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TEACHING ART TO HANDICAPPED CHILDREN

Sophie Ackerman-Landau

A Thesis  
in  
The Faculty  
of  
Fine Arts

Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements  
for the degree of Master of Arts at  
Concordia University  
Montréal, Quebec, Canada

November 1978

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ABSTRACT

Teaching Art to Handicapped Children

(Account of Teaching Art to Handicapped,  
with a Methodology Adapted to  
Various Types of Handicaps)

Sophie (nee Ackerman) Landau  
Concordia University, 1978

The thesis discusses first hand experiences in teaching art to deaf and physically handicapped children. The teaching environment, the kinds of problems encountered and the children are discussed. The thesis demonstrates the methodologies and pedagogical approaches employed in teaching art to exceptional children. Text is illustrated with the art work of the children.

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To Remy Landau, with love, gratitude and  
appreciation for helping me make this work possible,  
and to my children who made it almost impossible--  
but necessary.

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I would like to express my thanks to Professor Leah Sherman, my advisor, for her guidance and encouragement; Michael Seary for kindly agreeing to be my outside reader, as well as offering his help and suggestions on my rough draft. Especially, I would like to thank Remy Landau for his painstaking editing, and constant encouragement in my work. Most of all to the children and staff of Mackay Centre for Deaf and Crippled Children in Montreal, who were the source of this work.

September, 1978.

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FOREWORD

The distance of time does strange things to facts. The significance of past events takes on new perspectives. While some experiences intensify, others become hazy and dim. Although several years have passed since I worked at the Mackay Centre for Deaf and Crippled Children, it is still hard to feel that I have left:



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We are after all artists--each of us--even though we may not be great talents and by trying a few simple projects we can discover that art is indeed for everyone.

--Seary, Michael  
"Here Comes The Art Man"  
(Unpublished Manuscript  
pg. 2)

"In the Beginning..."

My appointment to the Mackay Centre for Deaf and Crippled Children was a chance event. On a whim, I telephoned them to inquire whether they needed the services of an art teacher.

I had no previous experience working with deaf and crippled children. All I could then offer was one year of art teacher training in elementary schools, some volunteer work with children in a low income area, and the teaching of arts and crafts in a variety of summer camps.

I was initially apprehensive. The orientation session at the start of the school year included tours of the facilities, some rather brief descriptions of the children, and what can be best described as a quickie course in finger spelling.

All this left me with no real idea of what I was to do, to say, or even to communicate. Nor was any feel provided for what could be expected of the children, and what it was that they could accomplish.

Description of the Building and Facilities

The Centre is housed in a modern building designed specifically for deaf and crippled children. The deaf children are accommodated in rooms which contain transmitters at the receiving frequency of their hearing aids. This allows the children not only to pick up sounds from a particular teacher, but also from record players and tape recorders. Further, the school's emergency alarm system is at such a frequency, that it physically vibrates the body when released.

The building incorporates specially designed ramps, elevators, bathrooms and desks, for the crippled children. Physio and occupational therapy facilities are included, as well as medical facilities with a full time staff.

Additionally the school is equipped with a large gymnasium, home economics and sewing areas, art room, music room, woodworking shop, weaving and vocational training rooms. Facilities for auditory testing and training are also housed in the building.

While the centre provides a cafeteria service to all its students, it maintains a special residence for some eighty children who live out of town.

In spite of its highly specialized nature the school building is far from being rigid or depressing. It is large and bright. Each classroom was designed with a wall of win-

dows, shelves, sinks, and special bathrooms to meet the needs of the crippled children. Such attention to overall detail has helped provide the school with an atmosphere of friendliness.<sup>1</sup>

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1. See John K. McMichael, "Handicap", for comparison of building facilities in another residential school. (pg. 22-23).

Overview of the Curriculum at Mackay

In spite of the specialized nature of the Centre, every attempt is made to provide as normal a school curriculum as possible. In addition to these requirements, the crippled children receive occupational and physio therapy, while the deaf children are given speech and auditory training.

The academic program ranges over the disciplines usually provided in regular school. The brighter children are grouped into an "A" stream. This will provide them with the training required to complete C E G E P or university entrance examinations.

The "B" stream consists of children who are better suited to vocational training. About the age of fourteen more time will be devoted in preparing this group to develop vocational skills such as bookbinding, sewing, typing, weaving, sorting, or packaging.

As a result of physical and perceptual handicaps experienced by the children, much of the teaching is done in small groups. This permits for more intensive individual attention in relation to a child's particular physical, and consequently, learning disability.

A child with a physical handicap is a child "at risk" from the emotional point of view. He is, because of his handicap, "different" from ordinary children. Most parents and children are aware of the need to be like everyone else; a need which is especially strong in one's school years. ...to have something wrong-- the very expression, so commonly used, implies some guilt or blame. 2

General Description of the Children  
at Mackay Centre

The four hundred children attending Mackay Centre are from four to nineteen years of age, although a few may be older. Their infirmities may range from loss of hearing to advanced stages of Muscular Dystrophy.\*

The children's intellectual abilities span an equally broad range. This variation can be from explicit mental retardation to average and above average intellectual ability.

While many of the children are quite mobile and capable of caring for themselves, others are so handicapped that they barely show signs of comprehension or even perception of their environment.

Some of the children are hyperactive, others have perceptual difficulties. Many children have recently become physically disabled or brain damaged as a result of road or other accidents.

Some of the children are capable of performing most of the normally expected tasks, others require constant supervision or attention. Some are not even able to hold a pencil, while still others show very little motor control. Children with slight loss of hearing can communicate reasonably well with the hearing world. Those with extensive hearing losses have minimal speech ability and are virtually isola-

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\* See Glossary of Terms

ted from the auditory world.

Each child that is in one way or another handicapped must cope with far more than just a single psychological or emotional problem.<sup>3</sup> They must face a world which does not accommodate infirmity. How accessible is a bus or an escalator to a child confined to a wheelchair? How simple is it to venture even outside the home for such an offhand activity as running an errand? And even if deaf children have great mobility, how in their world of silence can they relate to others who take for granted the very miracle of hearing?<sup>4</sup>

It is important to realize that if bringing up children can often be trying and demanding for the parents, even the simplest physical handicaps can increase the challenge to the affected families.<sup>5</sup> Parents with children confined to a wheelchair must often face the additional burden of patronizing passers by. Well intentioned as such strangers may be, the not too infrequent pressing of a coin into affected child's hand followed by "What is the matter with...", does have negative influences on the parents.

Under such circumstances it is quite difficult to expect parents to enrich their children's lives by exposing them to their environment, by continuous encouragement where needed, by taking them to places normally inaccessible to the children.

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3. McMichael, Handicap, pg. 15.

4. S. Gregory, The Deaf Child and His Family, (John Wiley & Sons, N.Y., 1976), pg. 19.

5. McMichael, Handicap, pgs. 76, 78, 81-2, 89-90, 112.



Although deaf children are not so confined, they cannot communicate in the normally expected patterns. Most have hard to understand minimal speech. A frequent reaction to their sign language conversation is ridicule or gawking by those who have no understanding. Often, attempts by the deaf to communicate with the hearing world are met with ignorant impatience or humiliating assumptions of mental retardation.<sup>6</sup>

It goes without saying that regardless of the child's handicap considerable effort is required by the child's parents to adjust physically and emotionally to the infirmity. As a result it is not surprising to find that many of the handicapped children come from homes with considerable conflict or broken marriages. Thus, many of the children suffer from psychological anxieties additional to those resulting from their infirmities.<sup>7</sup>

In quiet moments I would often reflect over the awesome truths that these children would face. Some would never hear, others would never walk again, some would die before maturing. These were the hard facts that the handicapped children would have to live with and ultimately accept. I could not help project and feel that only a very strong and secure person could rise above a physical infirmity, and ultimately lead a useful and productive life.

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6. S. Gregory, The Deaf Child, pg. 191-3.  
7. op. cit. McMichael, pg. 89-90.

Personal Adjustments

Teaching art to handicapped children required that I had to learn many things and to make many personal adjustments.

The adjustment that I was most reluctant to make was that of physical contact with the children. Seeing some of the children is not a pleasant experience. Some cannot control salivation, while others may be malodorous. There were times when children urinated in the classroom, regurgitated on the floor, or had epileptic seizures.

I had to learn to accept such events as casually as they were just a matter of course. This attitude had to be taken not only for the sake of the child involved, but also for the good of the rest of the class. It took me a while to make this very necessary adjustment.

Pampering the children because of their disabilities was another preconditioned trait which I had to overcome. The children are expected to learn to cope with their handicaps. Therefore helping a child can become a denial of their becoming more independent and self-reliant. Through discussions with other staff members I eventually learned which child needed help while struggling into a chair or picking up something, and which child was avoiding independent action. Although I first sensed an instinctive cruelty in this approach, I eventually was made to realize that greater

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harm would result in denying any child a sense of self-sufficiency.

So a teacher errs if he thinks that a "lesson" is something the shape of which can be finally fixed beforehand, and which is then "taught" to the children who "learn" it. ... Good teaching is the midwife of discovery. 8

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8. Ried, Louis Arnaud, Philosophy and Education (Random House, New York, 1965), pg. 193.

Pedagogical Adjustments

What to do,  
What to say,  
How?

You can't use any paint,  
You can't cut,  
and you can't paste.

What can we do?

You can't lift,  
You can't hear me,  
You can't follow in a sequence,  
You can't move from spot to spot.  
You are much too hyperactive,  
and your fact is just a blank.

What to do,  
What to say?

I think that we will start  
with your name.

Draw it,  
Say it,  
Paste it,  
Play it,  
Cut it,  
Build it  
What you may.  
We will start with your name.

My initial attempts to come to grips with my role as an art teacher in this environment were often based on false assumptions. I felt that because the crippled children could hear I could explain to them the various art lessons. I had been conditioned to accept that much of our art teaching motivation, in this essentially visual sub-

ject, was done verbally.

It was hard to conceive relating to deaf children since I had never before exploited alternative means of communication, and motivation in art teaching. The scope of the challenge that I would be facing in this role was slowly revealing.

The first few weeks of teaching often found me at a loss in coping with the problems that each class of new children introduced. I eventually began to realize that it was not the children's disabilities which so thoroughly interfered with my lesson plans; but rather my preconditioned teaching values.

I had to face the fact that end products could not be a goal of my teaching. Although the children would derive great pleasure in completing something, I also noticed that they derived equal pleasure in learning new tasks. These activities could be anything from mixing green paint, to cutting in a straight line. (see slide #1)

Once I had overcome the "supposed to do" syndrome, lesson planning became less frustrating. I was no longer locked into situations in which no matter how simple the art period, many children could not do it anyway; let alone the problem of just barely grasping the requirement at the end of the art period. The children had now become free to participate according to their abilities.

Coming to this solution required a reassessment of my own teaching values. In a way I feel that my previous experiences had conditioned me to equate children's abilities

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to produce with my own worth as a teacher. I had allowed teaching to become a fulfilment of my own ego, and may have tended also to judge other teachers by the work of their students. Within my preconceived prejudices how was I even to judge myself as anything but a failure if scribbling was all that could be accomplished by the twelve year olds in some of my classes?

My values and expectations had to change if I was to even cope with myself in this environment. I eventually developed lesson plans which made allowances for the different levels of ability within each of my classes.

Each child had to be recognized as individual with both handicap and potential. They had to be names and personalities, rather than faceless bodies in wheelchairs.

Shaping lessons with a knowledge of individual ability and expectation within each class proved to be simpler and more successful. This plan of action also provided more meaningful experiences for both the students and myself as a teacher.

Since classes were small each child could be given individual attention. I knew who could require extra help, who would require extra encouragement. It was possible to make allowances for the pucky and the impish, as well as plan specific roles for the dependable children.



The child and his teacher grow as individuals within the framework of their mutual experience. 9

Art is fun  
Art is pictures,  
Art is seeing,  
Art is looking.

Art is putting things together  
that have never been before,  
Art is seeing a sense of  
beauty in a thing unseen before.

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9. Snow, Ida, Canarsa. Growing With Children Through Art, (Reinhold Book Corp., N.Y., 1968).

Philosophy, Objectives, and  
Challenge of the Art Curriculum

Teaching art to the handicapped would be an expansion and enrichment within the frame of reference to which the children were confined. Realizing that I was neither a therapist, nor a psychologist, art experience would be the primary goal of my curriculum. Further, I would emphasize the development of independence by providing the children with a knowledge of not only the tools they could use, but also of what they could achieve on their own.

Art projects would be outgrowths of what the children had felt and seen, rather than copies of illustrated works. Careful stress would be applied to encourage the children in creating and executing their own designs.

The children's experience in the art room, regardless of their ability, had to be unique, special, and enriching. The children's handicaps could not be used as an excuse for mere doodling and gossip sessions. I felt that my task was to bring them the world of art. Even if the children physically could not do the art work, they could use their eyes, and perhaps be helped to enjoy looking at art. I felt that these children could be taught to realize that looking can provide the sensitivity and ability to perceive the aesthetic levels of an environment.

The stages of a child's development in art have been

well documented. These range from the scribble to representation of the environment and eventually the manipulation of physical reality.\*<sup>10</sup> For innumerable reasons handicapped children either do not pass through these various stages in art, or become arrested in this evolution.<sup>11</sup> As an art teacher, I felt that the children could be helped to either overcome the inhibitions to these various changes, or have the range of art activity enriched and expanded within their level of ability.<sup>12</sup>

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10. Kellogg, Rhoda, Analyzing Children's Art (Palo Alto Nat. Press, 1969), p. 94-112.
  - \* See review of literature on this topic.
  11. R. Guilliford, "Some Neglected Aspects of Ed.", from Teaching the Cerebral Palsied Child, ed. by James Loring (Spastic Society 1965), p. 378.
  12. M. L. Kellmer Pringle, Psychological Needs of Handicapped Children, (Spastic Society, 1965), pg. 53-55.

Motivation

I don't know what to do,  
I don't know how to do it,  
I am bored,  
I am finished.  
I'd rather watch.  
I don't want to do anything anymore;  
Neither do I.  
I'll finish mine next week,  
I have to go upstairs.

Motivation is a strange thing, since I have never resolved in my mind whether I believe in it or not. Ideally, I would like to have all my students self-sufficient to the point that they would not need me. My role in the classroom would be reduced to that of a resource person or advisor, if and when needed. Unfortunately that was not the case. The second most desirable thing was to find things that the children were naturally interested in, and exploit that interest in art.

I presented each art project with a view to its possibilities, rather than the expected end product. As a consequence differing disabilities each group of children required varying emphasis on separate aspects of any given art project.

Deaf children would be shown the possibilities of communicating through their art works. Children confined to wheelchairs would have their tactile experiences expanded.

Slow learners would be significantly encouraged to complete their projects.

One source of motivation came from very simple day to day observation. The children displayed an amazing interest in each other's art works. For this reason I allowed them to decide by themselves which works should be placed on the display board.

Each child was free to choose whether his or her art work should be displayed. It did not matter to me whether the display satisfied a purely egocentric need, or resulted from the sincere feeling of accomplishment. The display boards were made to belong exclusively to the children.

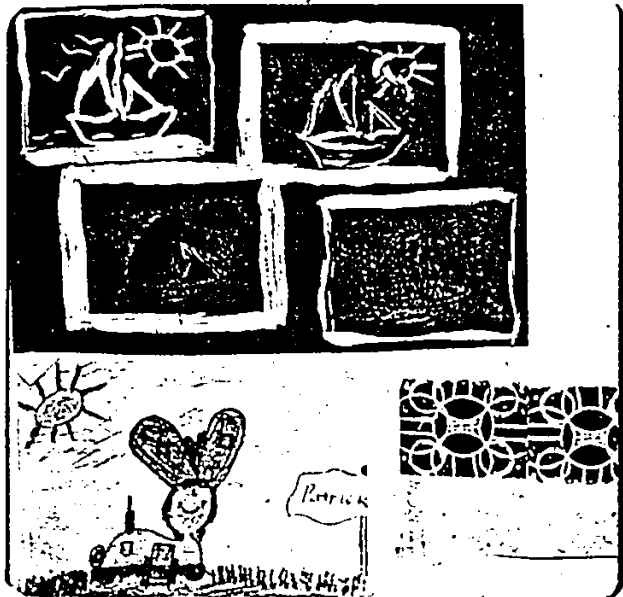
On occasion, I would ask permission from a child to display something he or she had just made. My reasons could range from being genuinely impressed with that child's progress to simply giving that child a much needed moral boost. Sometimes I wished to show various examples of works done in a certain medium.

