

Barbara Putz-Plecko
University for Applied Arts | Vienna
di:'angewandte

Background report on

Cultural education: The promotion of cultural knowledge, creativity and inter-cultural understanding through education



*Prepared for the Committee on
Culture, Science and Education
Initiated by Mrs. C. Muttonen*



Parliamentary Assembly
Council of Europe

Paris, 9. 12. 2008

Art and Culture – Key Elements of Education **An European Asset?**

„In matters of education, it is becoming very clear that society is changing: We no longer need the model that assumes there are a thousand obedient worker bees for each queen bee. Everyone in the industrial sector tells me we are educating our young people for the demands of today. We don't need people who think in straight lines. We need people who can see the wider picture; we need people who can make connections, unexpected connections. This is the area in which the arts are supreme, in which art and education can give more, in every respect, than any other discipline.”

Simon Rattle ¹⁾

Education must take into account social challenges.

Our world is characterised by rapid change, increasing globalisation and increasingly complex economic, societal and cultural relations.

Information, education and knowledge are progressively becoming the driving forces behind our new social and economic structures. The qualifications and competences of our citizens are thus becoming our central “raw material” and, as such, crucial factors of international competition. They are the key to every country's future.

If we are to meet these tremendous challenges with foresight and a sense of proportion, we need a suitable educational foundation that will set the necessary orientation benchmarks in this rapidly changing world and enable us to deal with it in a constructive and critical way.²⁾

In order to adequately prepare children and young people for vocational and social life, educational institutions must not only understand changes in needs but anticipate them.

In this sense, art and culture are indispensable elements of a comprehensive education, the objective of which is to achieve the maximum benefit for and best possible development of each and every individual and thus enable every individual to participate actively in society as a constructive member of the community.

The ability to capably handle the challenges encountered by each individual and by society, the capacity to deal responsibly with resources and the environment, well-developed interpersonal and communication skills and a well-developed faculty of reflection, as well as the ability to learn, to make decisions and to act competently – all these are educational goals which, when achieved, contribute substantially to a satisfying life.

In this context, experience with art facilitates learning processes that are of pivotal importance: for example, recognising and relating to what is different, or the capacity to develop transitions and interrelations within a heterogeneous group.

Like science, art can contribute to an overall process of development in society as a result of its view of the world and its approach to creativity. Moreover, cultural education creates a constructive basis for encounter and discussion, for coexistence and cooperation.

1) Simon Rattle in the NDR Kultur broadcast “Simon Rattle – Querdenker auf Erfolgskurs” (2008; re-translated into English from the German-language source)

2) Federal Ministry for Education, Science and Art, “Schule neu denken, Zukunft der Schule – Schule der Zukunft”, position paper of the committee of education experts (Vienna, 2003)

It is a foundation of general education, not a luxury that may be added when all other educational goals have been achieved. ³⁾

³⁾ German Commission for UNESCO, "Kulturelle Bildung für alle. Von Lissabon 2006 nach Seoul 2010" (Bonn, 2008)

The function of schools in society is not only to give our children knowledge and skills, but to open up spheres of experience and development in which young people can get to know themselves and become familiar with the world, and which will comprehensively foster the development of their personalities.



Example 1: School as a cultural centre. Staging curtain materials; developing possible roles inspired by fragments of costumes and space. Starting point: spontaneous theatre. Playful approach to variations in self-dramatisation. Examination and reflection on intentional and unintentional effects, experimentation with possibilities of social interaction. Interaction of different levels of the creative design process.

“Education in the arts” and education “through the arts” open up access to a more widely defined cultural education and are an essential part of it at the same time.

The aim of education must be to promote the full development of the personality, talents, and mental and physical capabilities of each individual child. ⁴⁾

⁴⁾ Article 29 of the Declaration of Human Rights

Cultural education, that is, education in the arts and education through the arts (which means the use of art-based forms of teaching as a pedagogic tool in all kinds of school subjects), as examined by Anne Bamford in her systematised and comparative global review written for UNESCO, entitled “The WOW Factor”, makes an important contribution to the achievement of this aim. It is, in effect, a motor of individual development.

Increasingly, parents are coming to recognise this. In Austria, at least, the most recent cultural monitoring study carried out by the Institute for Empirical Social Research (Ifes, Institut für Empirische Sozialforschung) showed that parents would like to see more art and culture in the schools because they believe that cultural education plays an extremely important role in the comprehensive development of their children’s personalities. And just recently, the Nordic Council identified cultural education as an area that needs to be more intensively focussed on by the schools in the coming years and correspondingly expanded and developed.

