puppets that they had made with papers during the activities. As well, their work was co-operative. I found that their stories and explanations were very creative — they were not simply following instructions but rather exploring their ideas, imaginations and words by using bodies that they were only able to move consciously. I felt their passion to express their ideas and imaginations through their powerful voices and their dramatic movements. From them, all the participants were able to share and learn of different ways.

Spiral Garden's staff's warm-hearted reactions made children comfortable

and encouraged them to explore their ideas and imaginations. For instance, during the activity of singing and playing instruments, Makoto took off his shoes, socks and hat and put them on a doll that he found somewhere. He put his shoes on the doll's wrong feet, as he usually does on his own. So I whispered to him, "This doll put on shoes like you because the shoes are on the wrong feet." He then corrected them, stood and went to show the doll to staff members, Jan and the facilitator. I wanted him to follow the others at that moment and was worried that the staff would not approve of his actions. However, the staff said, "It is a good idea," and laughed. I was surprised by their reaction because in Japan, teachers often interrupt their students when they are out of place. I found that the staffs' positive responses were wonderful for Makoto.

In another instance, there was one girl who asked Jan what she had to do next during every activity. Jan told her that she did not have to ask, as she always does well. After getting used to working without asking Jan, the child could make her artwork by herself. According to her mother, she always felt a failure at her school as she was dyslexic. However, she was very creative. Jan encouraged the girl to create her artwork by herself, and drew out her ideas by gazing upon her warmheartedly.

These community arts projects in Japan and Canada might provoke people to consider the value of arts activities involving the whole community as vital in our lives. In other words, certain art education programs should be provided to train professionals, such as artists and educators, in order to develop better teaching methods in community setting.

My Project:

the “Art of Japanese Calligraphy Workshops” integrating diverse people

Purpose

In order to examine my teaching methods in community arts projects integrating people of diverse cultures, ages and abilities, I held the “Art of Japanese Calligraphy Workshops.” Its purpose was to assist these participants in communicating with each other through collaborative art activities.

Participants’ profile

The participants were diverse people. Since the workshops were held in the early afternoon, I could not involve as many children as I wished. I also did not expect the participants to be present at all the sessions, because as it often happens in community settings, participants begin attending and later withdraw, while new ones might begin attending later in the sessions. In fact, this did happen, as attendance fluctuated.

Identification of the participants is as follows (Table A, p.23):

A is a staff member of L’Atelier d’Artisanat du Centre-Ville. Of the five participants with various disabilities, B, C and D are students in the programs offered by L’Atelier d’Artisanat du Centre-Ville. The Atelier does not ask questions about their problems since they have inclusive policy to accept all people who feel the need to be there. E, who has been in rehabilitation under medical treatment following an accident, takes private lessons in the art of Japanese calligraphy once a week at my home as a

compliment to the treatment. J, who was recently assessed with Attention Deficit Disorder, a neurological syndrome, was one of my classmates in the Masters program. The following are participants without disabilities: two participants, F and G, are Japanese females. The former is my friend and the latter is a student at Concordia University. H and K are children: H is my son and K is E's grandson.

Table A

Participants' Descriptions

<i>Participant</i>	<i>Age</i>	<i>Sex</i>	<i>Origin</i>	<i>Relation to workshop</i>
A	50's	F	French Canadian	Staff member of the Atelier
B	30's	F	French Canadian	Student of the Atelier (Specialty—Stained glass)
C	50's	F	French Canadian	Student of the Atelier (Specialty—Textiles)
D	40's	M	Haitian Canadian	Student of the Atelier (Specialty—Textiles and jewelry)
E	40's	F	French Canadian	Independent student of Japanese and Roman alphabet Calligraphy
F	30's	F	Japanese	Workshop leader's friend
G	20's	F	Japanese	Student of Concordia University
H	5	M	Japanese	Workshop leader's son (Kindergarten)
J	50's	F	Anglo Canadian	Concordia student with disability
K	3	M	French Canadian	E's grandson

Setting

L'Atelier d'Artisanat du Centre-Ville assists people with various disabilities, both physical and psychological, to learn craft and marketing techniques and to be integrated in society through art: dyeing cloth, making textile goods, stained glass, creating jewelry and accessories from different materials, dressmaking and leatherwork. The participants are able to get some income by selling their artwork in its shop as well.

There are various reasons why I chose L'Atelier d'Artisanat du Centre-Ville for my project. One of the reasons is that I wanted to involve participants with various disabilities; secondly, it was easy to access the Atelier because of its central location in Montreal; third, the coordinator was pleased to accept my project and offered her cooperation; fourth, it was an important place for helping people by promoting their art in the community.

To run the workshops, I was offered the recreation room of L'Atelier d'Artisanat du Centre-Ville Inc. in Montreal by its coordinator. I held the Art of Japanese Calligraphy Workshops for three sessions on Friday afternoons from 1:30 to 3:30 on March 30, April 6 and April 20, 2001.

In the recreation room there were four round tables, an electric piano, bookshelves and a large window. The participants used all the tables and gathered around them as they liked. Water was available from the washrooms which were next door to the recreation room.

Procedure

To introduce the sessions, I explained to the participants how they would be able to express themselves with calligraphy using different natural materials. I presented some examples. Then they practiced letters individually before making collaborative artworks. As a break between the individual and collaborative art-making activities, I allowed them to express themselves through a different art form: dance. At the end, they presented their artworks to others, explaining what they did and how they did them.

Materials

For the workshops, I mostly chose organic materials and avoided inorganic chemical materials. I also selected materials that relate to my artwork. In the first and second sessions, I chose three pieces of large paper for the collaborative artworks. My current interest is creating symbolic meanings by using Japanese calligraphy, papers and painting pigments. My idea and identity is expressed on three square pieces of elegantly decorated Japanese papers ("shikishi"). The three images create one set: three is a lucky number in Japan.

