

World Conference on Arts Education
Lisbon 2006

Canadian Reflections
on Arts and Learning:
The Challenge
of Systemic Change

Ottawa 2006



CANADIAN COMMISSION FOR UNESCO
COMMISSION CANADIENNE POUR L'UNESCO

www.unesco.ca

World Conference on Arts Education
Lisbon 2006

Canadian Reflections on
Arts and Learning:
The Challenge of Systemic Change

Canadian Commission for UNESCO
Ottawa 2006



CANADIAN COMMISSION FOR UNESCO
COMMISSION CANADIENNE POUR L'UNESCO

www.unesco.ca

ISBN 0-9780369-0-5

INTRODUCTION

Message from the President of the Canadian Commission for UNESCO

The challenges and opportunities presented by the diverse and complex modern world demand innovative, imaginative and generous responses. Through fostering the process of learning to know, learning to do, learning to be and learning to live together, engagement with the arts and cultural expression strengthens the creative process, encourages social and inter-cultural harmony and develops individuals of confidence, imagination and transformative vision.

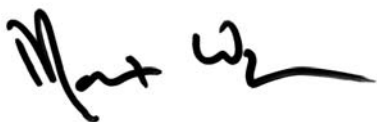
However, it has become evident to many - both in Canada and globally - that modern society is short-changing both itself and its young in the area of arts education. UNESCO, which sees education as a necessary building block in the construction of a global culture of peace, describes "an urgent need for reform" in the area of arts education.

As its contribution to Canada's involvement in the UNESCO World Conference on Arts Education in Lisbon, Portugal, in March 2006, the Canadian Commission for UNESCO undertook extensive consultations on the current state of arts education in Canada during late 2004 and 2005.

This report on those consultations provides a concise snapshot of the thinking that currently surrounds the issue, and of the potential for development and growth in this area. We hope it will be a useful tool in the deliberations of the delegates to the world conference. Information of this nature can help stimulate discussions and exchanges that can provide all Member States with understanding and opportunities to overcome mutual challenges.

This report does not represent an official Canadian position on arts education. All official reports on education in Canada come from the Council of Ministers of Education, Canada (CMEC) on behalf of ministers of education of the provinces and territories, since exclusive responsibility for education in Canada rests with the ten provinces and three territories. I wish, however, to acknowledge the collaboration and support of CMEC in the Canadian Commission for UNESCO's consultation process.

It is clear that, despite the great challenges, much has already been achieved by persistent and visionary educator-pioneers. The arts and arts education are alive and well in Canada, and a vigorous and vocal community is determined to ensure that they thrive. For all their various differences of viewpoint and experience, all participants in our consultations were united in their deep understanding of the issues, their values and their commitment to arts education in Canada - a vivid testimony to Canadian engagement and generosity of spirit. The Canadian Commission for UNESCO is confident that their passion will be felt and their messages heard.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Max Wyman', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Dr. Max Wyman, O.C.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT.....	4
INTRODUCTION.....	5
Context.....	5
Methodology.....	6
Definitions.....	6
SUMMARY OF CANADIAN COMMENTS AND PROPOSALS BASED ON MAJOR CONFERENCE THEMES	
ADVOCACY	7
1. The Importance of Arts Education.....	7
2. Strategies for Arts Education Advocacy.....	9
THE IMPACT OF ARTS EDUCATION.....	11
1. The Benefits of Arts Education.....	11
2. The Need for More Research	11
STRATEGIES FOR PROMOTING ARTS EDUCATION POLICIES.....	12
1. Funding.....	12
2. Bridging Gaps between Policy and Delivery.....	12
3. Partnerships.....	13
4. Lifelong Learning.....	13
TEACHER TRAINING POLICIES.....	14
1. Approaches to Arts Education.....	14
2. Formal Arts Education.....	14
3. Non-formal Arts Education.....	15
4. Teacher Education.....	15
5. The Complementary Roles of the Artist and the Community.....	16
CONCLUSION.....	18
Acknowledgements.....	19