This method of using the display board proved to be a positive motivating force to the children. The displayed works showed themselves to have greater meaning in explaining various ideas than did the demonstration of works by established artists. As a result, I found these boards a good starting point for many of the art classes. The display material more easily helped to encourage the children and to provide a meaningful basis for the exchange of ideas.<sup>13</sup>

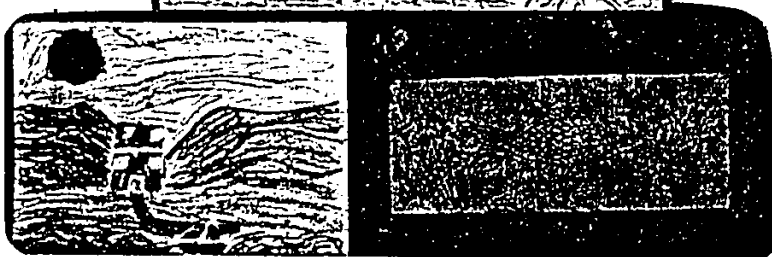
(see slide #283)

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13. M. L. Kellmer Pringle, Psychological Needs of Handicapped Children, (Spastic Society, 1965), pg. 111.



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A surprising side effect of these displays were the other teachers' reactions. In many instances the displays surpassed their initial expectations of the students' capacities. As a result, positive re-evaluation of children's abilities could be made.

I also did not restrict which art works could be taken back by the children. The students were free to either take home their proud possessions, or have those left with me. Children who lived in residence or foster homes often preferred to bring their works to their home rooms, or have them displayed in the art room. Since the children found themselves free to choose the ultimate destination of their art works, and the display boards were used to show not only the best or my personally approved products, all classes felt at ease in producing as best they could, regardless of the level of accomplishment.

Deaf and crippled children are more limited in their experiences, than are normal children.<sup>14</sup> Therefore, I was not able to assume that they had sufficient knowledge of, or had previously seen the subject matter for a given art project. I found that the children had to be sensitized to various topics well in advance of the project's presentation in order to be motivated to participate.

If an art project involved the making of animals, I could not assume that the children were familiar with many

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14. Smith, F.V., Creative Efforts of Handicapped Children, (Spastic Society, 1965), pg. 118.

varieties. As a result I would display numerous photographs of animals in their natural habitats. These pictures were easily found in past issues of National Geographic magazines. In this way the children would gain greater familiarity with the subject matter and be better motivated to proceed in their art projects.

Much of the preliminary motivation was made as visual as possible, so that the various ideas could be better communicated to the deaf children. These presentations also served to expose the children to a wider variety of visual stimulation. Posters of the intended project subject matter would be displayed, and as a result, it would arouse their natural curiosity, leading to an easier appreciation and understanding of the concepts and ideas of that given subject.

Short movies were another good source of material for motivating and sensitizing the children. I would explain the theme and story prior to the film's showing so that the deaf children could better understand the subject matter. The films gave the children both story and appropriate visual stimulation for getting started on such projects as murals, paintings, or drawings.



### Art Program for the Deaf

Deaf children often had the motor skills and the intellectual ability necessary to progress in their art development. Because so much of their communication is accomplished through finger spelling, lip reading, and especially sign language, I felt that it was possible to concentrate on visual expression. I found that through juxtaposition they could be taught how the meaning of objects changed within particular contexts. In this way they were able not only to create but also to understand the significance of their objects in their art work.

Often these projects included collage, masks, drawing of their hands in finger spelling, as well as drawing from a model. (see slides 4-14).

For deaf children too young to have yet grasped finger spelling, lip reading or sign language, art often became the vehicle of communication with others. Through illustration they often succeeded in relating their ideas and stories. As a result, emphasis on visual expression was vital in helping them expand their soundless environment. (see slides #11-14)

Deaf children responded enthusiastically to visual presentations, and I emphasized wide varieties of such materials. Movies, books, magazines, the Reinhold Visual Series and the works of other children or established artists were used as

means of motivation.

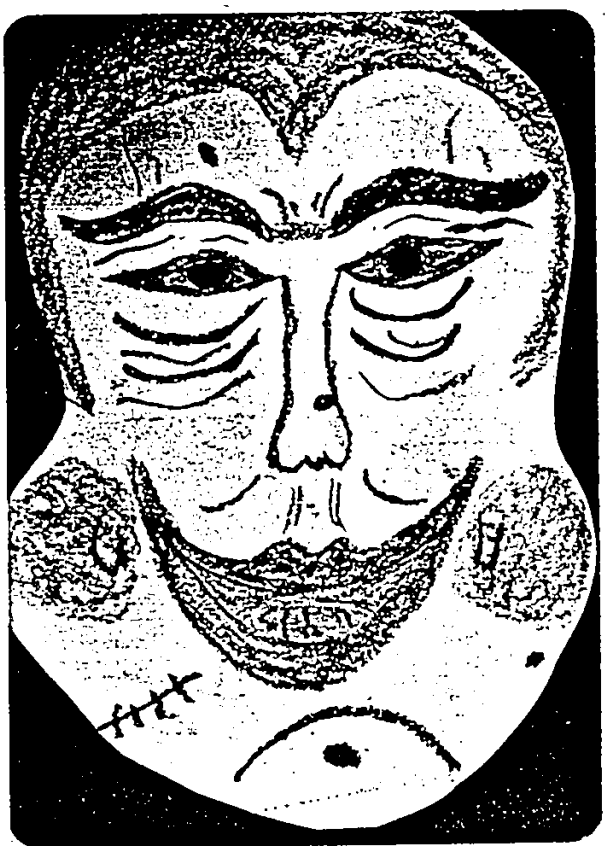
The younger deaf children found greater enjoyment with movies, photographs, and works of their peers. The older pupils preferred studying various ideas in the Reinhold Visuals, looking at art books, and visiting the museums. (see slides 15-19).



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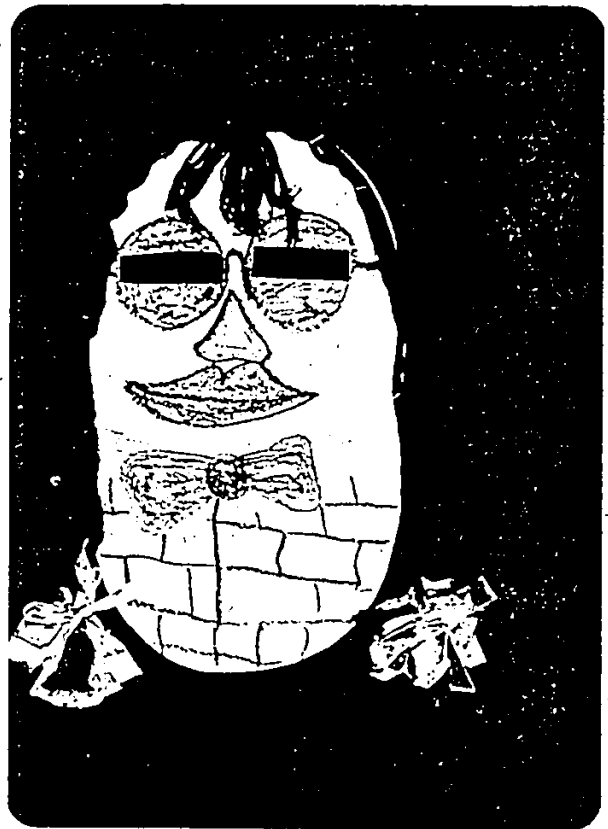


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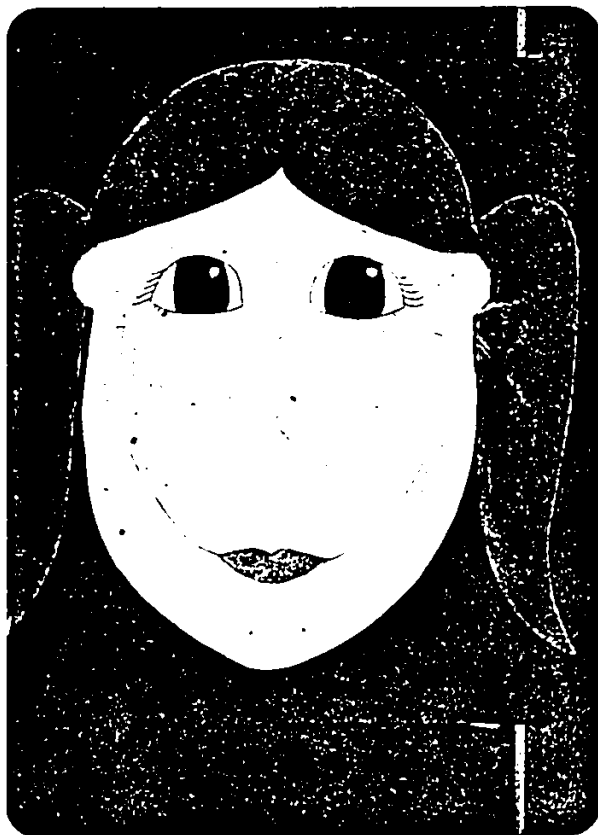




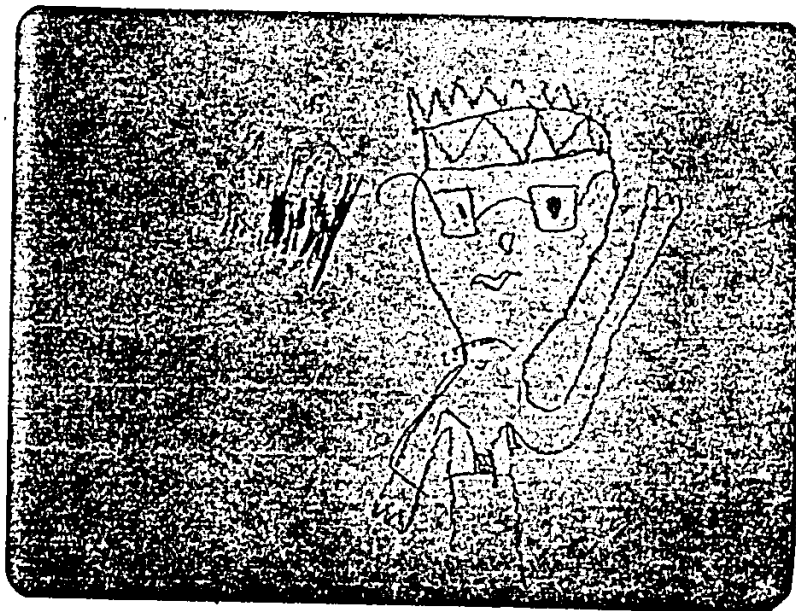
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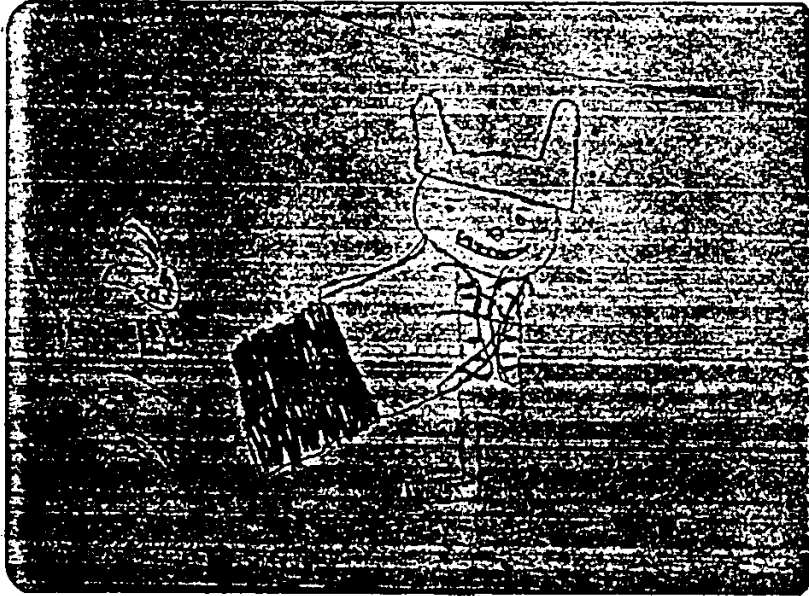
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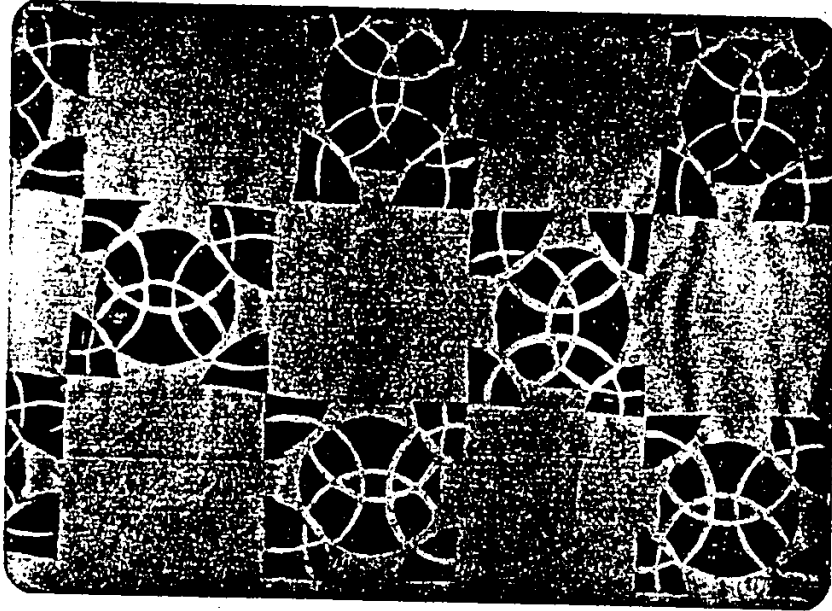


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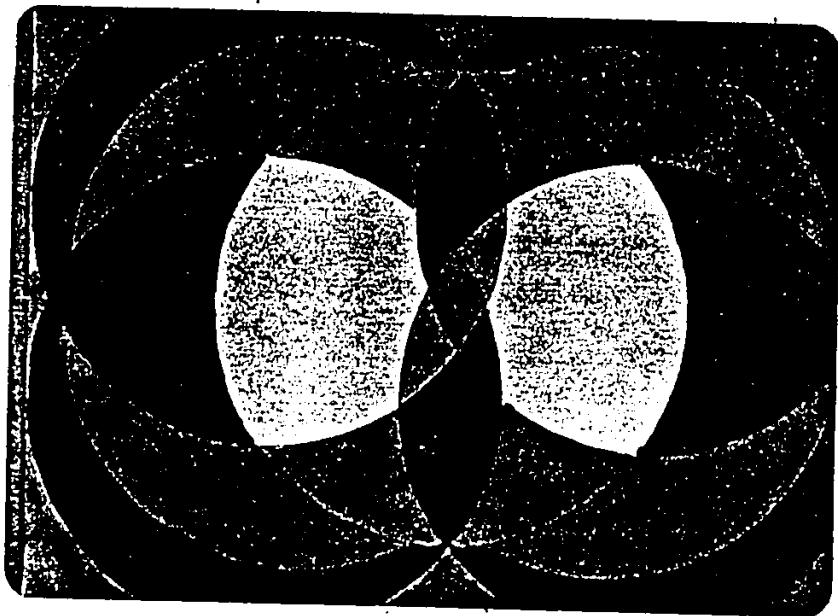


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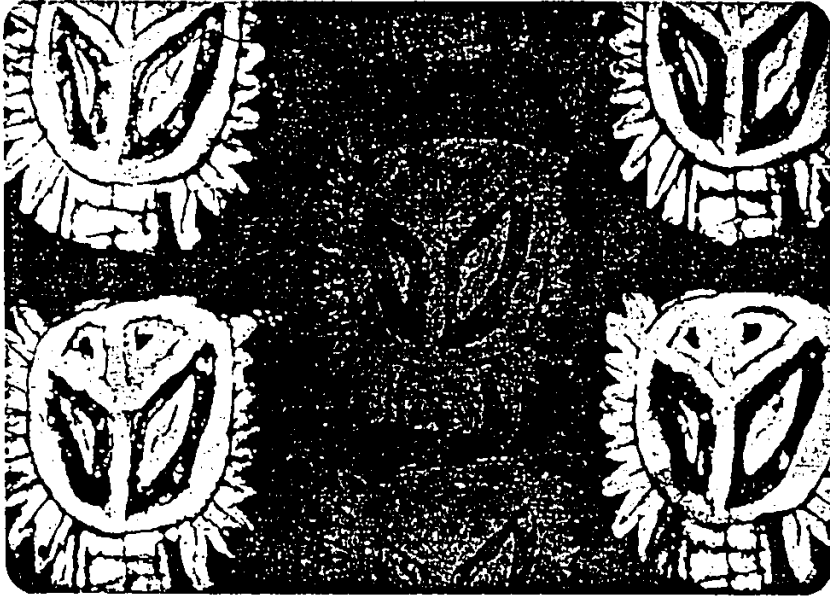
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The ordinary child can move freely about his world, handling a wealth of material and learning to select for his own practical needs. The spastic is unable to do this so we have to bring the world to him. 15

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15. Zaidee Lindsay, Art for Spastics, (Taplinger Publishing Co. Inc., New York, 1966), pg. 38.