⁵⁾ Anne Bamford, The WOW Factor. Global research compendium on the impact of the arts in education. Waxmann; Münster/ New York/ München/ Berlin; 2006

Artistic processes relate to the world “differently”.

Learning is a creative process. What we learn depends, for the most part, on how we learn: on the learning place and learning atmosphere, the time, the rhythm and the clearness of presentation.

Learning by means of art-based methods opens up specific spheres of experience and development – an easily recognisable fact that has been examined and described in numerous studies. This form of learning is distinguished by the particular vividness and clarity with

which knowledge and ideas can be communicated. And it promotes a positive understanding of diversity, of different approaches and of multi-perspective ways of viewing things – for example, by directly conveying the insight that there is more than one reasonable answer and more than one solution to a problem.

Not only demographic changes – which the schools are now having to deal with constructively – have made it clear that a homogeneous culture for all simply does not exist, and that, more than ever before, we are being called upon to take this into account.

A sensual approach lets children discover new worlds and come to grips with them in playful ways.



Example 2: textil:mobil was cooperative project that ran for a number of years between students of the Department of Textiles at the University of Applied Arts in Vienna, Austrian schools and a business. The goal was to promote a “material literacy” that was in the process of disappearing on the one hand and, on the other, to promote a learning culture that by using a sensual approach and joint artistic student work was intended to awaken curiosity, enjoyment and interest as well as leading to the formulation of relevant questions. These questions were explored and a number of works created that were spatially oriented and, above all, body oriented. They addressed issues related to the lives of young people, rendered their patterns of play and action visible, created references to their surroundings and tested new approaches.

The essential elements are: perception and creativity, the enjoyment and adventure of seeing and hearing, of trying things out, of simulating, playfully transforming, and achieving new effects under controlled guidance – and, of course, time and again, invention.⁶⁾

It is a matter of providing an indispensable and different access to the outer and inner worlds (apart from the cognitive approach through technologies and media).

⁶⁾ Hartmut von Hentig, Kreativität. Hohe Erwartungen an einen schwachen Begriff (Munich, Vienna: Carl Hanser Verlag, 1998)



Example 3: Art education – educating through art. A primary school class examined the artworks in the exhibition “The artist who swallowed the world” by Erwin Wurm in the Museum of Modern Art in Vienna. In many different ways the exhibition offered the visitor an opportunity to explore the relationship of artist and viewer from different perspectives. Visitors themselves became active and contributed to producing the work.

It is a proven fact that we need sensual experiences in order to develop: neuroscientific research demonstrates how thinking is stimulated by the senses and that creativity requires neuroplasticity.

Literacy—as an educational goal and key area of competence—must be more than language as a verbal means of expression and communication. Creative design takes place in many “languages”.

The schools must provide the time and space for this development of linguistic and non-linguistic forms of expression. Experimental situations must be permitted or created that will allow young people to make discoveries and develop new things or new modes of performance – in their own language, in their own individual ways, in their own personal forms of expression.

Artistic processes are always search processes that involve a seeking of individual paths, and at the same time they are processes of creative thinking. They bring new understanding of oneself in combination with greater understanding of and new connections with the world. And they produce insight and knowledge in a special way.

Aesthetic education, education in the arts, is distinguished by a specific interaction of cognition and emotion. We know that people who do not learn to deal with emotional intelligence run the risk of developing large deficits in perception, in decision-making ability and in the capacity to cope with everyday life and social situations.

Nevertheless: Surprisingly, very little is being done to put these insights into practice. A great number of good intentions are being expressed, but very few political measures are being taken that could facilitate and promote a paradigm shift.

Increased effort has to be made to establish synergies between knowledge, skills and creativity. With few exceptions educational politics gets no further than paying lip service to these ideas.

Time cuts and the setting of other educational focuses are reducing the scope of these areas of education in many European countries to such an extent that the potential of children and young people often remains disregarded. The result is that, on the one hand, young people's chances for development are lost at an early age and, on the other hand, their potential remains untapped for society as a whole – even though society's need for precisely the competences and qualities that are developed through artistic and cultural education is greater than ever.

These important competences and qualities are:

- the faculty of discriminative observation and perception,
- imagination, inventiveness and vision,
- creativity as their practical application,
- emotional intelligence,
- individual capabilities of expression and language competence,
- the ability to communicate,
- the ability to efficiently select and evaluate information,
- the understanding of relations and correlations,
- a capacity for critical reflection,
- the ability to relate thinking and action in creative as well as organisational processes and to use knowledge in accordance with specific requirements,
- the capacity to make decisions independently,
- the ability to implement ideas innovatively and
- the capacity to create new interconnections.