ABSTRACT

This report is a synthesis of consultations on arts education held from October 2004 and December 2005 in Canada, in the cities of Halifax, Ottawa, Toronto, Regina and Vancouver. Approximately 180 participants took part, representing governmental and non-governmental organizations, provinces and territories, as well as individual artists. The subjects discussed were: arts education and creativity, accessibility, quality in arts education, challenges in arts education and strengthening the role of arts and learning. The report is part of Canada's contribution to the World Conference on Arts Education to be held in Portugal in 2006.

The headings used in this report are the four major themes chosen by the conference organizers: Advocacy, The Impact of Arts Education, Strategies for Promoting Arts Education Policies, and Teachers' Training Policies. This format allows the reader to link Canadian views and approaches to what is being presented and discussed at the World Conference. The report addresses the following key components: statements on the importance of arts education; strategies for arts education advocacy; the impact of arts education; the benefits of arts education and the need for more research; strategies for promoting arts education; funding; bridging the gaps between policy and delivery; partnerships; lifelong learning; a description of arts education; teacher education and the role of the artist and of the community. Proposals and suggestions have been provided in the appropriate sections.

INTRODUCTION

Context

The role of the Canadian Commission for UNESCO (CCU) is to provide a forum for governments and civil society and to act as a catalyst for the participation of Canadian organizations and committed individuals in UNESCO's mandated areas: education, natural and social sciences, culture and communications and information. It operates at arm's length from the Canadian government.

One of UNESCO's roles as an "upstream" agency is to identify areas or issues of concern. One such area is creativity and arts education, which UNESCO has identified as an essential building block in the creation of a culture of peace. It has therefore called on Member States to work to place teaching about, in and through the arts at the heart of formal and non-formal education.

At the UNESCO General Conference of 1999, then Director-General Federico Mayor launched an appeal for the promotion of arts education and creativity in schools and in non-formal settings as part of the construction of a culture of peace. He called for a holistic approach to arts education that included the participation of cultural institutions, communities and families. A broad definition of arts education was to be used that would include such arts as the spoken word, literature, visual arts, music, drama, dance and film.

The objectives of UNESCO and its global community for arts education are to contribute to the integration of the arts and creativity in the learning process; to foster the development of the fulfilled individual; and to encourage mutual respect and understanding among cultures and peoples.

From 2001 to 2005 regional expert meetings were held in Finland, Fiji, Brazil, Jordan, South Africa, Hong Kong, Lithuania and Korea to share best practices, examine trends and program frameworks and content, and to prepare for the World Conference on Arts Education in Lisbon, Portugal, March 6-9, 2006.

The preparatory meeting for the Europe region was held in Vilnius, Lithuania, in September, 2005. Canada participated in this meeting with experts from provincial ministries and from the field of arts education. The objectives of this meeting were to examine political and program issues in arts education in preparation for the World Conference. Several recommendations followed this conference and are available on the web site, [LEA International: UNESCO Culture Sector](#).

In March 2006, UNESCO will be hosting the World Conference on Arts Education: Building Creative Capacities for the 21st Century, in Portugal. The conference will have four major themes: Advocacy, The Impact of Arts Education, Strategies for Promoting Arts Education Policies, and Teachers' Training Policies. It will include specialized panels, roundtable discussions and practical workshops. Canada's contribution to the World Conference 2006 will include the present report on arts education which is a summary of consultations held across the country by the Canadian Commission for UNESCO and its partners.

Purpose of the Consultations in Canada

The Commission, with the help of its partners, the Canada Council for the Arts, the Council of Ministers of Education, Canada, and the Canadian Conference of the Arts, hosted a series of six consultation meetings across Canada. These meetings present a comprehensive view of arts education in Canada and one that the Canadian Commission and its partners can use in their initiative, "*Arts and Learning: A Call to Action*".