Handicapped--Slow Learners--Younger Children

Although some of the children were slow learners, they often showed full control, or slight impairment in the use of their hands. It was possible to continue the general art program but at a slower and lower level, with those under twelve years of age. In this manner these children could be given the time required to absorb new ideas, since they had the essential manual capacity. (see slides 20-22)

Projects had to be introduced very slowly, time given for the children to grasp each new concept, and then a variation or an idea slowly integrated into their previous work. Many of the younger crippled children had little concept of their own bodies.<sup>16</sup> For this reason I arranged to have many of their projects involve the development of body image. One of the projects involved tracing their bodies and filling in various features--according to what they would like to wear or be. Other projects included discussing various body parts, and how they relate to each other in size and placement. In order to grasp the concept of body movements they made marionettes and puppets.

In order to acquire the concept of big and little as related to their body, I told them the story of "Gulliver's Travels"; and asked them to imagine themselves in a similar situation. (see slides 23-26)

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16. Op. cit. Lindsay, Art for Spastics, pg. 21.

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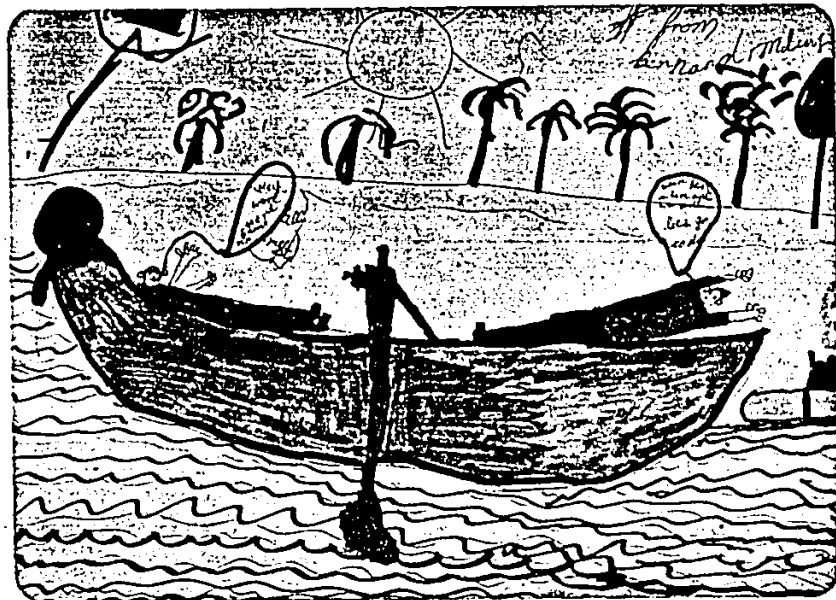
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Since crippled children are usually confined to wheel-chairs or crutches, they have limited opportunity to acquaint themselves with the touch and feel of their surroundings.<sup>17</sup> With this in mind, I designed art projects which could help them expand their experiences with the tactile sense.

Materials and objects of various textures were hung along the classroom walls or tables. These were low enough so as to be reached and handled by the children as they came in and out of the art room. When I felt that the children had become sufficiently sensitized to the various textures relevant art projects were introduced.

At first guessing games were played. Some objects would be placed in a paper bag and blindfolded children would have to determine which were softest, roughest, or hardest. Other games involved naming objects that were hard, soft, or rough. Once they had a concept of texture and a vocabulary to express themselves, they would begin art projects. Some of the projects were texture rubbings, texture collages, and clay modelling.

In spite of the repeated busing to and from school, the children did not seem to be aware of what could be seen along the way. Sights such as stores, shops, or streets were ignored or not remembered. Many children were not even aware of the school's exterior colour. Therefore, I found that art projects based on the sights of their everyday trips were another way of having the crippled children become

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17. Z. Lindsay, Art for Spastics, pg. 21 and pg. 26.

more involved with their environment.

In one such exercise the children were asked to put together a mural or a collage which recalled what they had seen during a bus trip.

Some of the children lacked fine finger control, but were nonetheless able to conceptualize and organize their art work. I found that collage allowed them an ideal medium for full participation in art projects, and made possible the expression of many ideas which drawing and painting inhibited. These children could cut or tear ready made objects for organization on paper. Even if they may have experienced difficulties in cutting or tearing, cutting and tearing paper tended to be easier and less frustrating than drawing or painting.

\* Children in advanced stages of Muscular Dystrophy were better able to work with felt markers and oil pastels. (see slide 27). Paint brushes were often too heavy to hold. The simple act of reaching for paints, mixing paints, cleaning the brushes, were far too difficult and time consuming for them. However, these children also enjoyed working with such mediums as collage, or modelling in soft clay, since these activities involved more use of the wrist and fingers, rather than the harder effort of using arms and elbows.

Severely Handicapped of Normal Intelligence

The level of art development that a child could reach often was limited as the result of intellectual ability, perceptual difficulties, or lack of motor skills.<sup>18</sup> Some of the children who lacked motor skills had the intellectual ability which made possible the exploitation of different kinds of art experiences.

They could be taught art history, and have their critical and aesthetic awareness enlarged. This outlook helped to develop new awareness of art activity.

If these children could not participate in the making of art, or handle the required materials, they could now study art history, read art books, see the pictures and magazine articles relevant to the current art period's subject.

I feel that knowledge of art history enriched the children's lives in at least two important ways. Since they could not participate in the act of making art, they were now able to appreciate the works of others. Those who were able to do so also had the opportunity of preparing for the provincial art examinations. This provided an important and relevant self realization of their ability to do work on a par with normal children in other schools.

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18. Op. cit. F. V. Smith, Spastic Society, pg. 118.

Since these students required additional time for their art studies, lunch hours and study periods were mobilized to this end. The older students from the "A" stream who had normal intelligence and the manual ability attended these sessions. I am very happy to add that they performed just as well as the normal students in the provincial high school leaving art examinations.

Some of the severely handicapped students made every effort to participate in art, at times against overwhelming odds.

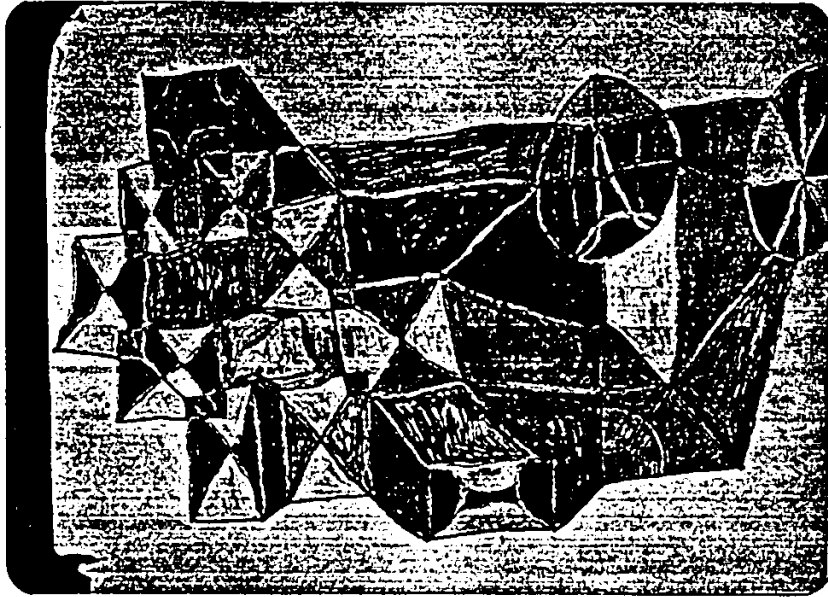
Many of the students suffered from Athetosis or Spasticity, and had to make every effort to hold a brush or pencil in their hand, not to mention carrying out a controlled gesture.<sup>19</sup> Some students had so little control in their hands that they had to have a brush fastened to an attachment on their heads. Often it took several weeks of effort to complete one drawing. When it was finished, it was not only an example of a work of art, but of perseverance and willpower. (see slide 27-29).

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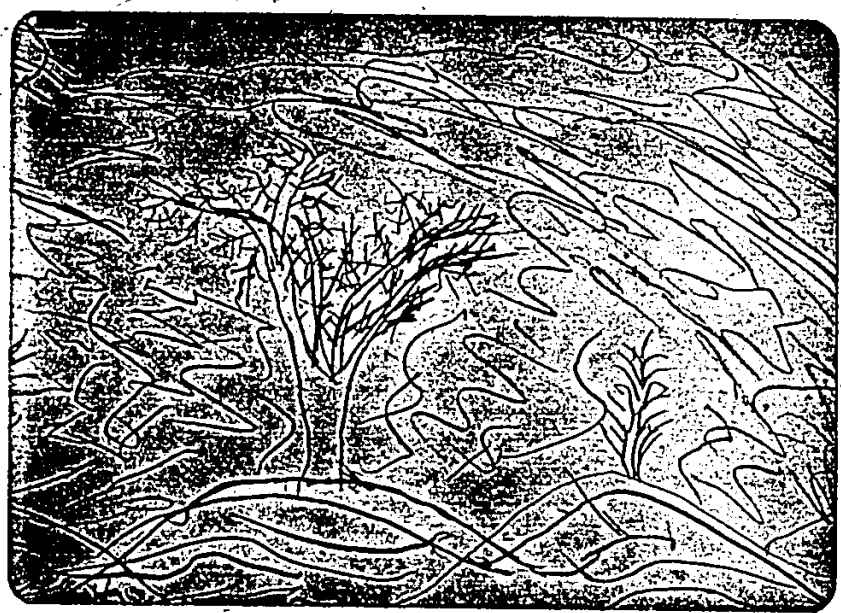
19. Z. Lindsay, Art for Spastics, pg. 21.

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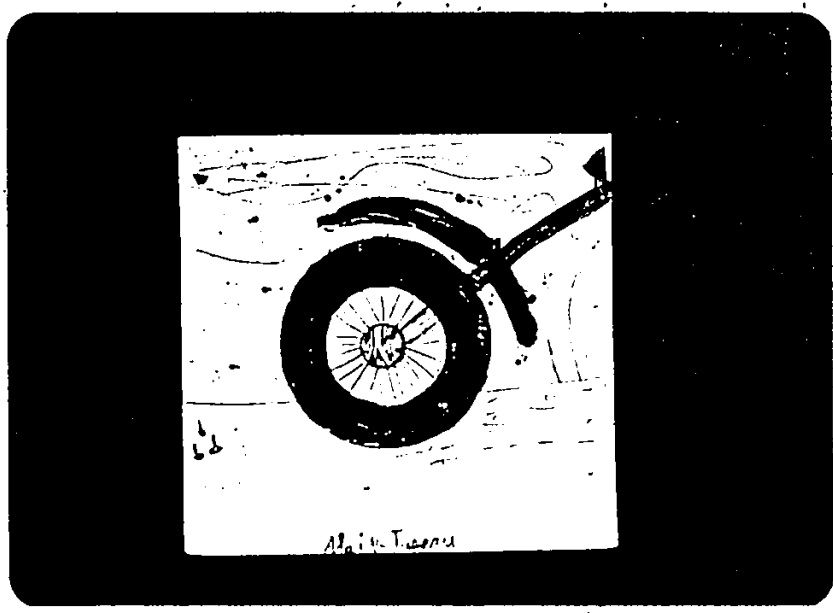
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Handicapped - Older Slow Learners

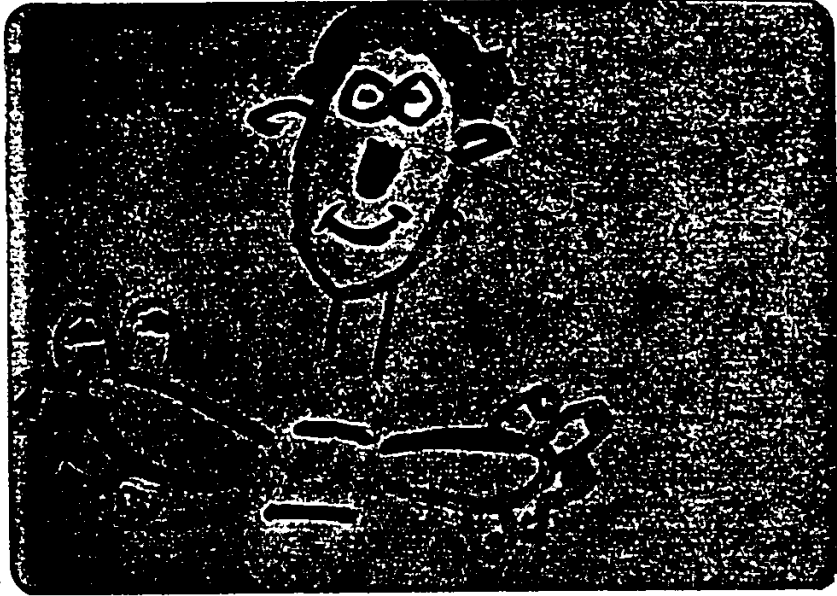
I found that the older groups of slow learners had reached their intellectual capacities. Often this limit corresponded to that of a normal seven or eight year old. Nonetheless they were acutely conscious of the inferiority of their art work.<sup>20</sup> (see slides #30-33)

Since there are countless examples of crafts done by primitive civilizations, I felt that expressing themselves through crafts would help them overcome the basic inhibitions which they displayed toward the more conventional media like painting and drawing. Not only were these children greatly motivated by the examples which were shown, they were also deeply influenced by these crafts. Clay, weaving, tie and dye, simple batique, embroidery, and applique, were some of the crafts included as part of their art work.

The children could express themselves through such crafts. They learned the handling of new materials. They experienced new tasks such as mixing of colours in tie and dye, or designing elements for embroidery, applique and weaving. In many instances these crafts not only provided the children with a finished functional end product which was a result of their effort, but also a highly beneficial sense of accomplishment.

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20. F. V. Smith, Creative Efforts of Handicapped Children, pg. 118.