For the workshops, I chose to introduce a similar task for the participants in their sessions. In two sessions, I gave them (as a group) three pieces of large paper for a collaborative artwork based on their identity (Session 1) and the natural environment (Session 2). In the third session, I provided each participant with a paper for another collaborative artwork dealing with the natural environment by using ideas of other sessions.

I prepared the materials for each session as follows:

First session

- examples of my and a student's calligraphy artworks
- Japanese calligraphy brushes
- Japanese painting brushes
- black water colour
- newspapers
- papers for the calligraphy practice
- three pieces of large white handmade paper containing pressed natural objects
- dried leaves: red and green maple leaves, and flowers
- scrap papers
- coloured and patterned Japanese handmade papers
- coloured Origami papers
- water: to cut Japanese papers
- scissors
- two sorts of pastes
- recycled yogurt containers for the pigments
- music tape of Japanese instrument “Shamisen”
- a stick with long Japanese calligraphy paper tape
- two white Japanese fans

Second session

- examples of my and a student' calligraphy artworks
- Japanese calligraphy brushes
- Japanese painting brushes
- black water colour
- Japanese painting two sorts of gold pigment
- newspapers
- papers for the calligraphy practice
- three pieces of large black handmade paper
- dried leaves: red and green maple leaves, and flowers
- scrap papers
- coloured and patterned Japanese handmade papers
- coloured Origami papers
- water: to cut Japanese papers
- scissors
- two sorts of pastes
- recycled yogurt containers for the pigments
- music tape of Japanese various instruments
- a Japanese traditional paper umbrella
- two white Japanese fans

Third session

—Japanese calligraphy brushes

- Japanese painting brushes**
- black water colour**
- Japanese painting two sorts of gold pigment**
- newspapers**
- papers for the calligraphy practice**
- a piece of coloured handmade paper for each**
- dried leaves: red and green maple leaves, and flowers**
- scrap papers**
- coloured and patterned Japanese handmade papers**
- coloured Origami papers**
- water: to cut Japanese papers**
- scissors**
- two sorts of pastes**
- recycled yogurt containers for the pigments**
- music tape of Japanese various instruments**
- a Japanese traditional paper umbrella**
- two white Japanese fans**
- a stick with long Japanese calligraphy paper tape**

Description

The activities of the three sessions, March 30, April 6 and 20, 2001, can be seen in the videotape of the workshops.

First session (March 30):

Presentation of participants' identities with their names.

This session was aimed at recreating the participants' names both in the Roman alphabet and Japanese letters. This was done by making collage artwork on three pieces of large white handmade papers with black ink.

Explaining with some examples

I talked to the participants in French and in Japanese, since most participants understood French and some preferred Japanese. Before starting the workshop, I explained to them the purpose of my project and got their agreement to document it. I also explained that I would like them to express their own ideas to make a collaborative artwork and that I would work with them as an assistant. I told them that I would sometimes be a facilitator rather than a teacher. I would give them some ideas to expand their own ideas and techniques.

I suggested to the participants how to use their own imagination to create and transform their names in the Roman alphabet, or Japanese letters, "Hiragana" or "Kanji": "Kanji are picture-like symbols." (Trudie, 1997). Using some examples, I gave them some ideas to create and transform the letters into their artwork.

As examples, I showed some Japanese calligraphy that a student and I did,

using such Kanji, as “水 (mizu): water” and “風 (kaze): wind.” I wrote “water”: with wavy lines like a river and “wind” with some quick written lines. I demonstrated how writing the Kanji was they different from usual written forms. As another idea, I showed the participants a student's representation. In a lesson of the “Art of Japanese Calligraphy Workshop”, she had used her imagination to create and transform the Kanji “雲 (kumo): cloud” by using black paper and white water colour. She applied the white colour by using the point of the brush gradually. It was drawing rather than writing: she worked not with one conscious line but with a number of variegated lines. She also used the colour blue for inside the letter. She had flown in her friend's airplane the day before, and had looked down at the spreading clouds. She used this experience to create “cloud.”

As another example, I presented my current artwork. I made three triptychs that showed the year of the snake. In each series, I hid the letters of the Japanese word “snake”: “へび (hebi),” “巳 and み (mi),” as well as the first English letter of “snake,” “S,” and hid three snakes in each series for good luck. In Japanese culture, the snake has symbolic importance: it is associated with the Japanese Venus, one of the seven gods of good luck, love and beauty (Garis, 1949). Many stories about snakes have been told in different parts of Japan, often involving women changing into snakes to accomplish positive things. I made simple representation of the snake, but included significant meanings.

In one of the triptychs, I referred myself, since I was born in the year of the snake. I “wrote” a big line to represent an initial of my first name, “M,” which also “巳 (mi),” means “snake” in Japanese. I did it abstractly in order to provoke people's

imagination about what it was. Nobody recognized the image as the snake. Rather, people thought that it was a river or a road. To represent another snake, I folded gold Japanese paper, shaping “巳 (mi)” in the second triptych. The third one, I cut a gold whirlpool pattern out of ribbon and put it beside my signature.

In another set composed of three squares placed vertically one on top of the other, I presented the snake from a story that tells of a girl's passionate love. The girl became a snake that came out of the lake, took her lover and went up into the sky. This snake was created using the first letter of the English word “snake” as a big line coming out from the bottom of the lake. For the lake, I used blue Japanese transparent paper and hid one of the Japanese letter “ひ (bi)” in its shape. For another snake, I folded Japanese paper shaping “み (mi)” and stuck it under the lake. I explained these letters to the participants by indicating them in the shapes.

In the third triptych, I strongly represented a female snake as a symbol of women's position in the twenty first century. I used red snakeskin patterned Japanese paper for the female snake, and black patterned paper for the male snake. The images representing women are more extensively rendered because I presented them as a feminist comment. I also integrated the letters of “へび (hebi)” in the shape of the snakes and I explained to the participants how I did it. As a part of “ひ (bi),” I combined “み (mi)” and “巳 (mi).” I demonstrated the technique I used.