Creativity and the ability to innovate are decisive for sustainable economic and social development.

At present we are at the end of the industrial age. The abilities and skills that were needed to safeguard the social order of industrial society are losing relevance. The modern working world is no longer primarily defined by demand, but rather by perpetual renewal and innovation. One of the most essential competences needed in the future will be the ability to decide, for the most part independently and unrelated to predefined work processes, which possible solution to a new problem is the right one.⁷⁾

Knowledge and creativity are the new economic factors. It is not raw materials and machines, capital and land, analysts say, that will be the driving forces of our economy in the future. The deciding factor in the success of countries and regions will be the competition for creative and innovative minds.

“Creative education,” summarises Monika Kircher-Kohl, CEO and CFO of Infineon Austria, “is a precondition for innovative industry. Cultural education is the basis for people’s ability to work together productively with understanding and respect in teams and global organisations. Artistic education ensures that young people will find the courage to cross boundaries and thereby develop their personalities – not only their intellectual talents – to the full: Education in the sense of a democratic society is inextricably linked with these attributes!”⁸⁾

7) Richard Florida, *The Rise of the Creative Class ...and how it's transforming work, leisure, community, & everyday life* (New York: Basis Books, 2002); also, Richard Florida and Irene Tinagli, “Technologie, Talente und Toleranz” in *perspektive* 21, no. 31 (Potsdam: SPD Landesverband Brandenburg, July 2006)

8) Monika Kircher-Kohl, in May 2007; cited in Michael Wimmer’s study for the Austrian Federal Ministry for Education, the Arts and Culture entitled “Vielfalt und Kooperation. Kulturelle Bildung in Österreich – Strategien für die Zukunft” [Diversity and Cooperation. Cultural Education in Austria – Strategies for the Future] (2007)



Example 4: design°mobil, an initiative of the Department of Design, Architecture and Environment for Art Education at the University of Applied Arts in Vienna supported by KulturKontakt Austria. During Designmobil processes the participants slip into the designer role. They test out various brainstorming and design strategies and learn to become acquainted with the design process as a creative strategy for action. Amongst the themes are an analysis of stale codes, ergonomics and useability, creating a market and human factors. Experiencing design processes serves to reflect on the status quo and sounding out possible design solutions. The goal of this activity is breaking with convention, re-thinking things and opening up new areas for action.

In this respect, adequate attention must be focussed on the multifaceted potential of young people, and conditions must be provided that allow this potential its full development. Unfortunately, up to now the promised paradigm shift has been reflected in the education system to only a very limited extent, or has been responded to merely with tightly structured “creative training” sessions.

***Creativity needs freedom.
It is something more than “superficial creativity”.***

But creativity – the ability to create something new – needs to be allowed to grow and develop in its own way and in its own time; it needs patience and faith. Creativity cannot be measured or produced according to scale. It cannot be categorised. It lives on freedom, not commands. (The problem is: The systems we have now are enormous categorisation and compartmentalisation machines, which oppose behaviour that diverges from the norm.) Creativity requires self-organised people and tolerant, open communities. This is what cultural education aims for.

Inadequate and bad teaching are hindrances.

However, the clear hierarchisation of school subjects, exacerbated by the OECD instrument of the PISA Study (at present, primary importance is given to the subjects that PISA tests) and coinciding, perhaps, with a prevailing mood of short-sighted utilitarianism in society, is not conducive to achieving this aim. This societal tendency to see and value only direct usefulness does not recognise larger interrelationships and does not look far enough ahead. Yet we know that the problems we face in the future can only be solved if, in addition to using rational approaches, we cultivate forms of communication that are capable of making complicated and complex situations perceptible and comprehensible. Only then can action be guided by knowledge.

Artistic languages make an important contribution to the development of these kinds of communication. But because of their mainly peripheral position in most education systems, or due to qualitatively inadequate teaching, not only are specific forms of intelligence and understanding not fostered, the very opposite is the case: they are actually obstructed.

Teachers play a decisive role in awakening and encouraging creative potential. They provide examples in the way they teach and through their personality.

This is why teacher training is so important. Teachers must be capable of capturing their pupils' interest and fostering their abilities in the sense described above and thus of presenting lessons clearly and competently enough to achieve these goals. At the same time, they must be interested in an interdisciplinary approach and have the corresponding capacity to work cooperatively.