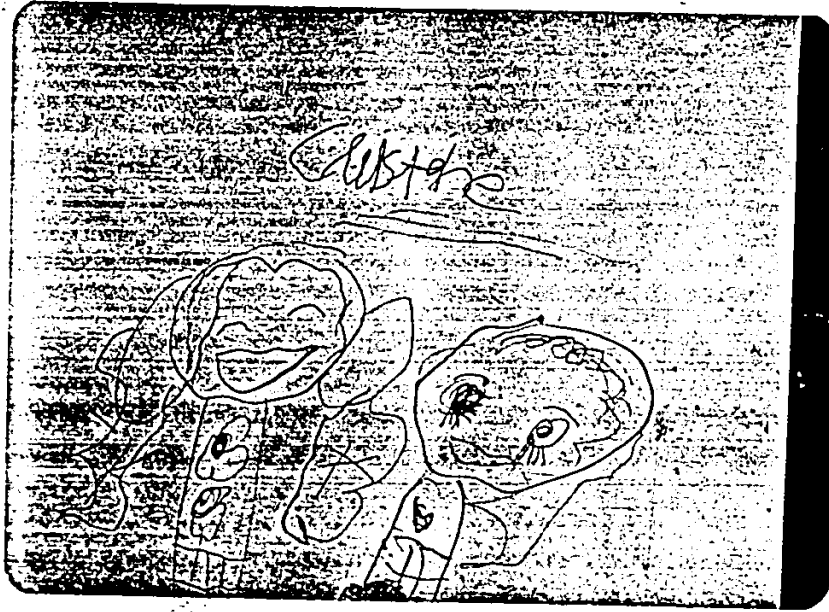


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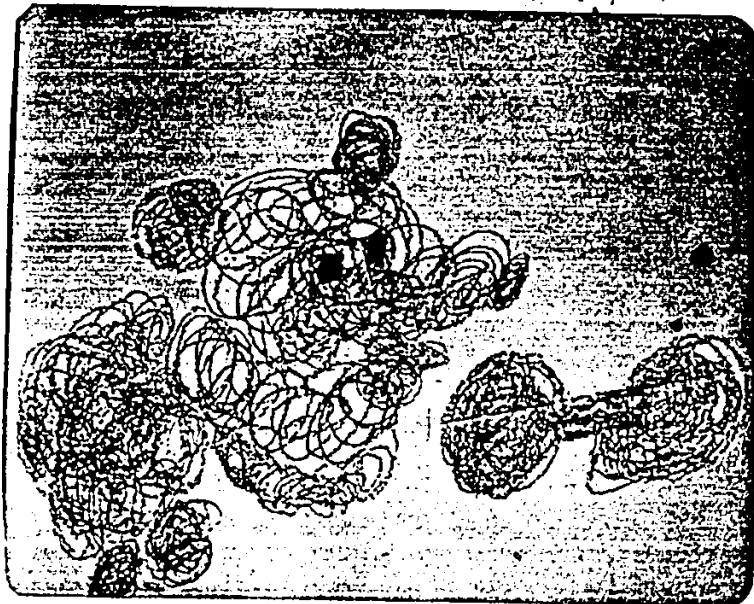


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I feel that it would be misleading to leave the impression that every child, regardless of the handicap, could in one way or another be made to participate in the art lesson. Some of the crippled children had neither speech nor hand control. Hence, they were deprived of some ability of communication. Although they could hear, there was no way in which I could be sure that they understood instructions, since they did not have the ability to communicate feedback. I talked to them trying to communicate an idea, rather than actually have them participate in a project. In cases where there was extensive brain damage, or retardation, even that was impossible. Later on these children were introduced to Bliss--a non-verbal means of communication, using hieroglyphic signs to which the children point, in order to communicate. Frankly I felt that their time would be better spent learning Bliss, or acquiring other basic skills, than in an art room. This recommendation was later implemented.

As many children had a limited exposure to different environments, I decided to make use of the school buses. I was able to arrange frequent visits to the local art museums. Such trips were arranged whenever I felt an exhibit to be unusual, amusing, or interesting, so as to maintain a spirit of both fun and education.

The exhibits viewed included Pre-Columbian clay figurines, Eskimo sculptures, the paintings of Pellan, and contemporary American paintings. Often such visits could be integrated with the classroom art activity. After seeing the works of Pellan the children became involved with mask

making. They became involved with sculpture after a visit to the Eskimo exhibit. An exhibit of art from the Congo led to projects using scrap materials.

I discussed the exhibits before, during, and after the visits, and tried to relate what had been seen to the various levels of the children's understanding. Although the children showed through their art work that they had been influenced in some way by what they had seen, I found that their art projects tended to be natural outgrowths of their visits, rather than mere copies of the exhibited material. To me, the significant aspect was that they had each contacted and extracted ideas and visions from other peoples, other cultures, and other worlds.

### Practical Considerations

Early efforts to have meaningful art activities were at first frustrated by the structure of the school's schedule. Each class was scheduled to a weekly forty minute period. Since no pause existed between the seven daily classes, organizing each period required coordinating the departure of one group, with the simultaneous arrival of another group. Additional time had to be allotted for helping children into their places, distributing the required supplies, explaining the art project, getting the class work started, cleaning up, and then repeat the cycle.

The forty minute periods were well suited to the usually short attention spans of the younger children, or slow learners. However, the allotted time proved inadequate for the older students. They often found themselves interrupted when deeply involved with their work. Since this was an upsetting experience, I enlisted the cooperation of other teachers in solving this problem. Whenever possible, we would exchange a period with each other every second week. In this way, the older students had an eighty minute art period on alternate weeks. The arrangement provided was more satisfying. The older students could better devote themselves to specific projects, and I had more time to develop and present new ideas.

Organization of Art Supplies,  
Introducing New Materials, and Clean Up

The distribution of art supplies was an initially time consuming effort. The limited mobility of the crippled children often required of me a greater fetching than teaching role. For these reasons, it was necessary that accessibility to these supplies be considerably simplified.

Resolving this situation meant that, regardless of the art work planned, supplies would be continuously available. Further, their availability was designed so as to be within most of the children's easy reach.

For example crayons, glue, pencils, coloured paper, were arranged on the art room's low and open shelves. The children could now fetch and use these supplies by themselves and as needed.

For obvious reasons painting supplies required greater consideration in their preparations. For these reasons I arranged these on trays near the art room's sink. Each tray could easily be shared by two to four children, which helped reduce the more complicated distribution problems.

The trays contained such essentials as liquid tempera, pans for mixing colours, large cans of water, paint brushes, and paper towels. Problems associated with paint handling were greatly simplified by having the various colours in separate plastic ice-cube containers. In this way, the child-

ren could more conveniently place the required working colours, and I could more easily replace spilled or dirtied paints. As well, the immediately available paper towels served to quickly clean up any mess that might have been produced during the working process, and to dry the paints after each washing.

Another positive result of having various art supplies at hand, was that students would use different media according to their discretion, or mix media, rather than depend on me to supply them.

However, not all children could benefit from such arrangements. Individual infirmities necessitated special preparations. For example, spastic children, or those able to use only one arm, could not hold paper in place and draw or paint at the same time. Masking tape had to be used to hold down their paper. In extreme cases these children required the use of paint blocks, so as not to spill paint on their art work. In some instances friends would dip and clean their brushes.

Because of its limitations, I confined the use of block paints to children with limited arm movement, since they were not able to control the quantity of paint which they picked up on a brush, and in many instances they were incapable of dipping a brush. Where painting became too difficult pencils, crayons, pastels, or felt markers were substituted.

The children's ability to handle various art materials and equipment had to be carefully considered in designing pro-

jects. Not every child could use all media and tools. I found that proper adjustments could be made to help the children use a wide variety of art materials and equipment.

One of the simplest adjustments was allowing the children to work in groups. This proved most useful since it allowed the children to share ideas, as well as enabling them to complete projects which they would not be able to complete themselves. These groups were usually selected on the basis of children's complementary abilities. For example, a child confined to a wheelchair might have the use of both hands, while a mobile member of this group could use only one. A third child might be creative, and yet have perceptual difficulties. Group work often allowed the children to learn from each other, and gave them the satisfaction of a completed work.

I gave my students a wide variety of materials with which to work. Such things as egg cartons, detergent bottles, felt and yarn, would be used to stimulate the students, and allow them to see new possibilities in commonly used objects. However, the selection of a medium could not be done without an understanding of each child's physical limitations.

A medium such as clay would usually first be given in small and soft clumps, on masonite or plaster boards. First the children would be encouraged to explore the nature of clay, feel its weight, how it responds to pressure, and gesture. As the children gained more experience in working in clay, only then would they be slowly introduced to wooden modelling tools, stands, sponges, etc. However, the tools

used depended largely on the children's ages and abilities.

Regardless of the medium for a project, I first acquainted the children in the use of the materials required. If the medium was paint, I would relate to the younger children the story of a dirty paint brush. The brush would leave dirty tracks wherever it walked, until it hit upon the idea of taking a bath before jumping into a new colour. The children would then be shown how the brush washed, rinsed, and dried itself. Later the children would be invited to participate in washing their brushes--thus being able to care for their materials. Such basic knowledge enabled the children to have greater control over their working materials. They became less hampered in their painting as a result of yellows that might come out looking green, or other colours becoming watery brown. This knowledge was also an important consideration in view of the fact that several children often shared the same materials.

The simple use of glue presented other considerations. The glue would be distributed in small tins with wooden tongue depressors for spreading. Since most of the children knew how to spread butter on bread, it was easy to show them that the tongue depressor was like a knife, and the paper like a piece of bread. In this way the children easily grasped a simple glueing technique. However, some of the children did not have much coordination. In this case glueing from squirt bottles, or glue sticks would be used.

The time consuming cleaning up activity required careful planning and supervision. Many classes could not perform



all of the cleaning chores. This activity had to be started well ahead of the art period's end, since the children themselves frequently required cleaning as well as the art supplies.

The task was more easily accomplished by having its various activities delegated according to the children's abilities. Mobile children could take away the supplies, children confined to wheelchairs could clean them, and less capable children would sponge clean the tables. In this way I was able to increase the time which could be devoted to the art lesson.

Analyzing Art Work

The included art work was all produced by students at the Mackay Centre. The examples selected are reflective of the children's handicaps and the quality of the art produced.

These illustrations were never intended to be used as thesis material. Rather, these often remained unclaimed by the students after art class. The included works are two dimensional only because three dimensional projects were usually reclaimed by the children and could not be conveniently stored.

The drawings and paintings included demonstrate working methods, interest, and the ability to portray chosen subject material. In particular I am also showing several examples of the art work done by two students because these illustrations trace the development of both their artistic expressions and personalities.

Much of the art was produced in spite of severe physical handicaps. Surprisingly, many of the examples shown do not reflect this fact. To view the art of these students in terms of the end product would be to ignore the immense struggle many had experienced in the creative process.

Peter F. and his Drawings

At seventeen years of age Peter F. had attended Mackay Centre since early childhood. He was handicapped on the right side of the body, showing a slight limp and limited use of the right hand. Due to the fact that he was a slow learner, Peter attended the vocational stream.

During the first few sessions, Peter refused to participate in any of the art activities. One day, I put down a pencil and piece of paper in front of him. Then I told him to draw whatever he liked, enjoyed thinking about or interested him. His eyes lit up momentarily and I decided to leave him alone and work with the rest of the class. Peter seemed deeply absorbed in his efforts.

When, at the end of the art class, I saw Peter's drawing, words failed me. The subject matter was explicitly sexual, (Fig. #34) and yet, it was Peter's first attempt at drawing. I decided to limit all discussion to the drawing itself. I pointed out that the girl had no arms and asked Peter if he knew where arms could be shown. I encouraged him to provide more details and also show where the scene could take place. Peter seemed happy with this first attempt and no more was said.

At the start of the next art class, Peter volunteered his desire to do more drawing. He explained that he had ideas for his subject matter. Delighted by this enthusiastic

show of initiative and self motivation, I left him alone with a stack of paper and a pencil.

Peter's second drawing showed an evolution. (See Fig. #35) He placed the figures on a base line and showed the human body in more detail. Both male and female have their limbs as well as a sense of movement. While Peter's figure is frontal and similar to what was first produced, he now shows arms stemming from the shoulders as well as the shoulder line. Peter had some trouble with the right arm. It is drawn twice, the first attempt obviously not having been erased.

The hands and feet seem to be appended to the wrists and ankles rather than being an integral growth of the body. The girl's breasts are more natural. Although the right side of her body has uneven lines, Peter has given her body more movement. He also initialled his drawing, as he seemed proud of the effort when finished.

Because of this confidence in himself I was now able to have Peter join the other students in their art activities. The other students did not ridicule or show any degree of surprise at Peter's results. They were used to and accepted Peter's preoccupation with sexual subject matter.

However, when we planned a drawing session, Peter would ask permission to pursue his personal interest. This permission was usually granted because his subject matter had far greater appeal to him than the ones I would suggest.

In the next drawing (Fig. #36), Peter has added background illustration for his subject matter. His naked couple is now ensconced between two mountains. The figures show

greater interaction than before and are touching each other as well as having intercourse. The activity is now so important that all features have been omitted from the male's face and the only arm drawn is touching the girl's breasts. In return, the girl is seen caressing a penis which Peter seems to have merely added to the male's side. It is important to note that Peter had enlarged what he felt to be important features and ignored those which he deemed of no significance.

I was not able to preserve the drawings which followed Figure #36 and preceded Figure #37. In the fourth drawing presented, the background has been elaborated and the figures are better blended with the scene, rather than being the dominant features.

A boat with a Viking sailor has been placed on the base line. The sailor has all the facial features. In addition, he has also been equipped with his head gear, a flag as well as with a body that seems to project some activity. The boat is also detailed from port holes on its side on up to the stripes on the sails. The flag and oars have also been included to ensure the authenticity of the detail.

A second base line is created with the mountains in the background. The figures are placed on a mountain, resulting in a drawing having a greater sense of space than any of Peter's previous works. While the figures continue Peter's favourite obsession, they now include all the facial features. For the first time Peter has included captions which hint at the story being depicted.

The last drawing in this series (Fig. #38) is a con-

tinuation of the previous story lines. In this picture, the Viking is not rescuing the girl. He is making love with her. What is of interest now is that both Vikings each have one of their arms drawn solidly with the other arm rendered in line form. The hats of both male figures are drawn with no regard as to the size of the head. You can see the head inside each hat in much the same way that children do their so-called 'X-Ray' drawings.<sup>21</sup>

Peter could not resolve some of the problems involved in portraying, as graphically as possible, a couple in the process of mating and kissing with tongue. If the couple had been shown intertwined this portrayal would have been very difficult. Consequently, he drew the penis, the tongues and the arms all the same length. The girl's breasts and arms were drawn in profile, while the rest of the figure was presented in the frontal position. This type of representation is again quite common to young children's art.

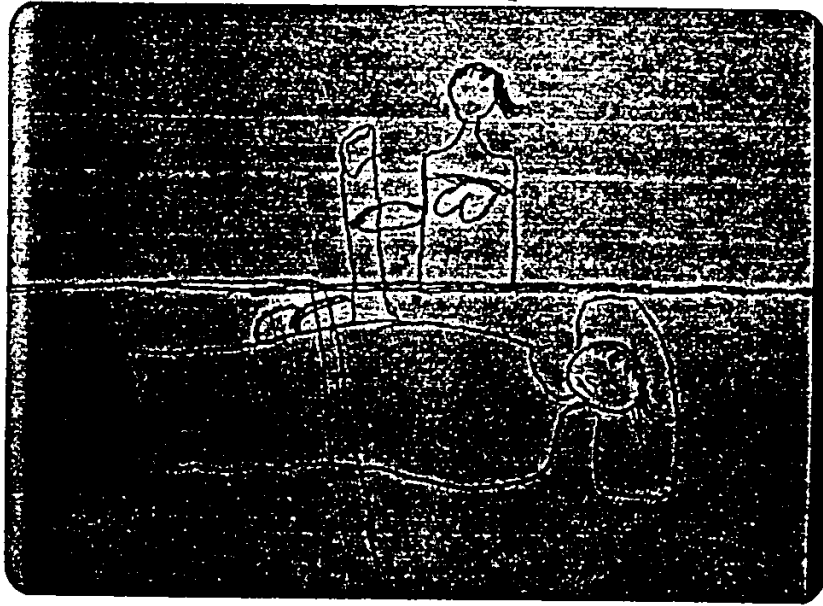
Although Peter spent considerable effort in drawing the background detail of mountain caps, waves in the water, and the flag, he did not put hair on the girl. Also noteworthy is the careful rendition of his initials. They are carefully scripted with short strokes going over the 'P' and the 'I' and then rendered again.

In his later pictures, which I unfortunately do not have, as Peter claimed them, Peter became more interested in drawing boats and mountains than in depicting couples mating.