Individual work

I explained to the participants that they would be able to use some of the ideas presented in the examples. I asked them to write their name in the Roman alphabet,

then demonstrated how to write their name in Japanese using two alphabets, “Kanji” for the first letter of their name and “Hiragana” for the rest, I then provided papers for them to practice. B wanted to use a different name than her real name, therefore I wrote down her the name in “Hiragana” and the first letter of the name in “Kanji.” C asked, “May I mix both the Roman alphabet and Japanese letters?” J responded in my stead, “Yes, you can do as you like.” I walked around to see their work as it progressed. When some participants asked me how to do something, I explained it to them through demonstrations. Mostly, I told them about the points that I liked in their work.

Most participants held their brushes as they held pencils. The Japanese participants F and G, and my regular student E held the brushes differently. When J asked me how to hold the brush and how she should start and end the line, I explained it to her through demonstration. I also explained to the other participants that the brush is usually held by the thumb, the forefinger and the middle finger, while other fingers are used as support. When painting a stroke, the beginning and the ending points should be held still for a few seconds. The participants should move their arms rather than their wrists to write freely.

The following is a description of each participant’s expression and creativity.

A was taught how to write her name in “Kanji” by E whose name was the same as hers.

B practiced the letter “田(ta)” sometimes holding up the paper on which she was writing up rather than putting it on the table.

C wrote her name by using her left hand. I found she used the brush smoothly since she moved her arms rather than her wrists, so the writing was fluid.

D wrote his name in an interesting way by placing the letters in a different order.

For A, I wrote the first letter of her name in “Kanji” differently from E’s as I thought that it was a better way to distinguish between them. However, she preferred the same as E. I found that it was better to let the participants help each other.

F worked quietly. Her way of combining her name in “Kanji” and “Hiragana” was very creative. She placed the symbols in a different order that was very unique.

G was busily helped my son. She helped him change papers for his practice and talked with him gently. She also practiced combining her name in “Kanji” differently.

My son also wrote his name in “Hiragana” by himself without example. When he made a mistake in writing a letter of his name, he said, “I can fix it,” and drew an apple by using the letter. When he makes mistakes and gets upset, I often tell him, “I am a specialist at fixing things” and help him through changing them to other things, such as pictures. It was wonderful that he did it himself without letting it upset him this time. I found he was doing well whenever he came or called me over to show me his calligraphy writing. When he had written his name, G’s name and my name, he started to play the piano while other participants continued the activity.

I provided two pieces of the Japanese calligraphy paper for each person in order for the participants to write their name and keep them as artwork.

Performing: a break

In the middle of the workshop, I included a five-minute performance art in

order to give the participants a break and encourage them to concentrate on the next activity. I allowed the participants to experiment with music, and movement using fans and a stick. At first, my son and I played and danced with the materials: my son held fans and I held a stick with a long Japanese paper tape. It was a co-operative dance: he fanned the tape on the stick that I flourished. I then passed the stick to another participant. My son also passed the fans on after dancing with another person. In this way, all participants were able to express themselves through performing dance. While some participants were performing, others looked at them and enjoyed it. According to Mofina (2000, September 1), physical activities such as sports and dance, help to keep workers healthy. In other words, we are able to keep ourselves healthy by moving our bodies.

Collaborative work

After I prepared three pieces of large paper on two round connected tables, I asked the participants to write their names on the paper where they liked.

I was impressed that the participants started to work immediately. B started: the others followed. They wrote their name using "Hiragana," and the first letter with "Kanji". They had no problem deciding where and how they would work. After they wrote their names, they started doing collage with different papers and dried leaves and flowers. While my son was making his letters, he asked, "Does this artwork belong to all participants?" G said, "Yes, it does." I recognized that, for him, it was the first collaborative art making experience with different kinds of people.

This is what each participant did to express his or her own creativity.

A wrote her name horizontally three times and vertically once over wrapping.

She only used "Hiragana," although she also practiced writing her name in "Kanji."

B started to write "田 (ta)" on the seam of two papers without hesitating.

C wrote her name twice; one was in the Roman alphabet and another one in "Hiragana."

D wrote the three letters of his name in a triangle, and decorated his name colourfully with mainly red papers

E wrote her name in "Kanji" and decorated it with different papers, some of them scrap papers that she brought. She was familiar with artwork that combines letters with collage. She also wrote her name twice, in Japanese and in the Roman alphabet calligraphy; decorating her name with "Kanji," and with collage.

F wrote her name in "Kanji" and "Hiragana" and decorated it mainly with pink Japanese papers and dried leaves.

Although G was busy helping my son, she created the first letter of her name with "Kanji" and decorated it with papers. Parts of it were written in black and others were written with cut-out papers.

J wrote the first letter of her name with "Kanji," two parts separately placed on two pieces of paper. She then put crushed dried leaves on the letter. J encouraged B to decorate her letter by talking about the meaning of the letter, since B did not know what she should do after writing first letter of her name. B then had some ideas, and put green and Japanese handmade papers inside the letter to represent rice seeding. She also shapes to represent created water blowing into the rice field.

Most of the participants were standing, and decorated only around their own names. They sometimes looked at their own work and the work of others while they

were creating their letters. They sometimes talked with others, but infrequently. At the end of the session, we put the collaborative artwork on the floor and looked at it. The participants explained how they had created their names. I presented the work of those who had left early.

Second session (April 6): presentation of their natural environment

The purpose of this session was to represent a natural environment on three pieces of large, black handmade paper by writing “Kanji” with gold.

Explaining with some examples

By writing examples of “水 (mizu): water,” “風 (kaze): wind,” “雷 (kaminari): thunder,” “雨 (ame): rain” and “雪 (yuki): snow,” and having my regular student demonstrate “雲 (kumo): cloud,” I presented some new ideas to the participants.