As a matter of fact, a large percentage of teachers are in favour of artistic and cultural activities and a number of them engage in such activities with commitment, which results in lasting positive effects for everyone involved. At the same time, there is an obvious disproportionality between the personal commitment required on the part of the teachers and the small amount of institutional support they receive in a system where openness for such activities is lacking. Often enough, teachers have to battle all kinds of structural resistance before they can carry out their activities.

***Art and educational institutions have an educational mandate.
A new learning culture has to be promoted by enabling new learning communities and supporting networks.***

Cultural institutions, too, need to rethink their roles in connection with cultural education; generally, the production, presentation and preservation of the cultural heritage are placed in the foreground while education takes a back seat.

In this respect, great differences are observable among the various countries of Europe. As far as mandates and measures relating to cultural and educational policy are concerned, a number of cultural institutions offer cultural education programmes which are also school-oriented.



Example 5: An art education programme in a border region. During the “signs” project, an art education project supported by KulturKontakt Austria, Austrian and Czech apprentices attending regional vocational schools were creatively concerned with the border area, the landscape and their living conditions. The goal was not only the extension of the real, external border area but also the challenge posed by borders and prejudices in the mind. The exemplary series of projects “Programm K3” is intended to motivate apprentices to independent cultural activities via a communicative exchange with cultural workers and artists which starts out from the realities of their own work and living situation. KulturKontakt Austria is active in the area of cultural education at the interface between education, art and culture. Innovative projects, programmes and methods of participative art and cultural education are developed here under a mandate from the Federal Ministry of Education, Art and Culture.

These vary from country to country. The fact is that for some time now, these institutions have been no longer measured by their artistic production alone, but also by their ability to attract an interested and informed public and to fulfil their educational function. Increasingly, this is leading to intensified contact between these “educational partners” and, at least in some European countries, to helpful accompanying structural measures.

Moreover, some cultural institutions explicitly assume the cultural and political mission of reaching socially disadvantaged and educationally underprivileged target groups, as well as of generally facilitating cultural participation for young people.

An unfocussed use of terminology can lead to misunderstandings and false expectations.

Aesthetic education thus leads, as it were, to the heart of cultural education. The important thing is to provide a sensual approach and a playful exposure to art and culture. Other essential elements are thought, communication and integrative processes.

While artistic education starts with the subject, cultural education is dialogical in nature and focuses on the way people deal with their fellow human beings and with the environment. It contributes to people’s socialisation and strengthens their ability to participate actively in the life of society – at various levels and in a variety of ways.

Cultural education has been on the European agenda for a number of years. It is not the particular concern of a few idealists interest in art and culture. It is a professional sphere of action in which teachers, cultural educators and artists work.

Their goal is to develop cultural competence – which is considered one of the key competences of the 21st century.⁹⁾ Cultural competence develops and expands in the course of long-term learning processes if these are allowed to proceed at individual speeds. It evolves to the best advantage in a lifelong and life-accompanying educational process.

It is in this respect that obstacles and questions arise: In a globalised society characterised by competition and pressure to perform, where do we find space and time for imagination, individuality and creativity, unoccupied zones for open, curious encounters, for constructively dealing with contradictions, for solidarity?

⁹⁾ Recommendation of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 December 2006 on key competences for lifelong learning (OJ L 394 / 30.12.2006).

Culture and cultural competence are understood differently.

If we think about cultural competence and try to determine what it really is, we also have to reflect on what precisely is meant by culture. There are a number of definitions, some of them similar to one another and others contradictory, and they all can influence the approach taken with respect to necessary cultural policy measures.

I shall single out those which exemplify the various positions and enable us to recognise the conflicting perspectives:

Raymond Williams defines culture “as a whole way of life”, thus offering the leitmotif of Anglo-American cultural studies, which dissolves the boundary between everyday culture and high culture and thereby significantly influences the European debate.¹⁰⁾

10) Raymond Williams, e.g. in *The Long Revolution* (London: Chatto and Windus, 1961. Reissued with additional footnotes, Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1965)



Example 6: Cultural competence is defined in the recommendations of the European parliament and commission as a recognition of the importance of the artistic expression of ideas, experiences and feelings in various artistic media. Knowledge, abilities, preservation of values and attitudes (such as respect and openness with regard to the diversity and cultural expression) are cited as components of cultural competence. These stretch from informed dealings with cultural heritage through openness towards the diversity of conflicting cultural practices in the present to visionary approaches that anticipate problematic and challenging positions in the future.