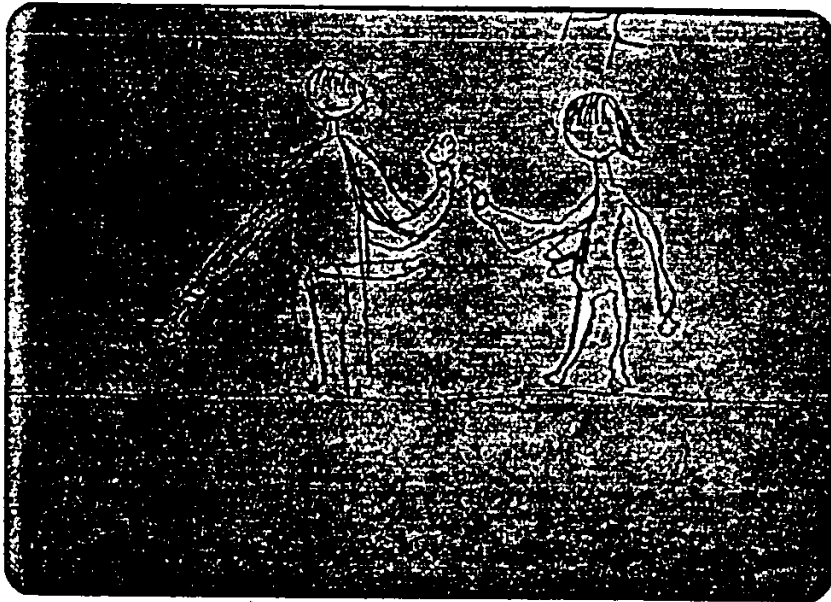
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21. Kellogg, Rhoda, Analyzing Children's Art, (National Press Book, 1970), pg. 177.

However, these five illustrations clearly demonstrate the significant progress which Peter made in his art work. His crude figures evolved to depictions with significant detail projecting movement. His backgrounds went from none to landscape which attempted to give his drawings the sense of space and depth. Peter even outgrew his rather unconventional classroom subject matter as his level of confidence and ability increased in art class. Through his own initiative he was thus able to exhaust his preoccupation with graphic representation of sexual activity and evolve into broader expression with art.



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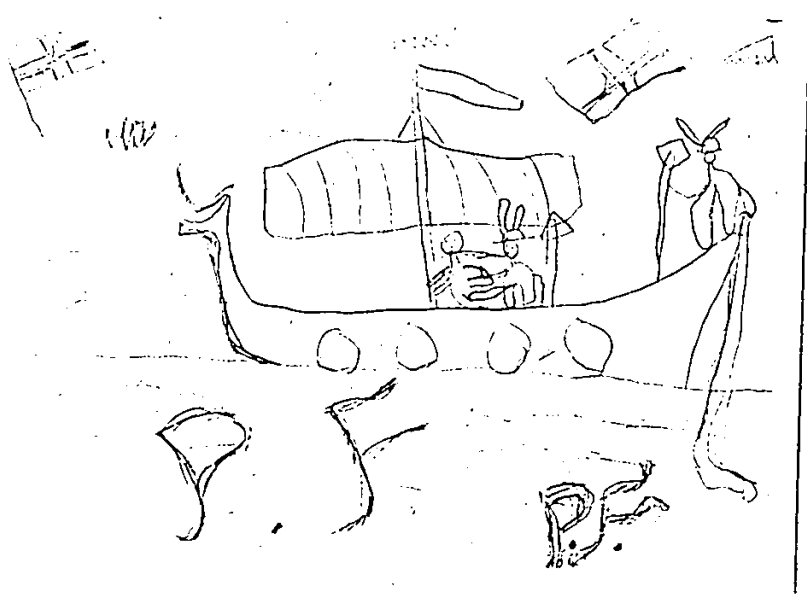




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37



Allan

Thirteen year old Allan was partially deaf and slightly hyperactive. Even though his deafness was from birth, it was only at thirteen years of age that he consented to the use of a hearing aid. Consequently, most of his speech was unintelligible. This made it difficult to communicate with him.

Because Allan had learning difficulties he was in the vocational stream. Allan identified himself more with animals than with human beings. He would growl and prance in his contacts with students and teachers to show an imitation of the sounds and movements of various animals. Even my raccoon hat once became the subject of some of his mimical attacks. This behaviour either amused or frightened the other students and made his social involvement with them practically impossible.

Allan's knowledge of the animal world was encyclopaedic. His passion for this subject pushed him to study any book or magazine that dealt with animals. He knew not only the generic names of exotic creatures, but also their habits and living environments.

Allan showed a remarkable talent for drawing animals in their natural locations. He also had facility in portraying extra-terrestrial beings and cartoon characters. His art work method was often accompanied by the sound effects he

associated with the subject matter.

Allan refused to paint or work in clay. He would reject these activities, screaming "Dirty! Dirty!". Since Allan was stubborn and prone to violence I did not press the point. Allan neither portrayed human beings in his art nor signed any of his works.

Allan received considerable psychological help and guidance. This produced a personality change which was reflected in his social behaviour and also in his art work. The illustrations which I selected represent Allan's art work over a two year span.

Artistically, little development can be shown in either style or rendition during this time. However, it is possible to see considerable development in terms of the images which Allan used. I observed these changes taking place in step with Allan's personal character development.

For a long time, Allan identified himself only with animals. He pretended to be an animal whether eating, playing or drawing. He was especially preoccupied by exotic animals and dinosaurs.

One of the few pictures in which Allan consented to use paint (see slide #39) illustrates a "kangawany". Allan's disdain of this medium is demonstrated in the relative clumsiness and crudeness of the drawing. Further, he made no attempt at mixing colours and preferred to use paints as prepared. A sharp contrast exists between this work and Allan's other drawings as shown in this account.

The next five slides (40-44) show Allan's preoccupation with science fiction and his remarkable ability in de-

picting animal life, humanoids and extra-terrestrial beings. These drawings were inspired by such television programs as Star Trek and Voyage to the Bottom of the Sea, and such comic book heroes as Ultraman. It was the first time that Allan had used subject matter other than animals in his drawings.

In slide 45 we find a battle between a dinosaur and a humanoid. Here, in sharp contrast to previous work, Allan has depicted the encounter and confrontation of two powerful forces. The impersonal nature of his previous drawings has been replaced with the tension, drama and interaction of the relationship between two antagonists.

Slide 46, I feel, shows a landmark in Allan's personal progress. The medium used was styrofoam printing. As this is quite a messy process and explicit instructions must be followed for its use, I was surprised to find Allan participate and thoroughly enjoy the activity.

One of the instructions given was to have the students arrange their prints on paper into some kind of pattern. I noticed Allan counting as he pressed his figures onto the paper. He seemed to delight in the counting process. I later discovered, from his home room teacher, that Allan had very little concept of numbers. He could neither add nor maintain a sequential count. That explained to me why Allan had displayed such a sense of accomplishment and discovery.

In slide 47 we find Allan's artistic proficiency displayed. He has illustrated a battle taking place between two opposing groups of humanoids. We see much violence and terror. Yet, what I found most unusual, was that Allan, for

the first time, had included representations of human beings in his drawing.

The human beings are minute and inconsequential. They are being victimized by the surrounding violence. Even a child is being dragged by an adult. And this terrorism is carried against other seemingly innocent living beings as shown by the trampling of a dog.

Allan has included sonant captions which, I feel, may have been inspired through better auditory perception since acquiring a hearing aid. He has also added a sun to his picture. I found this object incongruous. The solar symbol has been drawn without the care devoted to the rest of the picture. Its addition seems to have been as unconsciously included as the sun found in slide 39.

Slide 48 shows a robot controlled by a human being. It was at this stage that Allan began to have greater interaction with his peers. He no longer imitated animals. However, he began to act humanoid. His teacher had mentioned that Allan had seldom obeyed instruction. But at this stage of development he pretended to be a robot and thereby acquiesced to all commands 'under the control' of his teacher.

Slide 49 represents a curious change. The figure of the giant very strongly resembles Allan. The colossus is seen as wearing glasses and a hearing aid. The humanity shown at the leviathan's feet seem like ants. Since Land of the Giants was one of the current television shows, I assume that Allan's representation of himself drew inspiration from that source.

The changes in Allan's self image were paralleled by his drawings. In slide 50 we see the first personification of Allan himself. The drawing boldly proclaims the subject matter to be "ME". The figure is shown with glasses and hearing aid and is, this time, reduced to human proportions.

It was at this juncture that Allan had started to behave himself more as a human being. He no longer thought of himself as a robot and began to make friendly overtures to his fellow students. Slides 51 and 52 were the results of Allan's attempts to associate with his fellow students.

Allan was in a class of slow learners. Most of these students watched Sesame Street on television. Since his classmates loved the characters portrayed in this show, Allan could acquire an audience, praise and encouragement by drawing reproductions of the Sesame Street characters. This activity provided considerable satisfaction to Allan.

This was Allan's last year at the Mackay Centre. The school psychologist referred Allan to a school for mentally disturbed pupils, where he could get special help.