Individual work

First, I let the participants choose a word that relates to the natural environment. I asked them to watch as I wrote the word in “Kanji” for each of them. My objective was to demonstrate the basic techniques of Japanese calligraphy. A chose “木 (ki): tree.” B chose “河 (kawa): large river.” C chose “花 (hana): flower.” D chose “家 (ie): house.” E chose “星 (hoshi): star.” K chose “雨 (ame): rain.” H chose “空 (sora): sky” and “山 (yama): mountain.” Each time when I wrote in “Kanji,” they were impressed that the letters presented significant meanings.

When I wrote “雨 (ame): rain” for the participant K who was three years old,

he said, "It is not rain." His grandmother E explained to him that it was written in Japanese. I found that his reaction showed his honest impression. The boy had already presented his idea of rain by using his imagination on the paper after seeing the examples that I had presented.

When the participants practiced the letters, I found that most of them wrote in the wrong order. Therefore, I added numbers beside each line to indicate the usual order for each. To write Japanese letters in order — the characters in "Hiragana," and "Katakana," and "Kanji" — order is very important if they are to be written smoothly. However, I did not say anything whenever the participants wrote in a different order, since the purpose of the workshop focused on their creativity and on their own expression rather than on the technique.

The participants concentrated on copying the examples. K also practiced with his example "雨 (ame): rain." D drew flowers as her letter "花 (hana): flower."

Performing: a break

In this session, I brought a black, traditional Japanese paper umbrella that I had decorated with gold Japanese pigment and papers.

While the participants practiced, as a surprise, I let two children, H and K, perform holding the umbrella and fans. I played Japanese music on cassette players. H held the umbrella and K held the fans. I did not explain to K how to dance, however he danced with H co-operatively. The participants stopped their practice and joined in this activity one after another, as they had during the previous session. K liked the umbrella so much he did not want to stop performing with it. He enjoyed dancing with

the umbrella which he opened and closed

While I prepared materials for the collaborative artwork, the participants went to get their drinks.

Collaborative work

After I prepared three pieces of large black paper on two connected round tables, I introduced the gold Japanese pigments; the participants started to write their name wherever they liked.

I explained to the participants how to prepare the pigments. They must be mixed with a certain melted animal protein and gold powder on a dish by using the middle finger. Demonstrating the technique, I prepared two gold pigments: red and green gold. I also prepared blue and green pigments. The participants started to write the letters and decorate after E began. They again had no problem deciding where and how they would work which was the same as during the first session.

A created a gold tree in “木 (ki): tree” using only gold materials. She put the gold thread on the tree that she brought. She represented the leaves with thin gold wrapping paper that she brought.

Only B used the blue Japanese pigment. She wrote “河 (kawa): large river” and drew wavy lines like a river’s with the pigment.

C wrote “花 (hana): flower,” and drew lots of flowers surrounding the letter. She decorated with gold thread and papers. She also put rounded gold paper as a moon beside the flowers.

D wrote “家 (ie): house” and collaged on the letter with different coloured

papers. He also drew a rectangle fence around the house.

E started to write the letter “星 (hoshi): star” in the Latin alphabet by using the pen. The others wrote the letters after her starting. She mixed calligraphy Roman alphabet and Japanese, as she had in the first session.

K also wrote “雨 (ame): rain.” He enjoyed drawing with gold pigment and decorating with Japanese decorated paper. He sometimes drew while explaining what his images represented. I helped K apply the gold and took him to choose papers. He found the brush with the gold pigment by saying “This is a magic brush.”

H wrote “空 (sora): sky” and represented stars and a moon with gold paper. He also wrote “山(yama) :mountain” and drew small mountains inside the word.

In this session, most participants brought some gold coloured materials for collage. They got some ideas when I explained to them that they would use gold Japanese pigments and black papers at the end of the first session. I was impressed that participant A and the students of the atelier brought thin threads of their textile work. E also brought different materials, such as the materials of the Latin alphabet calligraphy, and different kinds of papers and scrap things.

Third session (April 20): presentation of their natural environment 2

This session had this objective: participants were to present the significant meaning or a letter of a name, or to use a symbol from the natural environment, through collaboration. Each participant wrote a letter on the paper that he or she chose. Others then added pigments and papers, each addition developing the significant

images. I told the participants to do as they wished, and explained that they could express their own ideas in different materials.

Individual work

Although I expected the participants to write the letter that they had already done during the last two sessions, most of them chose other letters. Therefore, I wrote the examples for them. They then practiced the letters.

A wrote “月(tsuki): moon,” B wrote “田(ta): a rice field,” C wrote “風(kaze): wind,” D wrote “あ(a): the first letter of Thank you,” E wrote “心(kokoro): heart,” F wrote “菜の花(nanohana):rape blossoms,” G wrote “夜(yoru): night.” H combined several letters “も(mo), こ(ko) and し(shi).” J wrote “岩(iwa): rock.”

Performing: a break

This session also included the performing dance as a break. The participants, H and J started to dance to the Japanese background music. H held the umbrella. J held the stick with a long Japanese paper tape, and I held the fans. As in previous sessions, they passed the materials to others, and others danced with them one after the other

Collaborative work

Each participant wrote the letter on the paper that they chose. After writing the letter, all participants passed their papers to another person. Each participant then added his or her own idea to the others' presentation by pigments, papers and other

materials. They then passed the work to others, one after the other. Until they had all added to the work.

A wrote “月: moon” adding one horizontal line inside character. B wrote small “田: a rice field” and “巳(mi): snake.” C wrote “風: wind” smoothly. D wrote “あ(a): the first letter of Thank you,” it was the same letter as the first letter of his name, and “月: moon,” which he copied from his neighbor A. E wrote “心(kokoro): heart” which she had already done, F wrote “菜の花(nanohana):rape blossoms,” G wrote “夜(yoru): night,” without practice, H combined several letters “も (mo), こ (ko) and し (shi)” and explained it to me. J wrote “岩(iwa): rock” since she collects stones and rocks.