Methodology

The report was prepared by organizing comments made by participants gathered from all six meetings held by the Canadian Commission for UNESCO on arts education in Canada. Comments were summarized and placed under the headings of the four main themes for discussion selected by conference organizers. A compilation and synthesis of original statements have been given in order to retain the breadth and depth of contributions from all participants. This approach allows the reader to comprehend more clearly the priorities and values Canadians share about arts education.

Definitions and descriptions of key terms

For the purpose of this document the following definitions and descriptions of key terms will be used:

- Formal education is education or training that is received in schools, colleges and universities.
- Non-formal can be described as organized, systematic educational activity carried on outside the framework of the formal system.
- Informal education is defined as learning at home or in some other non-institutional setting, such as learning from parents or family members, and lifelong learning that essentially happens as part of the experience of living.
- Learning *in* the arts refers to learning the specific knowledge and skills of a particular art form.
- Learning *about* the arts is generally an integral part of the arts program and allows the student to understand and appreciate works of art as well as the function and history of a particular art form.
- Learning *through* the arts involves using art lessons to teach concepts that are being studied in other subjects of the curriculum (geometric forms in a visual arts lesson to help with mathematics) or a skill (for example conflict resolution through drama). This approach is also called integration. The arts are used in this way to teach other subjects or are integrated into other subjects.

SUMMARY OF CANADIAN COMMENTS AND PROPOSALS BASED ON MAJOR CONFERENCE THEMES

ADVOCACY

Advocacy is an essential component of the work of all organizations and programs dealing with arts education. Visibility, support, appreciation, awareness, and participation are the goals of arts education advocacy. Advocacy initiatives need to be geared to target audiences. People in arts education are hungry for advocacy tools, arguments and evidence of the importance of arts education. When engaged in advocacy, it is important to have a clear, concise and consistent message about arts education and to use information and data that can stand up to scrutiny. It is also essential to maintain a broad view of our concepts of art and the role of arts education. The following information deals with the importance of the arts and arts education, and with strategies for arts education advocacy.

1. The Importance of Arts Education

The agenda of every consultation meeting began with the question, “*Why is arts education important?*” The purpose of this discussion was to elicit arguments for the benefits of formal, non-formal and informal learning in the arts, both for the individual and for society. The comments clearly demonstrated the empowering and engaging nature of arts education. This discussion was significant in that it revealed fundamental attitudes and beliefs that determine how individuals and indeed Canadian society as a whole value arts education. It provided participants with a statement of their collective views of the importance of arts education.

Participants offered some cautionary remarks which have also been recorded in this section. This list of comments, along with similar comments from the world community, can be a starting point for interesting and helpful research that can then be used for advocacy purposes.

In the following list of statements about the importance of the arts and arts education, the arts and arts education are often used interchangeably. This list has been divided into two categories, namely those that are directly related to the individual and those that refer to society as a whole

The arts and arts education are important to the individual because they:

- are a birthright and a cultural right;
- allow us to express ourselves artistically;
- have the power to touch the core of an individual;
- engage and release the imagination;
- educate the heart;
- offer a connection to the intuitive and transcendent;
- make us happy, providing joy and wonderful memories;
- address the body, the spirit and the intellect as one;
- help us find our voice and our identity;
- encourage risk-taking;
- help connect us to our bodies;
- engage us and allow us to think with a “multi-reality vision”;
- impart creative and interpretive skills;
- provide support and development for those with great talent;
- teach us to articulate and exercise better judgment in the arts;
- teach individuals to become artists, helping them to “create” their lives by acquiring and using observational, analytical and technical skills;