Another broad definition is the definition of culture used by UNESCO. It describes culture as “the whole complex of distinctive spiritual, material, intellectual and emotional features that characterise a society or social group” (including modes of life, value systems, religious and other beliefs and traditions).¹¹⁾

11) UNESCO World Conference on Cultural Policies in Mexico City, 1982

The British “All Our Futures” report, which introduces the Creative Partnerships programme, describes culture as shared values and patterns of behaviour that characterise various social groupings and communities. Behind this is a multicultural and multi-ethnic society in which cultural diversity is understood as a central idea of social and cultural policy.¹²⁾

12) National Advisory Committee on Creative and Cultural Education (NACCCE), “All our Futures: Creativity, Culture and Education” (1999)



Example 7: Two societies from many... If we regard it as essential to the future that we succeed in making cultural diversity accessible to our children, then it will be important to learn something of ourselves and the world from the various perspectives, intellectual paradigms and inventive paths offered by art and culture in all its different forms.

In Western Europe, particularly in the German-speaking countries, culture has up to now been seen as a tradition within the context of the history of ideas, a tradition which follows the ideal of the “cultivated person” held by educated middle-class intellectuals since the mid-18th century. In this context, high culture is considered an educational treasure, to which everyday culture and popular culture are seen, at times, in alarming contrast.

Nevertheless, traditional, outdated cultural concepts have for some time been dissipating in the wake of a plurality of life styles that no longer submits to any binding canon of high art as a matter of course. To this extent, an up-to-date concept of cultural education is based on the assumption that there are areas of interaction at the interfaces of everyday culture and so-called high culture.¹³⁾

13) Michael Wimmer, “Vielfalt und Kooperation. Kulturelle Bildung in Österreich – Strategien für die Zukunft”, study conducted for the Austrian Federal Ministry for Education, the Arts and Culture (2007)

The ability to enter into intercultural dialogue and transcultural understanding will decide our future.

When we speak of culture and education today, we have to take into account global migrations, worldwide communication networks, international business groups and the problem of poverty, which concerns all societies.

Europe, both as a cultural area and as an economic area, needs qualified citizens with intercultural competence, interest in linguistic diversity, the willingness to partake in innovative lateral thinking, a vigorous sense of social awareness and the capacity to act with solidarity.

It is evident that diversity and a multicultural environment tend to stimulate creativity.¹⁴⁾

The dialogue between the cultures and the discussion of similarities and differences – in other words, of Europe’s diversity – is the basis for harmonious and peaceful co-existence. It creates quality of life and opportunities for development for everyone and strengthens our sense of responsibility for a united Europe and for the world as a whole.

14) Council Conclusion on promoting creativity and innovation through education and training; Council of the European Union, Brussel, 22.5.2008

Educational policy that has as its goal tolerance and mutual understanding has the potential to transform the increasing multiculturalism of European societies into an asset for creativity, innovation and growth.¹⁵⁾

15) as cited



Example 8: project cooperation with international as well as non-European partners – transcultural project work embedded in various social fields are an increasingly important part of the work of the Department of Art and Communication Practices at the University of Applied Arts in Vienna. The potential inherent in the practice of art and art education outside the conventional sites of art production and presentation will be examined. The aim is reflected practice in which new areas of experience and action are made available and within which all participants feel represented. Culture is understood as a process, as the production and exchange of shared meaning. It is in this sense that these projects follow up on the various levels of construction of the so-called Other and so-called ‘own’.

Cultural education thus implies opening up our society by means of art and culture. Open forms of learning and shared creative processes create space for encounters and for dealing constructively with differences.

This space has physical, intellectual, sensual, emotional and social dimensions.

Cultural education cannot simply be prescribed.

It requires a new culture of teaching and learning, which

- is open and cooperative both internally and externally,
- focuses on the needs of the pupils,
- is open to innovative, interdisciplinary work and
- is project-oriented.



Example 9: Festival der Lampions.[Lantern Festival] Following an artist initiated project in the 80s, the asbl COOPERATIONS 1990 was founded in Wiltz(Lux.). Today COOPERATIONS is • a socio-cultural enterprise with a wide spectrum of activities focussed on professional orientation and artistic practices, • a cultural, social and educational service provider, • an actor in regional development integrated into the development strategy for north-west Luxembourg. The association's mission is the effective implementation of "creativity as a hub for sociocultural and socioeconomic participation". COOPERATIONS' programmes reflect this concept and today these are regarded as valuable tools in combating social exclusion on the one hand and, on the other, they are recognised as contributing to individual and local development.