39

VOYAGE TO BOTTOM OF THE SEA



40

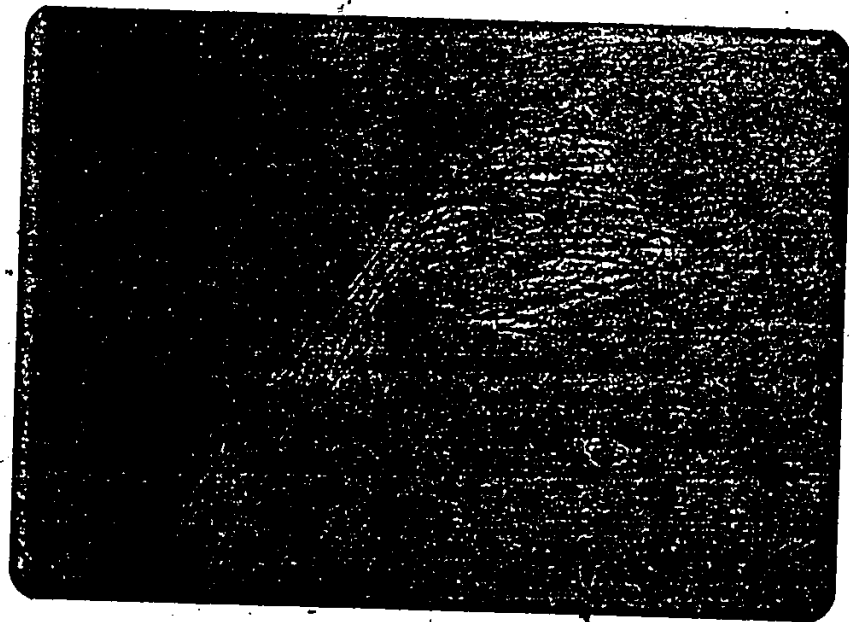


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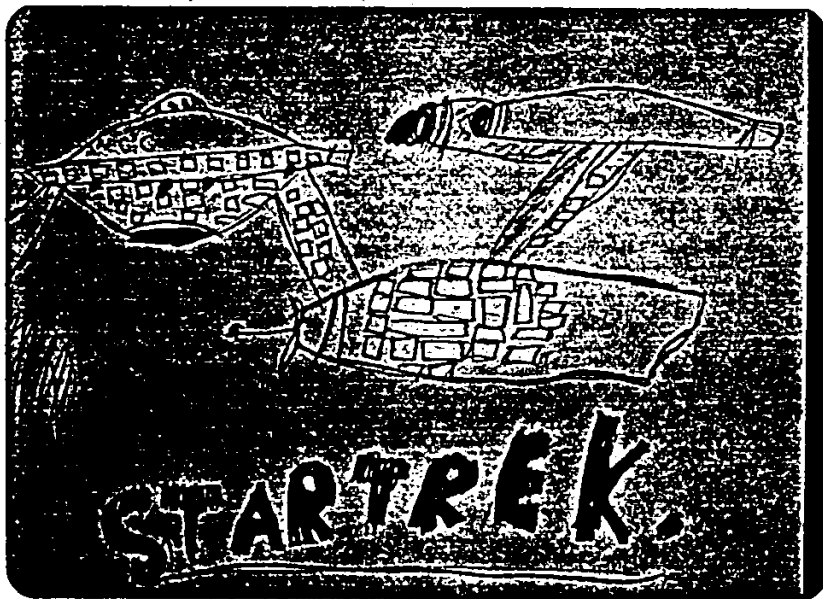
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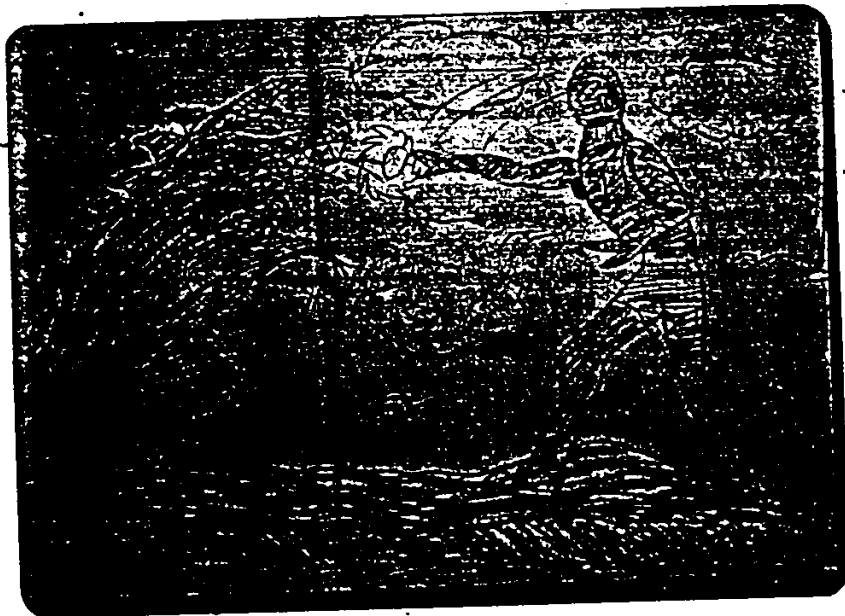
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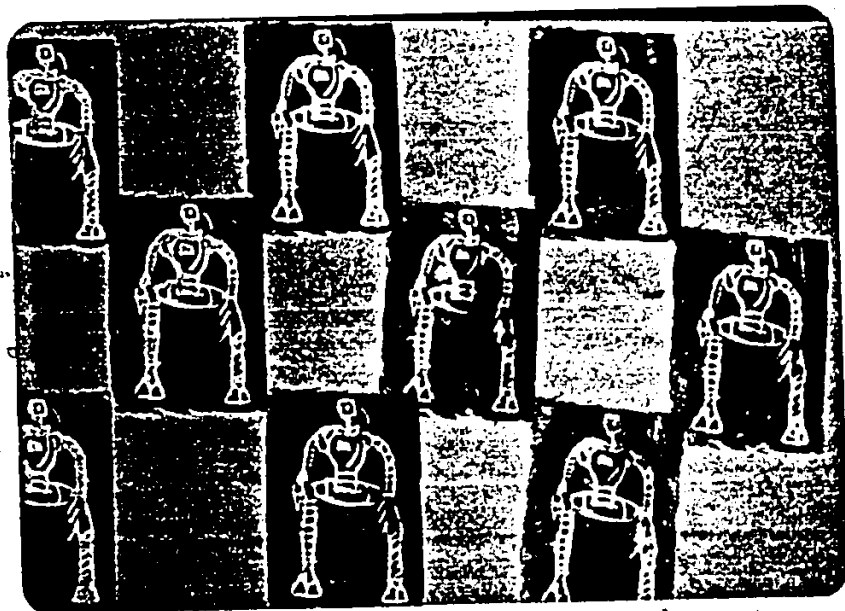
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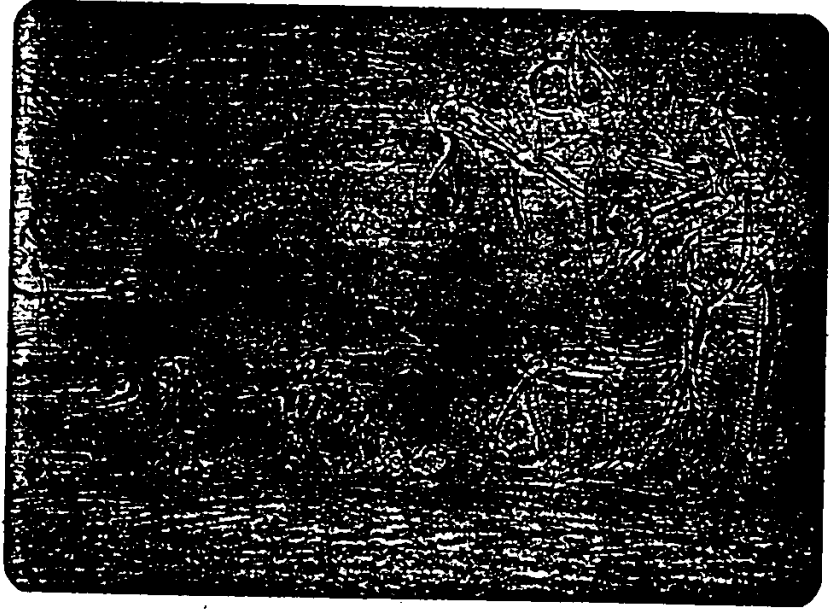
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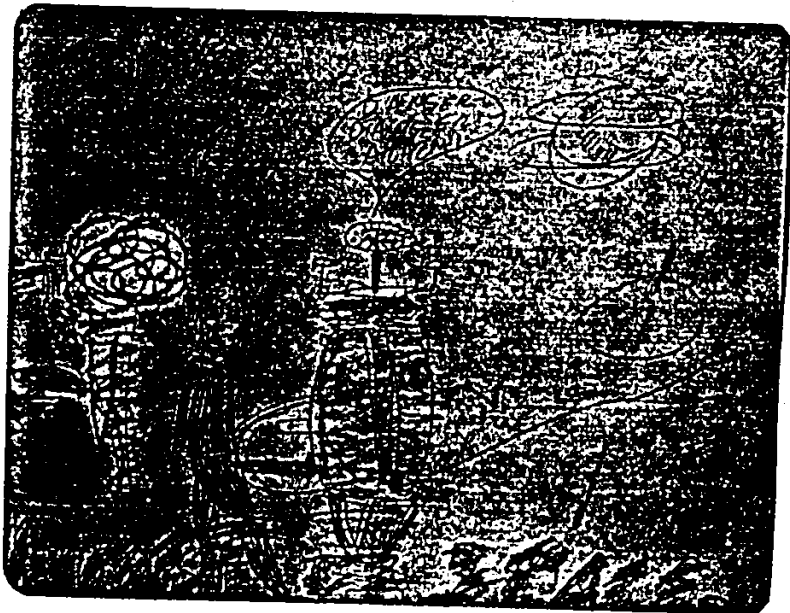
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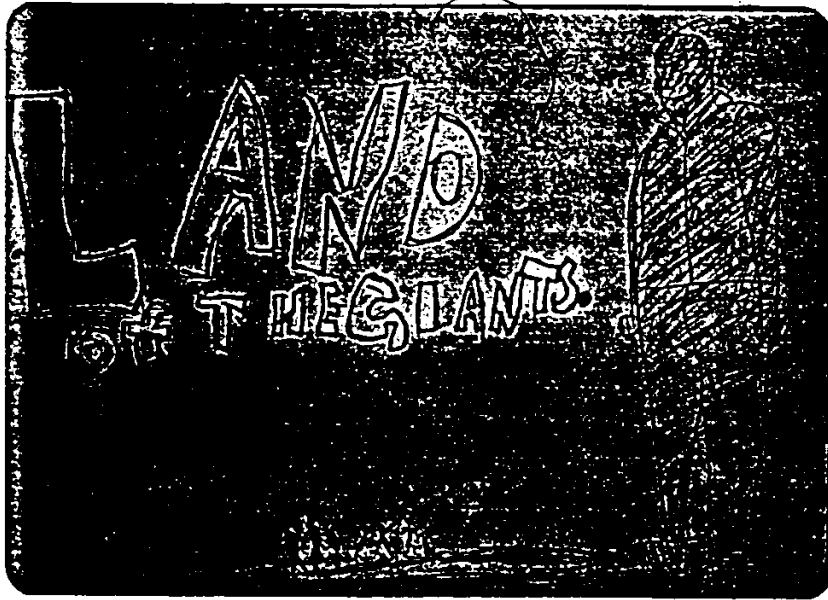
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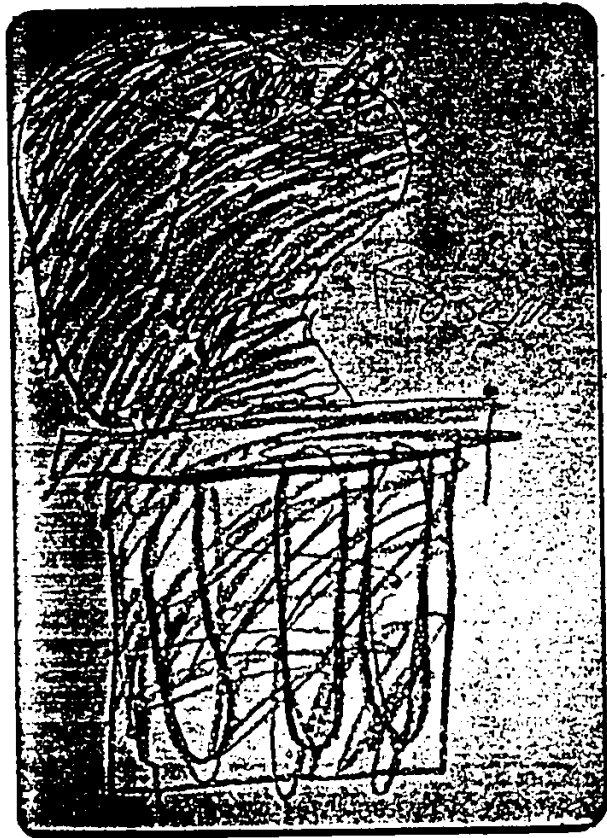


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In Memoriam

On a cloudy Monday morning we all learned of the sudden death of one of the teachers. It was not possible to put aside the sense of loss and grief which we all experienced during the first art period that day. Those who wished to express their mood in drawings were given paper and crayons.

The results, as shown in slides 53 - 57, demonstrate how poignantly nine to eleven year olds expressed their emotions. The drawings possess a sense of desolation. I feel that the rain symbolized the tears of sadness while the clouds served to reflect the gloom of this unhappy day.

If we look at slides 54 and 55, we observe the bareness of the streets. It is hard not to feel that emptiness being shrouded by the falling rain. The sense of loss is genuinely depicted through the use of these images.

Drawing 56 is a self portrait of the student crying. Drawing 57 shows a lonely figure in the midst of a landscape. Both convey the loneliness that is characteristic of the mourner.

In particular, I was deeply moved with the picture produced by an eleven year old girl suffering from a terminal illness (see slide #57). Joyce did not allow me to see her drawing until the end of the period. As it was then explained, the drawing represented what she imagined to have

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been her father's funeral. Joyce, herself, had not been able to attend.

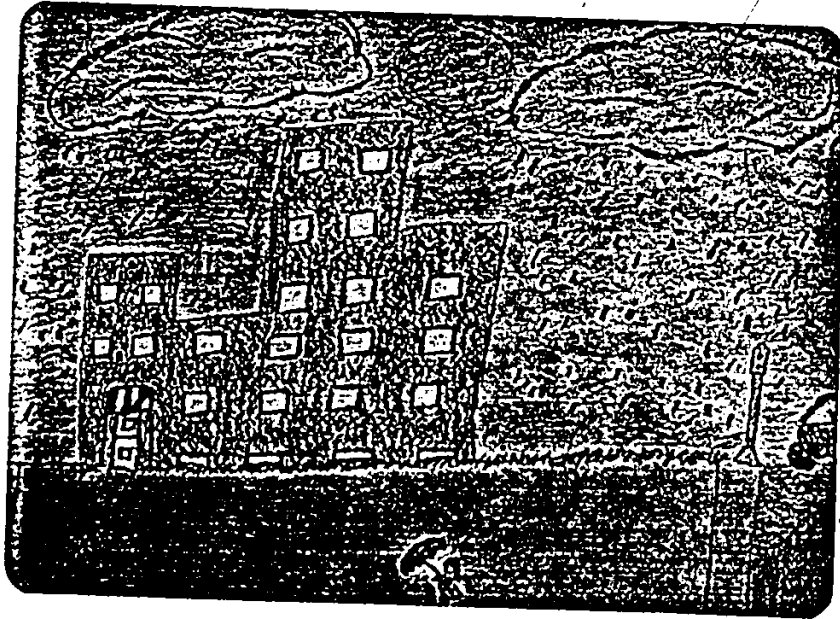


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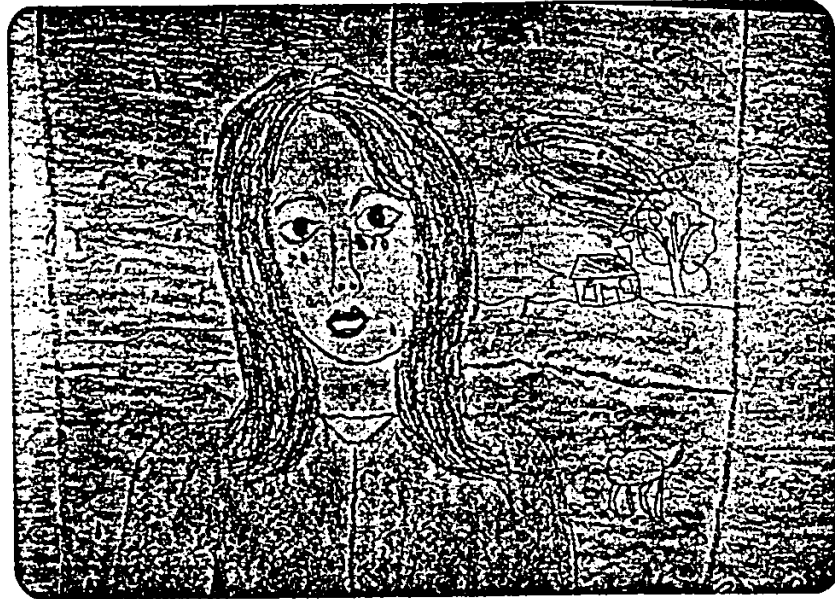
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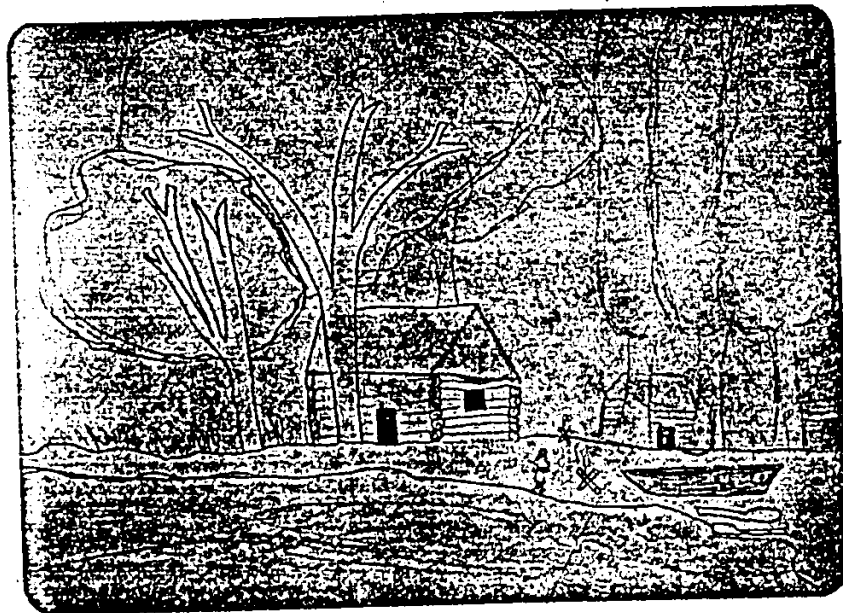
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54



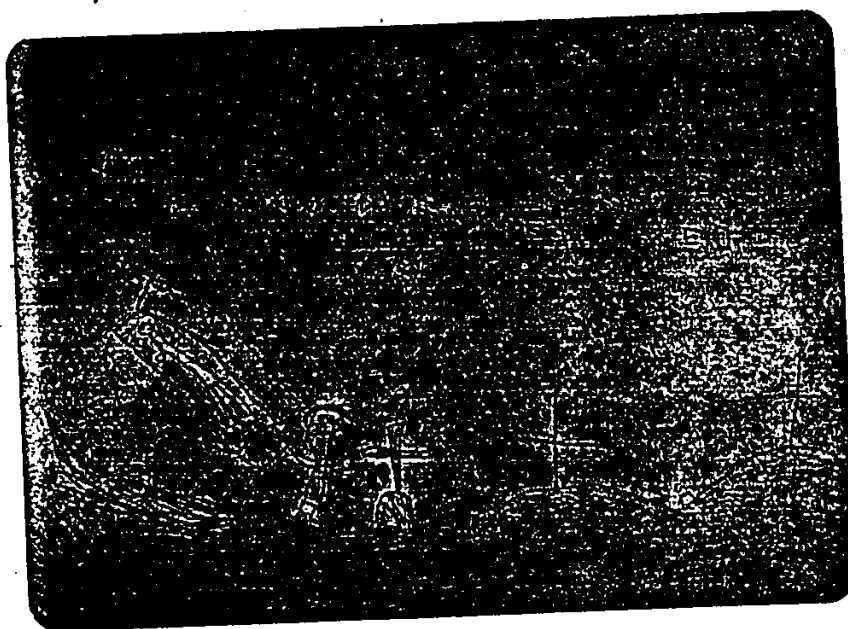
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51c



57

Slide Supplement

The slide supplement is included so as to help illustrate various complexions of the art of handicapped children. The works shown in slides 59 to 64 were done by physically handicapped children and, I feel, are no different from what normal children produce. Slides 65 to 69 reproduce pictures in which crippled children illustrated some physical disability. Finally, slides 70-72 represent the efforts of deaf children who suffered additional impairment.

The works shown in slides 59-64 are categorized as follows:

<u>Slide</u>	<u>Type of Work</u>	<u>Produced by</u>
58	drawing	7 year old boy
59	painting	8 year old boy
60	painting	8 year old boy
61	tissue paper	12 year old girl
62	print	12 year old girl
63	print	15 year old boy

The art included in slides 64 to 68 requires some background explanation. Slides 65 and 66 represent the work done by a six year old boy paralyzed from the waist down. He may also have had some perceptual difficulties. Slide 64 illustrates the work produced during a lesson in

which I tried to enhance the student's own body image.

The self portrait contains considerable facial detail since faces were first discussed. He has included teeth, tongue, ears and eyebrows. By contrast, the rest of the body is not as well portrayed. The arms have been omitted and a brace can be seen on one of the legs. The figure seems to jut at a right angle as if to reflect the fact that the artist himself sat in a wheelchair.

Slide 66 shows the work of an eight year old girl at the same lesson. She had cerebral palsy and perceptual problems. As can be noted, the facial features have been detailed. These features include cheek, teeth, and nostrils. However, the body is merely represented by a circle. The drawing made by a nine year old boy can be seen in slide 67. He included himself in the picture and we can see the cast on his legs in the lower right hand corner. This last detail conforms to the observation made by Dale Harris. This author, noted that the self portraits made by handicapped children would often include their disabilities.<sup>22</sup>

Slide 68 shows the work done by an extremely spastic thirteen year old boy. He had little fine motor control, and so had great difficulty with drawing and painting. Nonetheless, he was able to combine the use of felt marker with the elements of collage for this mixed media endeavour. In spite of the economy of detail I found the end result to have

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22. Harris, Dale B., Children's Drawings as Measures of Intellectual Maturity, (Harcourt, Brace, and World Inc., New York, 1963), pg. 46.

considerable impact.