Most of the participants worked, standing up. When they got another paper, they looked, thinking for a while, and then started to draw or collage on it. Each time, they asked others what significance their presentation had, and others explained. When they had already done one, they asked other participants if they had finished and exchanged with them.

Participants' Opinions

Each participants' opinion was expressed in response to the following questions:

- What did you learn through the workshop?
- What did you learn through collaboration?
- Did you express your own idea in the workshop? In what ways did it assist you to express your own ideas?
- How did you find the relationship between you and the workshop leader?
- What did you think of the workshop integrating diverse people? Did you get benefits? What kinds of benefits did you get?

A was impressed that “Kanji” were like pictures: the form of “木(ki): tree” is like a tree. Through collaborative work in the third session, she said that she was able to write more freely since she had to get her ideas immediately in order to pass the papers on to another person in a short time. She was working with the materials for the first time, the brushes especially gave her different ideas. Even though the children were young, they worked very well and she could not see any difference in quality between their work and that of the adult participants.

B found that most of the materials were natural. That helped her to present the significant meanings of the letters from the natural environment. The Japanese letters “Kanji” helped her to present the significant meanings as an idea. She found it was not easy to present the significance, however she was interested in doing it.

C was able to be open in exploring her ideas and “found herself” through the

workshop. She learned other ways of expressing herself through other participants. The materials, such as the calligraphy brushes, the gold Japanese pigment and handmade papers gave her pleasure when creating her images. She described many ways to create. She thought that all participants would continue to improve in expressing their own ideas if the sessions continued. During collaborative work in the third session, she did not need too much concentration, so she enjoyed doing it more. The performing break also gave the participants another occasion to express themselves through another art form.

D liked to work in collaboration. He was able to befriend others and learned through them. At the beginning, he wondered if he would be able to do the activities, however, he enjoyed doing them and did them well.

E explored her ideas fully through the activities. She found that all participants could express themselves without competition. Through collaborative work in the third session, the participants were able to connect with others like a chain.

F found that she was able to expand her ideas through collaboration with diverse people, especially with people with disabilities. When she saw the collage that the participants with disabilities were doing freely and creatively, she was able to break her fixed ideas and be more creative. She was surprised that others had enough concentration to work: most of the participants did not stop practicing their names in Japanese. She found that performing dance in the middle of the workshop provided the participants with an opportunity to express themselves differently. She was impressed that everyone expressed himself/herself using his/her own ideas and that

every presentation was original. Although I did not explain to her in Japanese, she was able to understand what to do next through the examples and others' activities. Therefore, she was aware that she was able to communicate with others through the collaborative art activity, and learned through others' expressions and ideas. She was absent at the second session, so she was able to see differences between the first and the third session. The atmosphere was different in that the participants were more familiar with each other in the third session.

G was able to expand her limited ideas through others. She enjoyed doing the activities since she was able to use her imagination and express her ideas freely. She found that the art teachers in Japanese schools usually gave too much instruction, so she could never follow her inspiration. In contrast, I told the participants "Do as you want," so she was pleased to express her ideas.

J liked the materials that contribute to her creativity. Through the examples, she was able to understand what to do and was inspired to try. Everyone was able to respect each expression without competition. She would have liked to learn Japanese calligraphy techniques further since she believed that she might write the letters more smoothly and expand her ideas if she knew them better. Through communicating with others, she was able to put on paper what she imagined.

In summary, most of them found that they were able to express their own ideas and learn through others. The materials also helped them to be creative. Through work with different people, they were able to learn to respect each other. They found all participants concentrated with and enjoyed the activities. The performance gave them a break and another occasion to be expressive. It was an innovative idea for

them. They were impressed that the children also participated in the activities and did well. Most of the participants presented their artworks to others.

Analysis

In this analysis, I discuss four aspects of the documentation of the “Art of Japanese Calligraphy Workshop” and the participants’ opinions. First, I discuss the integration of different people. Second, I discuss my teaching method focused on creativity of personal expression. Third, I discuss collaboration. Finally, I discuss the role of art in our lives.

Integrating different people in the community

I found that the participants were able to recognize and respect each other. All of them expressed themselves using their own ideas and every presentation was unique. There was no problem integrating different people in the workshop, and they were able to get new ideas through the others.

Arutyunyan (1978) believes that:

Integration is the dominant theme in mankind’s present cultural development. The growth of ethnic communities, the formation of large nations, the development of communication among nations, the fall of religious and other barriers — all these promote a steady, if difficult, process of integration of the peoples of the world. (p.79)

Art provokes people to be aware of and respect differences. The recognition of differences is important not only in art education but in all areas. In my opinion, when people are aware of and respect differences, thoughts and beliefs in general might change.

My teaching method focused on creativity of personal expression

I will discuss my teaching method which focused on creativity of personal expression in five sections: Japanese calligraphy as an idea, examples, materials, demonstration and respect.

Japanese calligraphy as an idea

This workshop's name, the "Art of Japanese Calligraphy Workshop," indicates it mixed calligraphy and art; these are rarely combined in Japan. Japanese calligraphy is usually taught using only the basic techniques. Beginning students in Japanese calligraphy usually are required to follow the textbooks or scripts that instructors prepare. When I taught in Japan, I used vermillion ink liberally to correct the forms in students' Japanese calligraphy writings: the beginning and the end of lines, brushing off, splashes and points. I did this because the purpose of the instruction is to teach students to imitate masters' works. Many Japanese learn Japanese calligraphy as a hobby to get grades step by step: there are more than thirty grades, and the students practice a lot. Paying attention to detail, they gradually move to a higher grade. It takes more than five years to reach the a highest grade. In contrast to this tradition, this workshop used Japanese calligraphy as an idea in expressing the participants' individual ideas in their artworks.