In this sense, the Austrian Minister of Education Dr. Claudia Schmied describes cultural education as a central motif of the current development of the school system.

It is a common concern and a dynamic process involving parents, pupils, teachers, school administrations, artists, cultural educators and the societal environment as well as the industrial, political and administrative sectors.

Quality in cultural education is achieved by means of exchange and partnerships; a major factor in achieving such quality is thus the ability to cooperate.

It is necessary to initiate and extend networks and partnerships between culture and working life that also includes civil society and other stakeholders.

Such partnerships require the proper supporting framework conditions and supervision. And they succeed best in cases where such activities become a part of the overall strategic orientation of an institution.

Essential preconditions for good cooperation are:

- shared spaces for these types of learning,
- common visions,
- clear strategies,

- mutual trust and shared responsibility,
 - good cooperation and
 - excellent communication between the partners.
- The boundaries between schools and communities must be permeable;
 - excessive formalisation in the planning and implementation of activities must be avoided
 - and a more open discourse on quality must be achieved.
 - Commitment needs to be appropriately valued.

In order to be able to learn from one another and pass on experience and knowledge, it is important

- to document processes and results
- and to set up data bases, systematise them and make them accessible.¹⁶⁾

¹⁶⁾ Michael Wimmer, "Vielfalt und Kooperation. Kulturelle Bildung in Österreich – Strategien für die Zukunft" (2007)

Learning communities and educational policy measures need to be based on good practices, differentiated exchange and appropriate dissemination.

Overstepping institutional boundaries, attempting to break out of clearly delimited systems, does not, as a rule, proceed without conflicts. And it always demands above-average commitment. Stretching boundaries always begins with taking an interest in others. It requires openness for new things and the courage to become involved in something that could develop in unforeseen ways.

The European goals - equality of opportunity for all, cosmopolitanism and justice - have to lead the way.

If we are aware of the challenges that life today presents for individuals and the community – namely, not merely to tolerate cultural differences but to analyse them and come to understand the reasons behind their ever new manifestations, not to confuse integration with assimilation, and to see participation as a constructive and active “taking part” rather than only as something passive – then we have arrived at the core of cultural education.



Example 10: In 2003 Simon Rattle, principal conductor of the Berlin Philharmonic, began a dance project in cooperation with Royston Maldoom and 250 children from very different social backgrounds living in Berlin. Stravinsky’s “The Rite of Spring” was rehearsed together and performed in the Trepow Arena am Treptower Park with great success. Embedded in a series of projects this cooperative effort was aimed at addressing young people from socially dysfunctional areas by using the production level to turn it into a joint space for experience and negotiation about the differing views of music, movement; of life and aims.

Royston Maldoom, dance and choreographer, says:
 “Through dance we can connect both our inner selves and others, transcending barriers of language, race, gender, with the potential to overcome negative attitudes to our differing economic, social, religious and cultural background, and at the same time maintaining our own particular identity.”

Whether it is language, media culture, music, visual culture and art, dance, drama, design, architecture, material culture, fashion, everyday culture, rites, forms of thinking and acting, or aspects of everyday culture that form the basis of cultural dialogue: we are drawing here on a treasure trove of languages and ways of articulating, of knowledge and experience, of history and the present day.

Cultural education grows out of learning processes that take the inner differentiations and complexities of culture into account. It lets us experience the learning process with the senses and allows us to internally comprehend how people, under different conditions, have understood the world, interpreted it, acted in it and changed it in different ways and continue to do so.

Our openness for learning processes of this kind is continually being challenged.



Example 11: „treffen“. What happens when artistic working methods are infiltrated into a system that has nothing to do with art? The example given here presents a series of works made during a week-long project in a care centre for people with special needs. It documents the intensive work processes of a group of men who were personally unable to make themselves verbally understood but who, over the course of a week, developed a series of wooden sculptures that formulated their individual and group needs and communicated them to the system. The works dealt with the issues of increased privacy, communication with the outside world, the ambivalence between control and overview and the desire for self-administered rooms for meetings.

It is when resources become scanty and insecurity grows, when a lack of opportunities allows no visions of the future, that borders are closed up tight and there is a tendency to retreat behind hardened constructions of what is one's own and what is alien. Idealisations and demonisations are frequent side effects of this process. Deviations from what is familiar engender rejection and aggression, or are penalised with marginalisation. Discussions about identity and culture then often serve the purpose of justifying separation and exclusion. Cultural education programmes cannot work miracles, but they can introduce new perspectives, make restrictive views and actions perceptible, and challenge people to make a move – however small. In this sense they open up negotiation spaces, promote active debate and thus help to develop a conflict culture. (This can be compared to the work strategies of the Japan Foundation in the field of peacemaking.)