Slide 69 reproduces the self portrait drawn by a deaf and autistic seven year old girl. Her impassive facial expression has been well captured. The eyes stare into space. The mouth, slightly open, neither smiles nor scowls. And, in spite of the imaginative use of paper, I cannot help feel that the ornamentation at the bottom of the page is being used to conceal some untold secret.

The self portrait shown in slide 70 was produced by a deaf and hyperactive eleven year old girl. She spent part of this art period in frantic search of an orange crayon with which to draw her face. She has included her glasses and hearing aid in this picture. Her use of lines conveys energy and movement.

The seven year old boy whose drawing is shown in slide 72 had not been able to hear the approach of the car that hit him. The accident left him confined to wheelchair and suffering imbalance and perceptual difficulties.

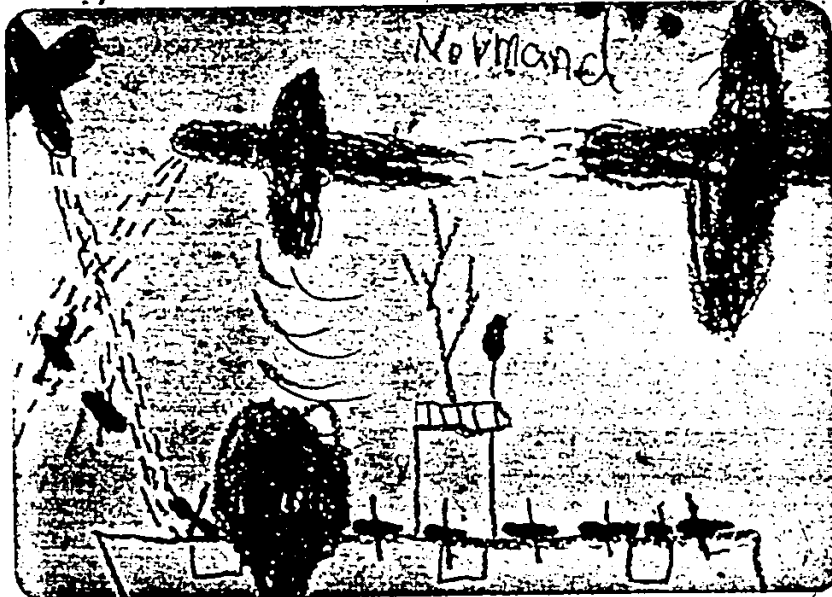
Since his family lived in Newfoundland he was resident in the school. This made school holidays the only times for visiting his family. The picture shown in slide 71 was drawn during the art class which immediately followed the Christmas break.

He had not yet learned enough sign language or finger spelling to communicate with others. Yet he was eager to describe his holiday experiences.

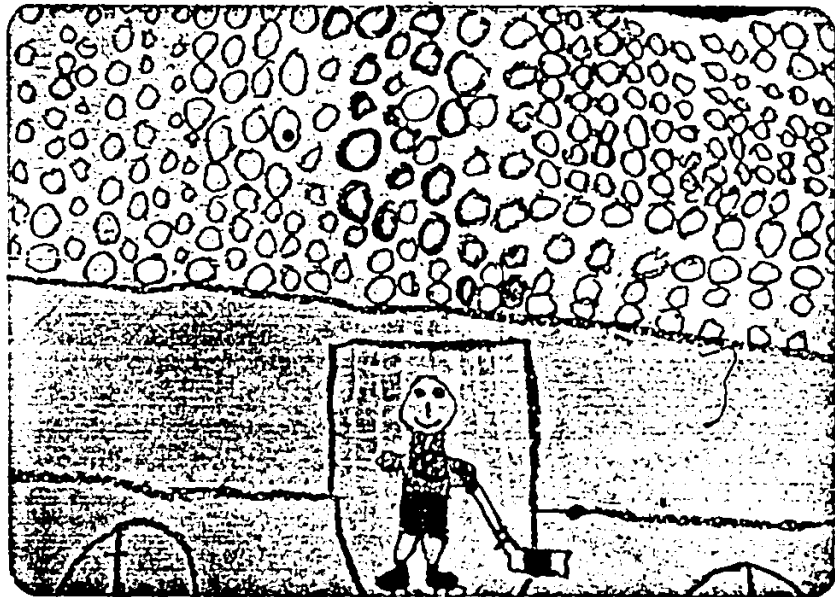
His home room teacher was able to interpret this picture. Mario had gone home on the airplane shown in the lower

right hand side. At home, he received the Christmas gift of a wagon as seen in the upper right hand side.

I found this drawing to be an excellent example of a deaf child communicating through art. At that time, drawing was his only means of conversing with the hearing world.



58

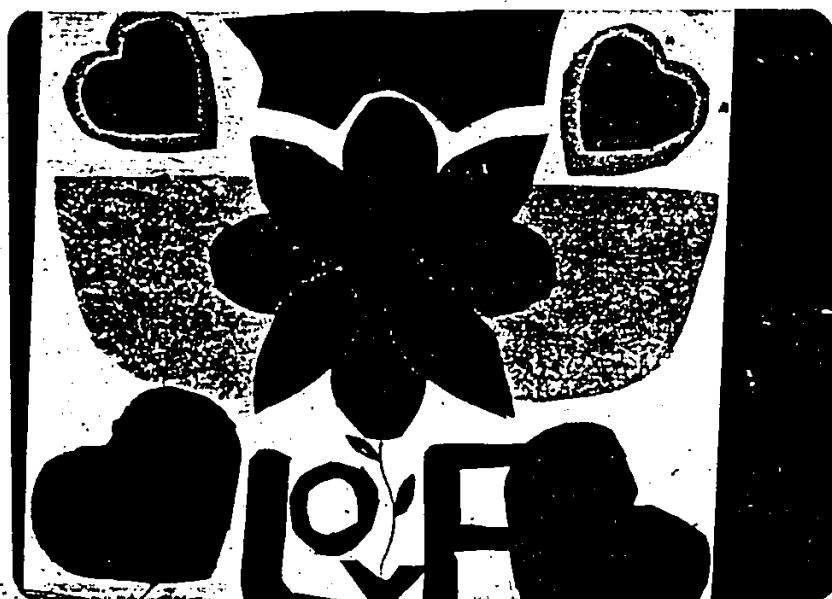


59





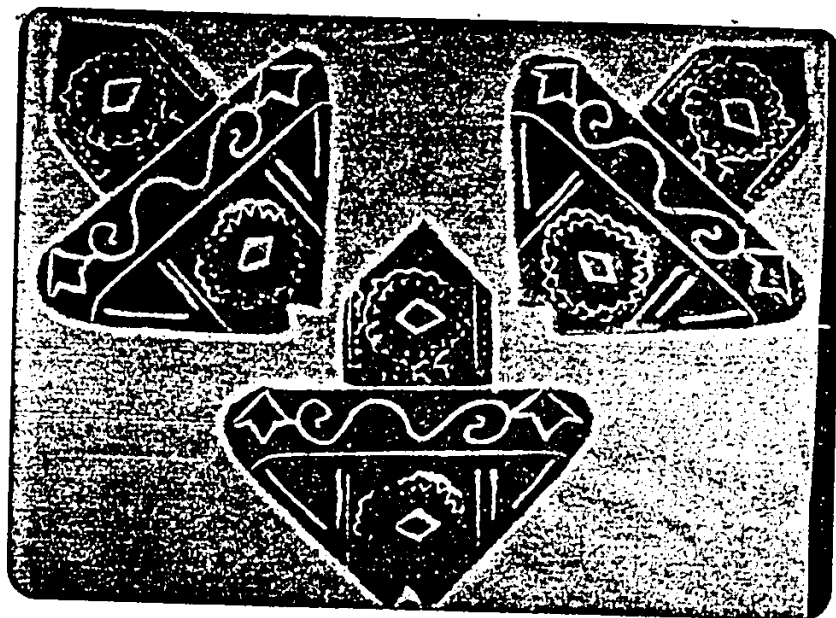
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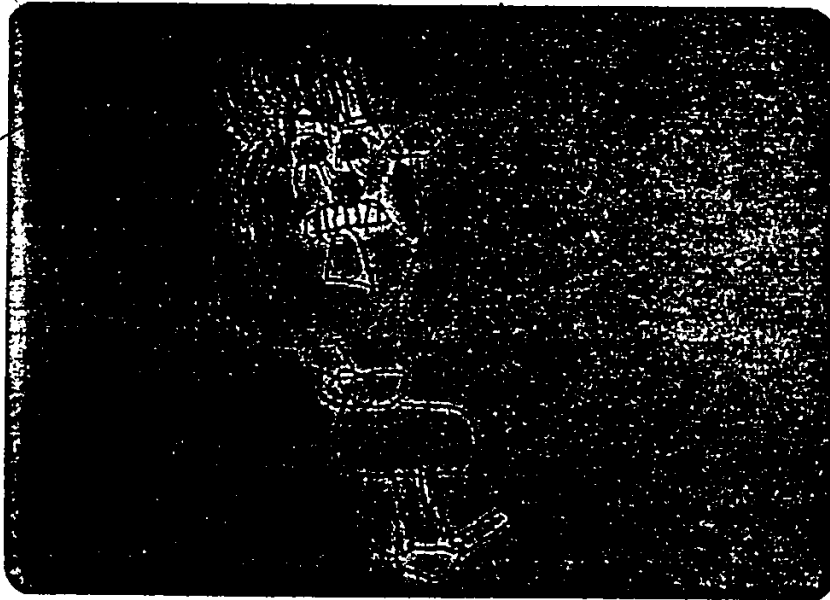
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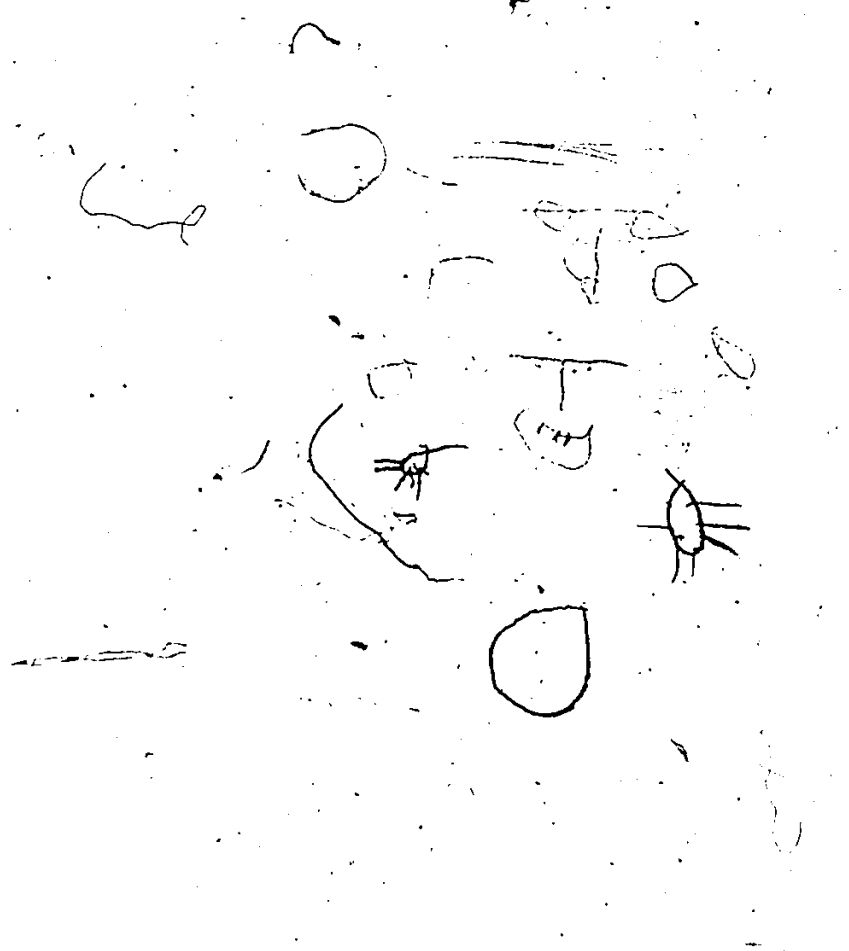
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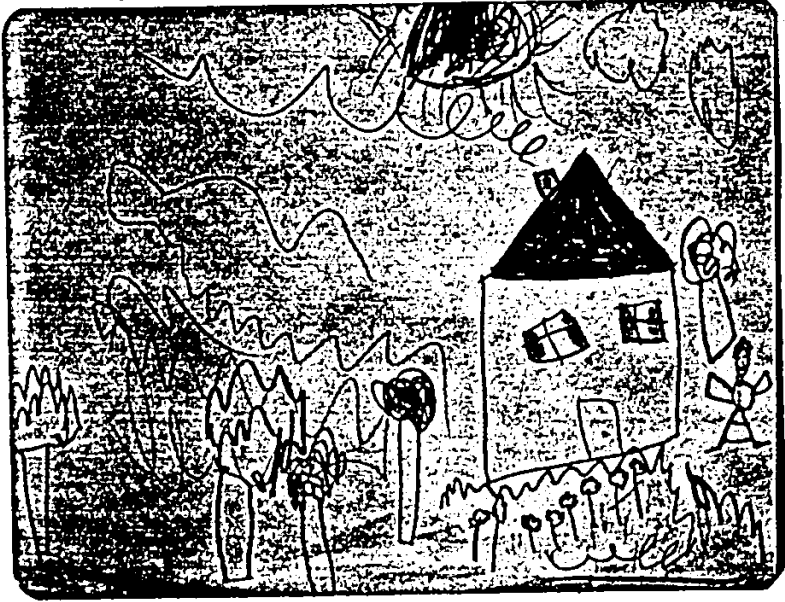
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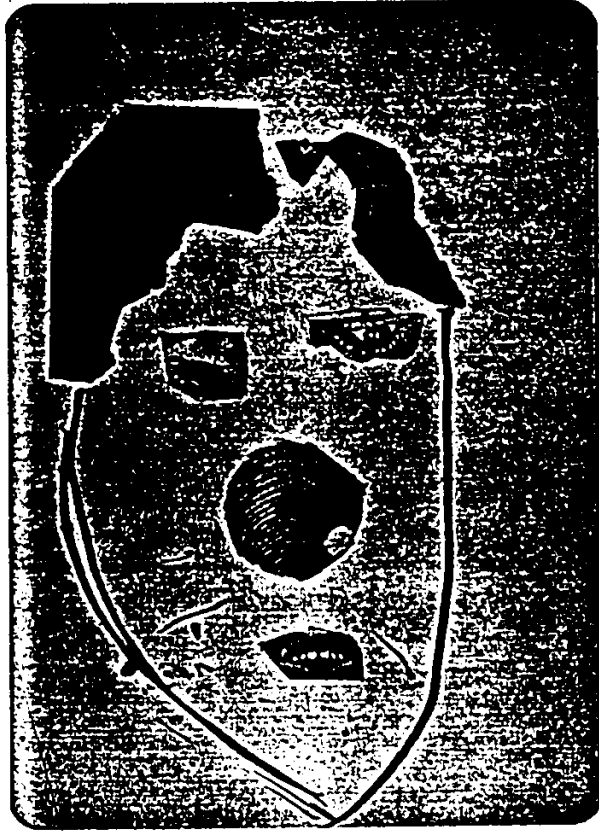
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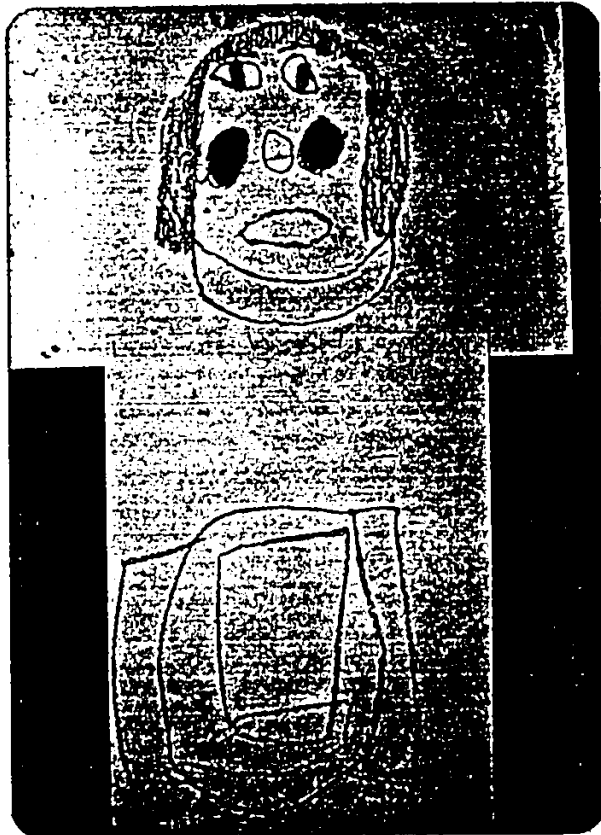
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68



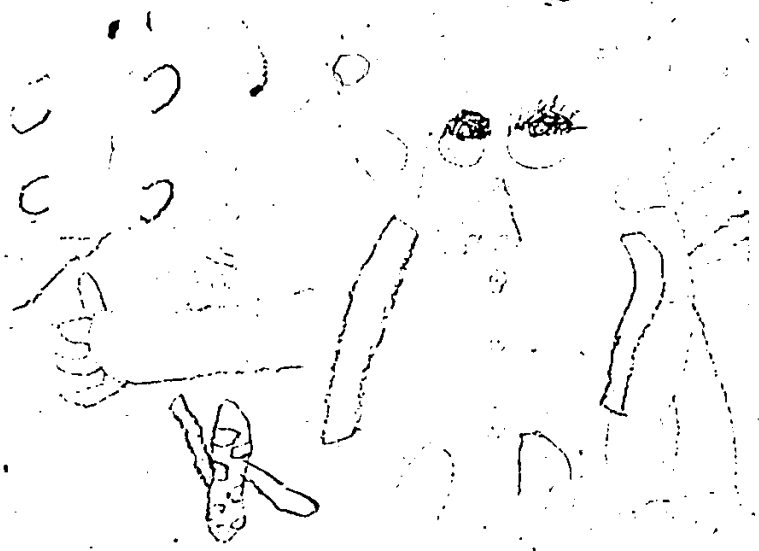
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70



71

Conclusion

There was much that I learned and had overcome while teaching in this environment. Amid the changing movement and bustle of each working hour, little time was left for reflection.