- are integral to life;
- are a life-long enterprise which can be very rewarding and most successful when taken up early in life;
- provide ways of knowing and ways to communicate;
- allow the student to access the artist: to hear, to see and to use the artist as a model;
- engender self-esteem, self-awareness and confidence;
- improve our ability to think and work creatively;
- provide us with a sense of history;
- broaden the individual;
- create diversity, which is important for a balanced life;
- change us and change society;
- develop critical thinking;
- are a portal for other experiences;
- are great tools that lend themselves to many purposes;
- speak to our need for mystery and difference;
- speak to our primal needs;
- can prevent and help solve social and personal problems;
- give us a sense of accomplishment;
- give participants a sense of belonging;
- are an integral part of our daily activities;
- provide solutions to personal problems such as shyness and to other problems in work situations;
- are a way of inquiry, of gathering information and accessing knowledge which is very significant because we live in an “information and knowledge-based society”;
- help many students come alive, push themselves more, take on tasks more willingly, look at greater possibilities and be more supportive towards one other;
- transform the artist as well as the audience;
- can be cathartic and therapeutic for individuals and whole groups;
- can help us earn a living.

The arts and arts education are important for society because they:

- define us;
- play an archival role in society helping to conserve a diversity of cultural forms;
- reflect the health of a society and are a requirement for a healthy society;
- allow us to explore and celebrate this unique ability that humans have;
- the arts provide an essential social and psychological infrastructure;
- build community and social cohesion and bring people together;
- provide group-building experiences that help disenfranchised youth and contribute to crime prevention;
- prevent the loss of culture and promote tolerance, compassion and understanding of ourselves and others;
- help bridge the gap between high and low art, the rich and the poor, social classes, religious groups and people from all walks of life;
- break down language barriers, allowing us to share and to communicate in a more universal form;
- create opportunities for diverse groups of people to work on together regardless of their political, social or ethnic backgrounds;
- teach us skills that help us to resolve conflicts and reconcile our differences;
- help develop a sense of social justice;
- help society articulate and share its values;
- help us to tell our stories and thus to define who we are;

- can help young people and adults learn about our collective histories;
- are a tool for social change because they educate people about important issues and can reach greater and more diverse audiences;
- give a voice to those who do not have a public voice;
- provide a cultural background to understand the past, and thus is of great cultural significance for children and creates a sense of belonging for them;
- are an effective teaching tool and develop the skills needed in other subjects;
- help meet the needs of students with different learning styles;
- appeal to many students and help them to resist the oppressive idea that there is a right and a wrong way of doing the work;
- keep certain students from dropping out of the school system;
- help students do better in schools;
- can be cathartic and therapeutic for some students;
- are a life-saver for some students;
- contribute to the development of a “creative class” adding an economic value to communities;
- foster skills like creativity, flexibility, problem-solving, transferability and collaboration that are highly prized by organizations in our society.

Cautionary Remarks

While arts education fosters and develops creativity, it does not have a monopoly on developing creativity. We short-change the arts when we try to justify them primarily on their instrumental value, or over-emphasize their role in increasing self-esteem and learning other subjects such as mathematics. There is a danger that the arts can more easily be dropped or side-lined if we do this. Keeping the arts front and centre while valuing them for themselves is far more important. It is more important to defend the arts because of their uniqueness as forms of cultural expression for the individual and society. Some participants felt that the arts and arts education can at times be perceived as a threat. Certain art works challenge and question societal values as well as political and social arrangements.

2. Strategies for Arts Education Advocacy

Many participants believed that strategies for arts education advocacy should target all levels of society and highlighted the fact that the arts and arts education are relevant to daily life. Youth participants stressed that it is difficult to tell people about arts education: it must be demonstrated and experienced. The following are examples of the numerous and various strategies that were suggested:

- invite governments to market arts education to different audiences by using the audience's own language and perspective on arts education;
- create a continual flow of information and updates to and for different target audiences with ideas and examples of best practices;
- create partnerships with the business community to get visibility. There is no need to work only through the educational structures;
- encourage the use of action research as an important advocacy tool for arts education in communities. The tensions of doing community-based research can be overcome by participatory action research and research done by community members. There is a need to advocate for this form of research;
- inform parents of the benefits of arts education and of their right to demand arts education for their children. They should also be encouraged and shown how to exercise that right;
- create more discussion and debate about arts education using different sources and channels to ensure that arts education is always in the public eye.