Example 12: Bordergames is a project to empower young migrants through the process of designing and programming a videogame fully made by them. Bordergames comprises a series of workshops, a videogame engine and an editor which allows young migrants not only to design a video game in which their experiences are the main element, but also to learn the importance of becoming familiar with new technologies and using them to self-organise and recover control over their own lives and environments. www.bordergames.org Spain

Parallel to the school, learning is increasingly taking place in informal contexts and during free time. ICT-based instruments of learning are on offer and extremely helpful.

In addition living outside the centres should not result in any disadvantages for the individual.

The use of new technologies can develop these projects considerably further and open up entirely new dimensions for communication and negotiation.

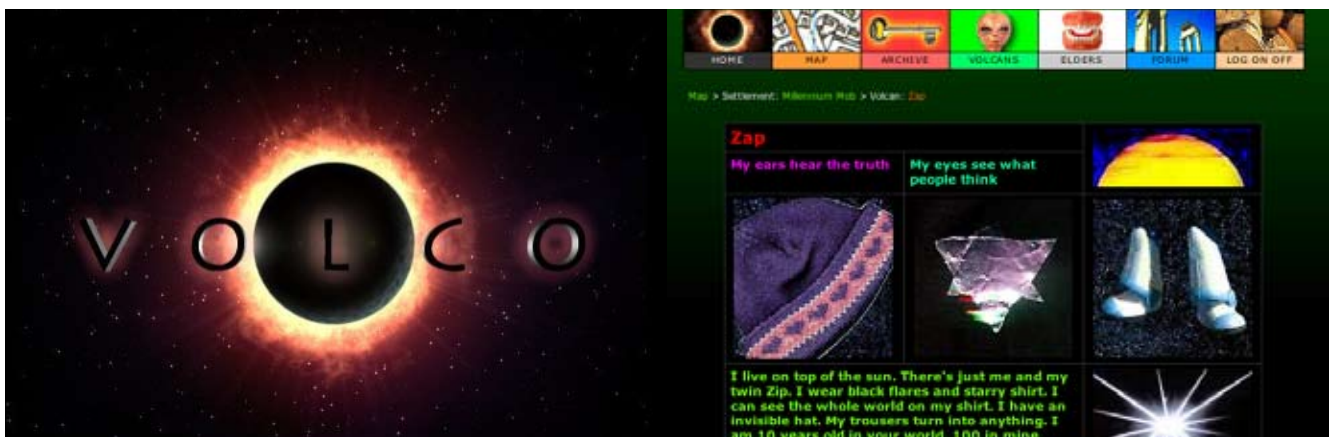


Example 13: “Here we only cook with love”. The illustrated “cookbook” is a document produced by a cooperative effort between art and art education students and the tenants of a high-rise complex on the outskirts of Vienna – a social hot spot with a high level of latent violence. Initial encounters in which cooking and eating together represented the central element of familial life led to stories about cooking and life that sketched an impressive portrait of the tenants and their worlds. By working jointly on the book, areas were opened up which the tenants had previously reacted to with disinterest or rejection, shyness or fear.

Differences should be accepted and constructively negotiated.

Every society is permeated with cultural differences. They arise between generations as well as between different communities and sexes, between social groupings and between a variety of self-chosen affiliations. They develop as a result of people’s different backgrounds and reflect different life situations. And we carry them inside us. They construct identity. How we deal with these outer and inner differences plays a role in determining our future.

In this sense, too, the growing importance of cultural education is confirmed in many ways.



Example 14: Volco - a virtual planet in cyberspace by and for children. Volco is an evolving Virtual Online Co-Operative environment, a planet in cyberspace being constructed by children and young people communicating via the Internet and making links across geographic and cultural divides. The project taps into the energy of popular net culture and facilitates co-operative relationships between participants of different backgrounds and life experiences, while enabling a new, virtual society to emerge out of their combined imaginations. Inventing VOLCO children explore new, imaginative and co-operative ways of creating a better life on their own planet. www.volco.org

Excellent and exemplary practice works towards countering marginalisation, isolation and exclusion.

A broad spectrum of projects and programmes can cater to the needs of a wide variety of target groups. Numerous best practice examples have been documented.