In the stillness of night or the promise of dawn I marvelled at the miracle of children who required no prosthetics. The handicapped seemed normal and the commonplace had become extraordinary.

The little things that we take for granted are obstacles to be overcome by the handicapped. In spite of it, it was never possible for me to find the work depressing. Any child has to be approached with energy and enthusiastic hope. This is especially true for handicapped children, since both the teacher and the pupil must make increased efforts in order to make even the slightest progress. I was very often rewarded, as a result, by such events as seeing the development of some new insight by one child, or the accomplishment of some novelty by another.

In spite of this resolve I could not help being saddened with the memory of those children whose infirmities progressively worsened. I found it emotionally hardest to work and observe those children afflicted with Muscular Dystrophy. This usually hereditary disease normally appears in the pre-school child, and causes a complete degeneration

of the muscular structure. (see Glossary of Terms).

We have not yet learned to stop the inexorable progress of this disease. Eventually the child can no longer hold the simplest objects, nor can the neck even support the head.

The ebullience and spirit shown by David--"Hey Lady! Get me a crayon!", at first belied the overwhelming truth of his condition. Once I asked his class to draw a memory or a dream which had a strong effect on them. It could be as pleasant or as shocking as they wished. When I asked David to tell me his "story", he said that it would be a picture of the time when he was able to walk.

It is hard to cope with or express the overwhelming sense experienced when a child such as David eventually passes away.



There are many Davids  
and they all had dreams.

The memories that were lost,  
Never expressed,  
...died.

Your mother at one time must  
have had dreams for you.  
And they died.

Life is a growth,  
Which moves forward,  
Explores,  
Expands.

Life grows, and then regresses,  
It traces its steps back the  
way it came.

At first the legs,  
Then the hands  
Then the bladder, and bowels,  
Then the chest and neck,

The eyes close,  
Then the very breath,  
The circle closes.

Hope died long ago,  
And with it all dreams,

David, I still remember you,  
And your many, many brothers.

Glossary of Terms \*

- Athetosis-- A form of cerebral palsy marked by slow, recurring, weaving movements of arms and legs, and by facial grimaces.
- Auditory reception-- The ability to derive meaning from orally presented material.
- Autism-- A childhood disorder rendering the child noncommunicative and withdrawn.
- Cerebral Palsy-- Any one of a group of conditions affecting control of the motor system due to lesions in various parts of the brain.
- Conductive Hearing Loss-- A condition which reduces the intensity of the sound vibrations reaching the auditory nerve in the inner ear.
- Congenital-- Present in an individual at birth.
- Cystic Fibrosis-- A hereditary disease due to a generalized dysfunction of the pancreas.
- Decibel-- A relative measure of the intensity of sounds; zero decibel represents normal hearing.
- Diplegia-- Bilateral paralysis affecting like parts on both sides of the body.
- Dysarthria-- Difficulty in the articulation of words due to involvement of the central nervous system.
- Dyslexia-- Impairment of the ability to read.
- Haptic-- Pertaining to the sense of touch.
- Hemiplegia-- Paralysis of one side of the body.
- Hyperactivity-- Excessive mobility or motor restlessness.
- Kinesthesia-- The sense whose sense organs lie in the muscle, joints, and tendons and are stimulated by bodily movements and tensions.

Glossary of Terms (cont'd)

- Menoplegia-- Paralysis of one body part.
- Muscular Dystrophy-- One of the more common diseases of muscle. It is characterized by weakness and atrophy of skeletal muscles with increasing disability and deformity as the disease progresses.
- Paraplegia-- Paralysis of the legs and lower part of the body; both motion and sensation being affected.
- Phoneme-- A speech sound or closely related variants commonly regarded as being the same sound.
- Prosthesis-- The replacement of an absent part of the body by an artificial one.
- Sensory-neural hearing loss-- A defect of the inner ear or the auditory nerve transmitting impulses to the brain.
- Spasticity-- Excessive tension of the muscles and heightened resistance to flexion or extension, as in cerebral palsy.
- Spina bifida occulta-- A defect of closure in the posterior bony wall of the spinal canal without associated abnormality of the spinal cord and meninges.

\* The definitions of these terms have been taken from Kirk, Samuel A. Educating Exceptional Children, 2nd Edition; (Houghton Mifflin Co., 1972).

Annotated Bibliography

The two authors that deal directly with the art of handicapped children are Zaidee Lindsay and Donald M. Uhlin.

Zaidee Lindsay is an art teacher working specifically with exceptional children. Her books are very much to the point and seem to be geared to teachers of exceptional children. Her books include:

Art and the Handicapped Child  
(Studio Vista Publishers,  
Great Britain, 1972)

Art for Spastics, (Taplinger  
Publishing Co. Inc., N.Y. 1966)

Art is for All, (Taplinger  
Publishing Co. Inc., N.Y. 1967)

In these books Zaidee Lindsay discusses the difficulties encountered by handicapped children. She stresses the necessity for art activities, and how to introduce them and adapt them for special children. The books are project oriented, covering a variety of projects. The activities include printing, painting, carving.

Each project is briefly introduced specifying the pedagogical and therapeutic advantages. The author also deals with materials, and difficulties that the children might encounter. The books are very brief and do not discuss approaches in teaching art to the handicapped.

The other book that deals specifically with handicapped children is Donald M. Uhlin's

Art For Exceptional Children  
(William C. Brown Co., Dubuque,  
Iowa, 1972).

This book reviews various handicaps, e.g. spasticity, cerebral palsy, retardation, etc., and shows examples of art done by these children.

The book does not deal directly with teaching art to exceptional children. The author interprets the art done by these children, stressing the psychological problems revealed through their art. I found these interpretations more suitable to art therapists, than to art teachers.

Stitchery for Children, by  
Jaqueline Enthoren (Reinhold  
Book Corp., New York, 1968)

The author has included a chapter which deals with teaching stitchery to exceptional children. The book is concise and well illustrated. Information is included concerning materials, their uses, as well as what children are capable of doing at various ages.

Learning and Teaching Through  
Art and Crafts, by Allan Cotton  
and Frank Haddon (B. T. Batsford  
Ltd., London, 1974).

...If freedom has to be learned,  
then the more backward a child is  
the more difficult it will be for  
him to acquire freedom of action,  
for his own inner resources are  
that much more limited. (pg. 43)

This is an excellent book on art education. The book first approaches the teaching of art in theory, and then in practice. It is obvious that the authors had extensive teaching experience, from which they were able to abstract theories and guidelines.

The authors deal with various media, describing their uses, possibilities, and their pedagogical significance. They also include a chapter on teaching art to retarded children. Here again we find philosophical and pedagogical guidelines which explain how most of the information in the book can be adapted to the teaching of slow learners. It is a pity that the book did not deal in greater detail with the exceptional child.

A book that is useful to teachers of handicapped children, researchers in that area is Art Therapy: A Bibliography, compiled by Linda Gantt and Marilyn Strauss-Schmal (George Washington Univ., Washington D.C., National Institute of Mental Health, 1974). This book is well indexed, giving information on current literature in the area of art, therapy, and special education.

Other books, which were on art education or related topics, which are not concerned with the handicapped, but were helpful nevertheless are: Lowenfeld's Creative and Mental Growth; Analyzing Children's Art, by Rhoda Kellogg; The Child and His Image, by Kaoru Yamamoto; Young Children and their Drawings, by Joseph Dideo; and Psychology of Child and Youth Drawings, by Helga Eng.

These books trace the stages of development in children's drawings and paintings. They were useful for the purpose of "comparing" the "normal" stages of development, with those of the handicapped children. Rhoda Kellogg's book was especially helpful in comparing the development of the body schema in normal children, with that of the handicapped.

Many art educators mention teaching art to exceptional children. However, the information is often general to the point that it is not applicable. I cite, as examples, the writings of Lowenfeil, McFee, and Kellogg with respect to exceptional children.

I also found some books which do not deal directly with teaching art to exceptional children. The books speak of the children's needs, their families, and their educational requirements.

I found the following books to be most useful:

Barbara Herberholz, Early Childhood Art,  
(Wm. C. Brown Co., Dubuque, Iowa, 1974)

It is an excellent book that is pertinent not only to teaching art to young children, but older ones as well. Its concern lies not only with doing art, but looking at art and developing an aesthetic awareness. It is well written and profusely illustrated with children's art work. The book also includes an excellent bibliography.

Many of the ideas mentioned in the book can be used with handicapped children, as they not only are simple to use but also have great pedagogical value.

Ways With Art, by Harold Stevens,  
(Reinhold Publishing Corp. N.Y. 1963)

This book in the hands of a good teacher, offers extensive possibilities in conventional media. If and when a class is ready for something different either to revive them, or renew their interest, this book may be worth looking into.

It explains various techniques and their use and application. Extensive illustrations of each step are provided

with each technique. Some of the topics covered include drawing, stenciling, printing, 3D-design, etc. Each topic's possibilities with the materials is discussed. (e.g. 3D-design includes welding with crayons, wire and plexi-glass).

Art Plus, by Ronald N. MacGregor,  
University of Alberta, (McGraw Hill  
Ryerson Ltd., 1977)

This book is geared to elementary and high school students. It deals with concepts and ways of seeing rather than "how to do things". Some of the subjects covered in the book include perceiving, materials, environment, etc. These subjects are treated first as concepts, and later how these concepts can be learned through art. Many ideas given are imaginative and open up new ways of perceiving.

Also included is a very useful appendix which deals with both materials and projects. It is an excellent book to have since it can well serve as a resource book that will last for many years, always revealing a new idea.

Visual Education in the Primary School,  
by John M. Pickering, (B.T. Batsford  
Ltd., London 1971)

In this book the author seems to be interested in children learning to perceive and becoming aware of their environment. Once this is accomplished then art can spring from these sources, but these sources have to be opened up and explored. Children are encouraged to become aware of all their senses and to transfer that knowledge to art. This book is useful to a teacher who wishes to enrich the child's sense perceptions. As this is important with handicapped children, this book



would be a great help to those who teach exceptional children.

Handicap: A Study of Physically Handicapped Children and Their Families, by Joan K. McMichael, (Staples Press, London, 1971)

Most of the information is compiled through questionnaires and interviews. The author stresses the psychological effects that a handicap may have on a child and his family.

...a physical handicap, of itself, constitutes an emotional hazard and sooner or later will become an emotional challenge both for the child and his family. (pg. 15)

The presence of a handicapped child in a family affects all the members of that family, not only the parents. (pg. 99)

With this in mind the author reveals the problems encountered, and provides a better insight into the problem.

Educating Exceptional Children by Samuel Kirk, deals with different groups of exceptional children. — Blind, deaf, crippled, and mentally retarded children have their needs and educational provisions described. Samuel Kirk also suggests programs for rehabilitating the handicapped. The book is much too general to help with any specific problem, but it offers a good introduction into special education.

In The Special Child by Harold Michael-Smith Ph.D., and Shulamith Kastein, the authors discuss the psychological needs of handicapped children, public attitudes to the problem, and also offer a realistic philosophy towards rehabilitation and coping with various handicaps.

Dr. Silverman et al, in the book Deaf Children, treats deafness not as a sickness, but simply as another variety of human expression. Thus the deaf child is to strive towards an individuality rather than trying to emulate a hearing person. Silverman stresses creativity as a unique way of expression and emphasizes the need for art. Unfortunately, he does not offer any practical suggestions for implementing an art program for the deaf.

The Young Handicapped Child, by  
Agatha H. Bowley, PhD. F.B. Phys S.,  
and Leslie Gardner, (E & S Livingstone  
Ltd., 1969)

The deaf child is likely to be particularly active in touching and moving things..., since touching and close looking at things is a way in which he makes up for his lack of speech and the fact that he cannot have things explained to them.

This book deals with handicaps which include deafness, cerebral palsy, blindness and autism. Each handicap is treated in great detail, defining the terms, problems involved, and the development of a handicapped child. The book limits itself to the clinical aspect, rather than delving into the emotional problems that the children may encounter.

It is helpful as an introductory book since it also includes an extensive bibliography on each handicap presented. I feel, however, that it has to be balanced by another book which also describes the children's emotional make up.

Deafness, by David Wright,  
(Stein and Day Publishers, New  
York, 1969)

This book deals with deafness from personal and historical points of view. The first part of the book recounts the experiences and struggles of David Wright, who has been deaf from his early childhood.

In the second part David Wright reviews the history of deafness, and education for the deaf. Later on the author notes the research and scientific knowledge available on deafness.

The book is well written, giving the reader an insight into the subject of deafness rarely obtained from books written by hearing people.

Activities for Intellectually  
Handicapped Children, by Michael  
Ahrens and Grant Scott, (Whitcomb  
and Tombs, 1975)

It is a little book, more like a handbook in which various handicaps are listed and best activities suggested for these problems.

Some of these activities are specifically related to art, others are not, but are useful to know if one is to work with handicapped children.

Other books which elucidate the world of the handicapped are:

The Deaf Child and His Family, by  
Susan Gregory (John Wiley & Sons,  
New York, 1976)

This is a study of the deaf child and his family. Most of the information in the book is collected through interviews and questionnaires. The value of this book lies in first hand responses on the subject matter. The areas covered in

the book include the child's everyday life, his relationship with his family, siblings and peers.

A book which deals with handicapped children is

The Non-Verbal Child (An Introduction to Pediatric Language Pathology, 2nd ed. by Sol Adler PhD. (Charles C. Thomas Publisher, Springfield, Ill., U.S.A., 1975)

This is a textbook dealing with verbal communication and its pathology. The information in it is very precise, well defined and structural. The author includes normal speech development and the abnormalities that may occur.

Since the second part of the book deals with habilitation, the author outlines the needs of the various disfunctions and how they can be corrected through various means. Some of the methods used include art, music, play therapy, drama.

The author outlines the needs of the children and ways in which art can be used to help. He mentions several projects which are especially suited to these children. The book also has a source list, case histories, and an extensive bibliography.

For a more extensive listing of books, see the Bibliography.

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