- recognize and support individuals who make a difference in getting things done;
- give the arts community (artists, art groups, and art educators) who are a very creative force, a greater place in advocacy;
- advocate for an important place for the arts in society by being passionate about what we do and telling our stories;
- promote the fact that having arts education gives individuals an edge in whatever they do;
- produce a film that makes the case that arts education is essential to a healthy society;
- inform society about the richness and value added of using the arts and art activities in the home. For example, singing to your children is as important as reading to your children;
- make theatre practices part of everyday life. Citizens should be encouraged to use “forum theatre” (based on Augusto Boal theatre techniques) to discuss government policies and give the result of this work to politicians;
- encourage the creation of “Arts Cafés” similar to “Philosopher Cafés”;
- create a “Creative Cities Policy Programs” that would be used by every city and influence all decision making in a city;
- create and equip art mobiles with art products and resources, and send them out to rural communities (example: the Van Gogh traveling art project in Vancouver);
- place art in public spaces, government buildings, community buildings, banks, shopping centres and grocery stores;
- create community “art spaces”: grassroots locales where people can be creative, using existing public spaces such as arenas and libraries;
- use mass media to get the message of the benefits of the arts to people and communities in a way that will be understood. Invite the media to conduct a survey on the true picture of the arts in relation to society;
- conduct a national campaign for arts education aimed at youth and include the concept of earning badges for achievement in certain areas of the arts, perhaps modeled on similar programs used by Girl Guides and Scouts;
- encourage students, young people and children to become strong advocates for arts education;
- encourage countries to host a National Arts Day;
- organize “career days” and invite artists from their communities;
- create an awards program for both teachers and arts education programs across the country, using credible institutions such as the Canadian Commission for UNESCO and the Canada Council for the Arts;
- start a national grassroots campaign for arts education. Convince the general population of the importance of the arts. Educate and change the public's perception about the arts in such a way that they will make arts education one of society's priorities;
- find political champions who understand the situation and provide them with support and information to initiate action on certain projects or issues in arts education. Encourage decision-makers to become art advocates;
- support artists running for public office to assure a voice in government for arts and arts education;
- add arts references in all text books (for example, mathematics, language, history, geography) to convey the message that the arts are integral to all learning;
- give tax breaks to organizations using art activities in their team building practices;
- make use of international conventions that have been signed in order to advocate for the role of arts education in certain areas and highlight implications for arts education.

THE IMPACT OF ARTS EDUCATION

The value of arts education is more readily understood when its impact is measured on the individual and society. Personal and social benefits to individuals involved in arts education include: enhanced learning skills, a better appreciation of cultural heritage and diversity, more developed social and collaborative skills, acquired transference skills, and greater motivation. The following are comments made by participants about the benefits of arts education, research and the need for more research.

1. The Benefits of Arts Education

Arts education brings both economic and social benefits and these are interrelated and complementary. Many of the organizations that contributed to the Commission's consultations described their programs as dealing with such benefits. They range from municipal, to provincial, to national programs administered by both governmental and non-governmental agencies.

Existing research indicates that arts education is important for the individual because the arts are transformative and increase learning in other areas such as language and mathematics. Societal interests are served in that arts education helps students at risk, develops collaborative skills, increases enjoyment of school and improves school attendance. The arts develop self-esteem, reveal and increase potential and help individuals communicate who they are.

In Canada a national study of *Learning through the Arts* indicated that, far from detracting from other subjects, the arts enhanced student learning in mathematics. It showed that children with learning disabilities did well and were transformed by art programs. It also had an impact on teachers' awareness of the arts. The most important theme that came out of this study, which reviewed a three-year program, was that the arts are about engagement, involving the whole person.