Europe has a mandate relating to educational and cultural policy:

But above and beyond the colourful practice of projects developed and implemented by dedicated educators, and apart from philosophic discourse, cultural education requires

- a suitable infrastructure,
- financial and human resources,
- discourse among experts about content and objectives and
- the appropriate political framework conditions.

In this context, measures are needed in the area of cultural and educational policy, for example,

- the coordination of individual measures,
- advocacy and lobbying,
- an intensification of European cooperation,
- structural safeguarding of cultural education programmes in the schools and outside them, and
- research funding.

In conclusion, I should like to mention a number of examples of individual, committed initiatives, measures, institutions and advocates of cultural education in Europe:

- **UNESCO**, Road Map for Arts Education. Developed within the framework of the World Conference on Arts Education: Building Creative Capacities for the 21st Century, Lisbon, 6–9 March 2006
- **Kultur-Rucksack**, Norway. The “Culture Rucksack” is a state programme aimed at bringing elementary school pupils in contact with the professional art sphere.
- **Cooperations Wiltz Luxembourg**; www.cooperations.lu
- **Creative Partnerships**. A programme of the arm’s length organisation Arts Council England for schools in poor or disadvantaged areas, aimed at developing the creative abilities of young people and strengthening their self-confidence and motivation; a cooperation of pupils, teachers and creative practitioners.
- **Cultuurnetwerk Nederlands**. Network of the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science of the Netherlands.
- **Culture and School Network** of civil servants from cultural and educational administrations: www.culture-school.net/network.htm; www.cultuurnetwerk.nl/glossary/ge/index.html
- **Canon Cultuurcel**. Cultural entity of the Flemish Ministry of Education. Objective: promotion and networking of the sphere of art and culture with teachers, pupils and extracurricular youth work.
- **Arts Awards**. Qualification certificate awarded by the Arts Council England and Trinity Guildhall College. Individual learning programme which supports young people in their development as artists and arts leaders.
- **Kompetenznachweis Kultur**. A “cultural qualification” certificate for children and young people, coordinated by the Bundesvereinigung kulturelle Jugendbildung (German federal association of cultural youth education).
- **CKV-Bonnen**. Gutscheine für Kultur. Voucher system of the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science of the Netherlands that helps pupils and teachers finance participation in cultural activities.
- **EDUCULT**. An independent institute for culture and education in Vienna, Austria. Goal: To interlink culture and education in theory and practice.
- **KulturKontakt**, Vienna, Austria. Centre of excellence for cultural education, cultural dialogue and educational cooperation with Central, Eastern and South Eastern Europe.

credits

Barbara Putz-Plecko is Vice-Rector of the University of Applied Arts Vienna and head of the Department of Art and Communication Practices / Textile Department, related to Art Education Programmes.

2007/2008 she was a member of the committee of education experts of the Federal Ministry for Education, Arts and Culture.

© Text: Barbara Putz-Plecko, 2008

photo credits:

- Cover: „Denkkappen“, („Caps for Thinking“) University of Applied Arts, Vienna, Textile Department, Univ. Prof. Barbara Putz-Plecko; Costume © Jean-Paul Gaultier
- Page 3: University of Applied Arts, Vienna, Department of Art and Communication Practices / Textile Department, B. Putz-Plecko
- Page 4: „textil:mobil“, University of Applied Arts, Vienna, Textile Department, B. Putz-Plecko
- Page 6: „design°mobil“, University of Applied Arts, Vienna, Department of Design, Architecture and Environment for Art Education, Univ. Prof. James Skone
- Page 8: Land-Art Project „Signs“, 2006, Kulturkontakt, @ Doris Prenn/prenn_punkt,
- Page 9: Guggenheim Museum, Bilbao; Trulli, Sardegna; Schloss Schönbrunn, Vienna; Farmhouse, Black Forest, Deutschland; Edouard Manet, The Luncheon on the Grass; Punks, London, GB
- Page 10: „UGATRA Project“ University of Applied Arts, Vienna, Department of Art and Communication Practices / Textile Department, B. Putz-Plecko
- Page 11: asbl COOPERATIONS, Wiltz, Luxembourg
- Page 12: Rhythm is it!, Simon Rattle, Royston Maldoom and 250 children in Berlin
- Page 13: Projekt Treffen; www.Bordergames.org
- Page 14: www.volco.org

English translation: Beverly Blaschke, Tim Sharp

Traduction française: Traude Chatel

Graphic design: Studio Putz+, www.ewigesarchiv.at

Download report: www.dieangewandte.at/aktuell