Examples

The examples of my artworks gave the participants some ideas about how to use Japanese letters for their own purposes. The participants were able to present

their ideas with Japanese letters “Kanji” or “Hiragana.” At the same time the examples influenced their ideas. For instance, participant B used “巳(mi): snake” that I had used in my artworks and presented as examples in the first session. Although I did not write the example for her, she kept it in her mind and used it in order to present her ideas. As another example, the participant F combined her name in “Kanji” or “Hiragana” very creatively.

Materials

The materials also helped the participants express their own ideas. The participants enjoyed using the materials that I prepared. I selected the materials that I knew well and had used in my artworks. I had usually selected the materials carefully for my artworks, so I did the same thing for the workshops. Also the materials sometimes help me to get ideas. I thought that the participants also would be able to get some ideas through materials.

Demonstration

The demonstration helped the participants understand the basic techniques of Japanese calligraphy. Since it was not purpose of the workshop to learn the techniques, I did not insist the participants use them. However, I presented the techniques through demonstration. I noticed that some participants attempted to use the techniques. For instance, the participant B imitated even the way of writing on the paper by holding the paper without putting it on the table. I had also learned the techniques through my instructor’s demonstration. My instructor always placed

written scripts in front of me and demonstrated techniques. In my opinion, demonstration of techniques is important to help students to extend their ideas in art form. Goldberg (1997) considers a balance of technique and creativity:

By focusing on the act of creating rather than the judgment of a product, the teacher can encourage students to be imaginative and create an atmosphere in which a desire to create — that is, to see things in new ways and explore complexities — is celebrated. On the other hand, technique enables one to create more easily. (p.54)

Respect and trust

I respect and trust my students. I believe that I learn many things from them. Abbas Kiarostamim, an Iranian filmmaker — who made many films focused on children and recently makes woman's films, said that he always asks a child to help when he is not able to solve a problem (2000, September 1). In my opinion, this respect and trust is very important between a teacher and a student.

Zerubavel (1994) mentions that:

Only in relation to the fine mental lines do sentiments such as fidelity, loyalty, or patriotism, for example, evolve, only in relation to them do we learn whom we can trust and of whom we should beware...and whom we must avoid. (p.14)

There is a good example of the relationship between a teacher and a student. In her exhibition catalogue, a Japanese painter, Tamako Kataoka, narrated her relationship with her master at the beginning of her carrier. When she was discouraged to continue painting since her artwork had been rejected from an

exhibition for seven years, her master, Kokei Kobayashi, encouraged her by saying "Although your artwork is considered as odd by other, ...you should keep your idea and style by turning a deaf ear" (Kataoka Tamako Executive Committee, 1987). His respect and trust guided her to become one of the best, great Japanese painters.

It is unfortunate that some teachers do not respect children's originality. Schafer (1982) considers that "many people have their artistic sensibilities killed in the school system by insensitive teachers who tell them they are not artistic because they can't draw, act or hold a tune"(p.6).

In my opinion, the role of artist-educators in community arts programs and projects is to assist people to express their own ideas. The artists should share with the participants their knowledge about materials and techniques without hindering the participants' creativity.

Collaboration

Through the collaborative works, the participants were able to recognize and respect each other. In having two sorts of collaboration, I found that different benefits were achieved. Through collaborative work in the third session, the participants were more able to communicate with each other than they were in the first and second sessions. In the third session, the participants added to each artwork after having others' additions passed on to them on to each other. In this way, they were able to look at, think and talk about others' ideas with others while they were all doing the activities together. In contrast, in the first and second sessions, they worked more

individually to make collaborative artworks. In these sessions, they did not participate directly with others since they respected each other's workspaces. However, through both approaches, the participants were able to recognize and respect each individual's idea.

I believe that people are able to be aware of, and help, each other through collaborative work. There are successful collaborative artworks by two Japanese painters. In a NHK broadcasting program, a Japanese painting painter, Iki Maruki, who painted many series of "A-bomb in Hiroshima" works with his wife, oil painter Toshi Maruki, said that when working together, they let each others' strengths determine how they composed the artwork together, since they respected each other. Iki knew more about black ink and Toshi drew human figures better, so Toshi did most of the drawing of the human figures and Iki put the black ink on her drawings (2000, March 5). Through respecting and helping each other, they presented the dreadfulness of an atomic bomb. Their collaborative artworks show strong criticisms of the war that impressed people throughout the world.

As the participant F mentioned, that the atmosphere between the participants became gradually changed from the first to the third session. In the first session, the participants still hesitated to communicate with others. However in the second and third session, they were able to communicate with others. Through the videotape, it was obvious that by the third session, their expressions were cheerful and delighted during the activities.

The role of art in our lives

Through documenting the workshops, it was clear that the art activities promoted the participants' communication with others and that they enjoyed their time together. Chalmers (1971) mentions the role of art by which:

Literature about art is examined for clues to the general process of cultural integration and change. An attempt is made to see how art relates to the social order in a causal functional manner. The authors of the literature reviewed indicate that art, directly and indirectly, may bolster the morale of groups to create unity and social solidarity. As used by dissident groups art may create awareness of social issues. (p.53)

The participants in these workshops did experience what Chalmers describes as the art activities strengthened the connection among them.

Conclusion

I believe that my research on this subject is valuable in order to develop teaching methods in community arts programs and projects integrating various cultures. This research would also provide an influence on other subjects, such as teaching attitude and methodology. For future educators, this research may serve to verify the benefits of community arts programs and projects. My hope that this research presents a model of how to organize and to teach in community arts programs and projects. Owen (1984) emphasizes that the development of community arts requires a professional approach to train staff: managers, workshop leaders and volunteers. He also stresses that programs should be practical and socially directed. Arts in Community Building Indicators Partnership (2001, March 16) also indicates the needs of social relevance of arts:

There is strong sentiment, among people who are supporters of the arts, that the arts are valuable. Nevertheless, with the exception of research on the impact of the arts on school performance and economic development, there is very little empirical research that clearly links forms of cultural participation with other specific desirable social outcomes, particularly at the neighborhood level.