2. The Need for More Research

There was a general consensus that more Canadian research in arts education is needed. This research should be solid and provide information and data that can stand up to scrutiny and be accessible to a greater number of people. Most art associations and organizations expressed a need for a large data base of programs, resources, names of groups and individuals who are active in all of the arts. There is also a need to have a clearinghouse where research on the impact of arts education can be categorized and from which this information can be disseminated. More specifically, research is needed which:

- examines and articulates what children are learning in arts education;
- pools our collective resources and identifies our specific needs;
- deals with the creative process and how to teach creativity;
- assesses teacher practices in arts education and whether these practices have changed, or if they need to change;
- highlights best practices and pockets of excellence, celebrating these and using them as models;
- studies other societies and their approaches to arts education;
- examines what is really learned through digital technologies in the schools and how they meet the needs of the learner as outlined in the curriculum;
- makes explicit the existing paradigms of arts education and develops new, more fruitful ones;
- follows up on a variety of art experiences;
- collects data on alternative models for arts education;
- finds appropriate ways to measure cultural success (i.e. develop a GDWI - Gross Domestic Wellness Index - that reflects the role of art and wellness in society and could be used as an economic barometer.

STRATEGIES FOR PROMOTING ARTS EDUCATION POLICIES

In many of the regional meetings, participants presented well-developed policies and programs used in their provinces. Regardless of the intent and quality of these documents, each province faced the same difficulties, namely, that of regional disparities. Long distances, lack of resources, lack of qualified staff or quick turn-over of staff were familiar problems. Many participants had successful projects they shared with other participants at the consultation. Inter-ministerial cooperation within each province and inter-ministerial cooperation between provincial and federal agencies need to take place in order to resolve some key issues which include funding, bridging the gaps, creating partnerships and supporting lifelong learning.

1. Funding

While many arts organizations receive government and corporate funds to operate, funding is always an issue. Sustainable and on-going funding is crucial to these organizations. Corporate organisations are ready to fund arts education and need to be provided with examples on how to do this.

Participants stated that funding should be: allocated on a sliding scale; address equitable allocation of cultural resources; acknowledge that more resources are needed in some areas rather than others; and require the prioritizing of needs and acknowledge the opportunities that exist when those needs are met. Funding could be based on existing models (for example, the federal government has in the past funded technology in education across the country, and similar funding could be made available for arts education) or it could come from a new alliances and partnerships. Recently, ministries of health and justice have funded art projects based on findings of a McGill University study that proves that the arts affect psycho-social behavior and improve society at large. Funding arts education is not the same as funding specific art forms and the former should have its own set of requirements and criteria.

2. Bridging Gaps between Policy and Delivery

Over the course of our consultations many comments and suggestions were made to address regional disparities and bridge the gap between general policies and implementation. The following series of proposals deal with accessibility, integration, innovative strategies, and alternative programming solutions:

- redefine the arts, so that they are broader in scope and people can recognize the arts as being an integral part of their daily lives;
- engage in inter-generational dialogue to support and benefit the arts;
- reframe the debate so that social policies and economic policies are not pitted against each other;
- encourage the development of projects that are grassroots and on a human scale;
- encourage more transdisciplinary projects like the Three Rivers Project in the Yukon, a three-year project which integrated many disciplines and brought communities together;
- integrate Aboriginal peoples more fully at every level beginning with the planning process;
- include knowledge learned from cultures in which tradition, preservation and participation in the arts are emphasized;
- promote and support good alternative arts programs in the community that add to and complement formal school programs;
- provide more training in the arts within communities and establish mentorship programs;
- provide arts courses for pre-school children;
- develop Canadian art resource materials;
- create a culture and climate of experimentation;
- borrow from models used in vocational schools and community colleges;
- use artist-in-residence models: these are good examples of projects that work because they provide an income for artists, a creative space and benefits to the school and community;

- create, with the help of experts, an international accord (such as the Kyoto accord) for the arts and arts education. Rather than debate the presence of arts education, let us debate its implementation worldwide.