Art education is not something that should only be found in institutions, it should also be applied in society as a tool for learning and development. It is also used as a way to encourage people to communicate by guiding the expression of their ideas. In this way, they are able to learn many things by themselves and with others in the community. By expressing our own ideas and experiencing pleasure through art, we are able to find meaning in life and to gain vitality.

Most studies of community arts have been conducted in Britain; my research might help to expand this area of investigation. Owen (1984) argues that the history and activities of community arts have been neither documented nor investigated. Owen's hope is that his investigation will contribute to discussions concerning the specific contributions the community arts movement has made and might make in the future to improve all people's lives and to make society better.

My hope is that this thesis research will provoke people to consider the value of arts in our lives and its role in developing a healthier community. My research shows that well-conceived community arts programs and projects can benefit the whole of society. Also, I believe that art helps people to communicate with others from various cultures. Through their involvement in art, people learn to recognize and respect differences. Smith (1996) mentions that:

The possibility of aesthetic experience providing an ideal for human life resides in its special ability to integrate and harmonize complexity, which is to say to synthesize means and ends into a seamless unity. (p. 47)

Through community arts, these benefits can be offered to the whole community and people will see that art is essential and a part of our every day lives.

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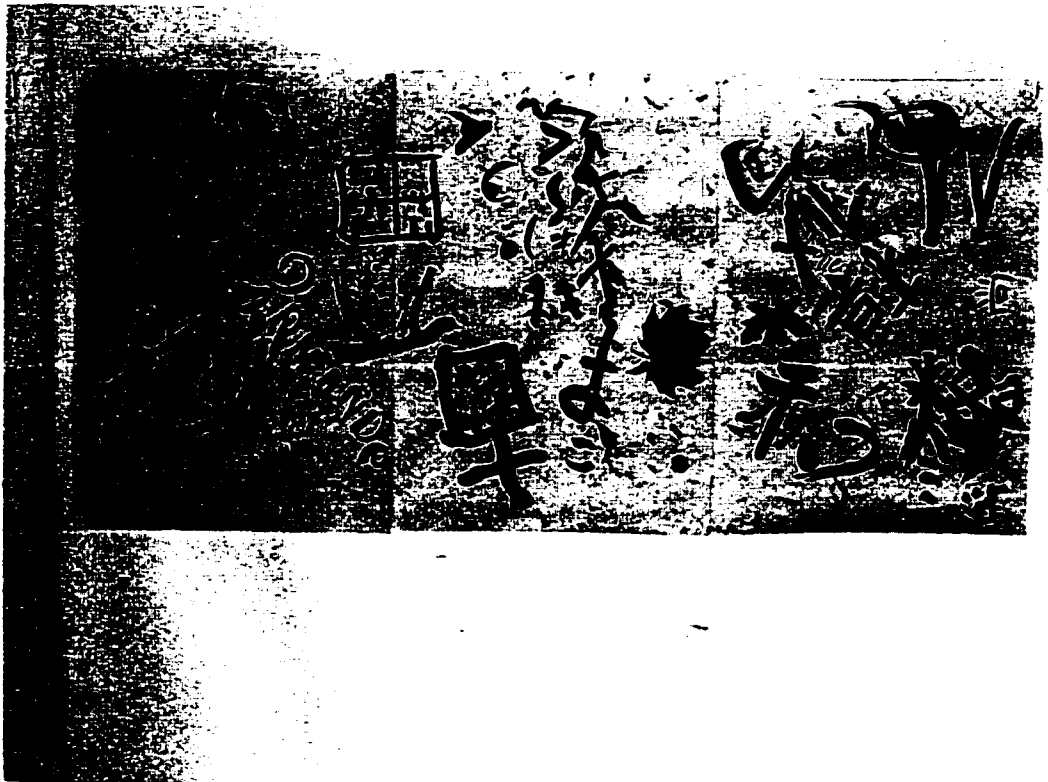


Fig. 1. Collaborative Art Work
First session: recreating participants' names

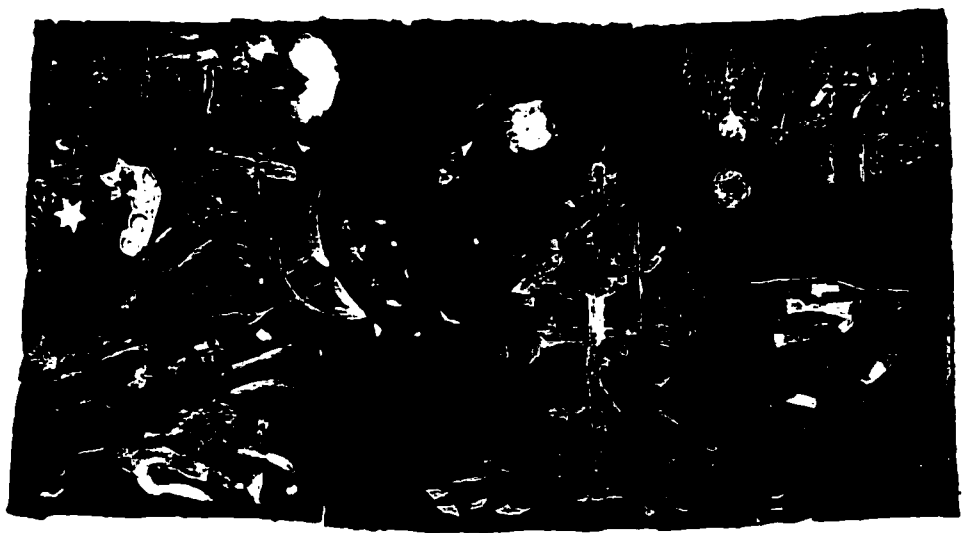


Fig. 2. Collaborative Art Work
Second session: presenting natural environment



Fig. 3. Collaborative Art Work
Second session: presenting natural environment 2
月(tsuki): moon

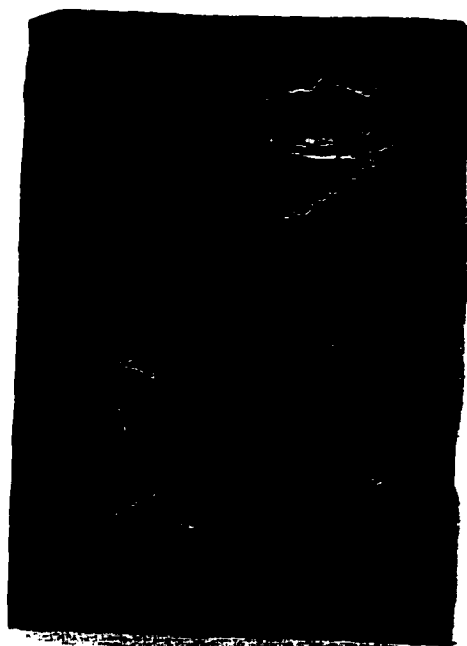


Fig. 4. Collaborative Art Work
Second session: presenting natural environment 2
巳(mi): snake and 田(ta): a rice field



Fig. 5. Collaborative Art Work
Second session: presenting natural environment 2
風(kaze): wind

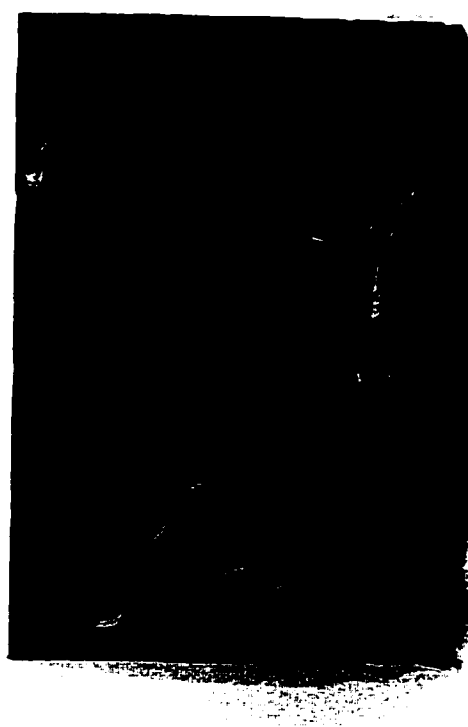


Fig. 6. Collaborative Art Work
Second session: presenting natural environment 2
あ(a): the first letter of Thank you



Fig. 7. Collaborative Art Work
Second session: presenting natural environment 2
心(kokoro): heart

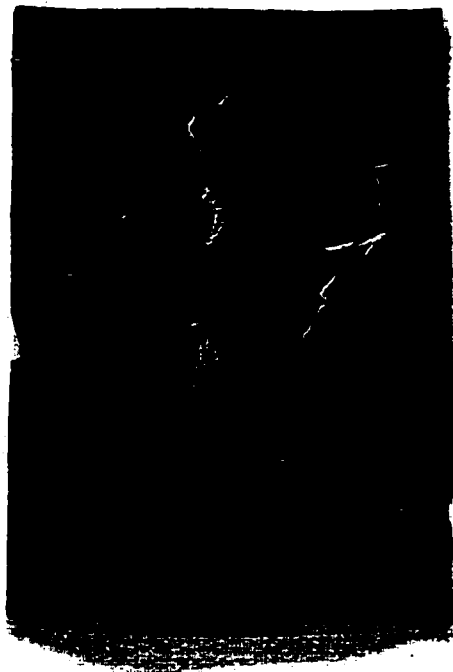


Fig. 8. Collaborative Art Work
Second session: presenting natural environment 2
菜の花(nanohana): rape blossoms



Fig. 9. Collaborative Art Work
Second session: presenting natural environment 2
夜(yoru): night



Fig. 10. Collaborative Art Work
Second session: presenting natural environment 2
も(mo), こ(ko) and し(shi):
combination of several letters



Fig. 11. Collaborative Art Work
Second session: presenting natural environment 2
岩(iwa): rock

CONSENT FORM TO PARTICIPATE IN A RESEARCH

This is to state that I agree to participate in a project of research being conducted by Misako Okuyama as a part of her research "Community Arts Projects: integrating people through collaborative work" under the supervision of Dr. Elizabeth J. Sacca of Art Education at Concordia University.

A. PURPOSE

I have been informed that the purpose of the research is as follows:

In what ways can the workshop leaders assist diverse people to communicate each other through collaborative work?

B. PROCEDURES

The Art of Japanese Calligraphy Workshop will be documented at L'Atelier d'Artisanat du Centre-Ville Inc. from the end of March to the beginning of April. It will be documented by using a digital video camera: a Sony Handicam. The participants will be interviewed with prepared questions. In order to have participants' confidence, the researcher will explain to them how she will document, use and analyze the information, and discuss it with them. Afterward, she will present them with her research through the videotape and research papers.

C. CONDITIONS OF PARTICIPATION

- 1) I understand that I am free to withdraw my consent and discontinue my participation at anytime without negative consequences.
- 2) I understand that my participation in this study is **CONFIDENTIAL**: the researcher will know, but will not disclose my identity.
- 3) I understand that the data from this study may be published.
- 4) I understand the purpose of this study and know that there is no hidden motive of which I have not been informed.

I have carefully studied the above and understand this agreement. I freely consent and agree to participate in this research.

NAME (please print) _____

SIGNATURE _____

DATE _____