3. Partnerships

It is very important that the arts education community remain connected. The goals and objectives of their organizations are similar but they are often pitted against each other when competing for limited resources. Networking and partnership are an ideal solution for both those who fund and those who receive funding. Suggestions from participants included the following:

- create an inventory of all those involved in arts education and use it to build sustainable programs and funding in arts education;
- invite Ministers of Culture and Education to engage in conversations about arts education;
- hold annual meetings and use other methods to keep all leaders in arts education across the country connected;
- strengthen the links between schools and cultural resources;
- create and increase on-going conversations with all levels and regions of the arts education community;
- highlight the importance and the benefit of hiring artists in all kinds of businesses and organizations;
- create more cultural exchange programs with other provinces and other countries;
- share examples of arts programs that demonstrate a sense of traditional cultures and diversity of cultures in Canada;
- encourage and facilitate coalitions of arts groups to work together;
- create more conferences and information exchanges on creativity, teaching creatively and promoting and nurturing creativity;
- develop collaboration and partnerships between local cultural institutions and learning institutions such as universities and school boards for specific projects that help students earn credits or offer them places where they can do their practicum or placements;
- help solve time-tabling issues for school boards and students by encouraging local community groups to offer certified courses to compliment students need;
- create projects that get people involved in the arts in subtle and inviting ways;
- produce art in new, non-traditional venues to attract new clients of the arts;
- create sustainable policies and funding for arts education and the arts.

4. Lifelong Learning

Lifelong learning in the arts is well established and a way of life in Canadian society. Lifelong learning in the arts is a tool for advocacy in the arts. Many learning institutions, community centres, non-governmental and private organizations offer art courses to all age groups. However, many participants felt that more could be done in this area and suggested the following:

- demystify the arts as a club belonging only to a select few;
- place the focus on activities that bring diverse groups together;
- make use of the media to promote lifelong learning in the arts and showcase successes;
- provide art courses available free of charge for the general public on a federal web site;
- increase the number of programs to meet the demands of lifelong learning in the arts.

TEACHER TRAINING POLICIES

Arts education should be available in all schools. This is a given. It is important to provide high quality art and high quality arts education. Not only do we need arts education in the schools, we need quality arts education in other sectors. Non-formal arts education and formal education are equally important and complementary. The youth consultations informed the Commission that arts education in Canada is too often centered on the auditory and the visual and needs a better balance. It was important for them that the use of youth-driven media be used in the school curriculum to raise relevant issues from their perspective. In arts education, time is an important factor. Arts education and art activity take time and require reflection. This needs to be understood and accepted. Aesthetic learning is an important component of arts education and an example of something that can be shared among cultures. The issue of quality education is linked to the importance of teaching aesthetics.

The following discusses arts education in Canada. It describes approaches to arts education, formal and non-formal education, teacher education, assessment and the role of community practitioners and that of the artist.

1. Approaches to Arts Education

Several approaches are used for teaching the arts in Canada which include learning in, through and about the arts. Most participants felt formal arts education should incorporate all three approaches and recognized their positive contributions. Each approach has benefits to offer as well as hurdles that need to be overcome.

The major challenges in using all three approaches are teachers' lack of education in the arts and lack of finances for programs involving integration. Most teachers at the elementary level are generalists who have little background in the arts and very little arts education. At the secondary level, most teachers teaching the arts are specialists in their area. Integration models of arts education are more common at the elementary level. Using the arts to teach allows learning and the arts to go hand in hand. Indeed, for some, this integration gives the arts more importance because it makes them part of the whole curriculum.

2. Formal Arts Education

Ministries or departments of education in Canada establish policies and guidelines for arts education and set coherent, sequential and comprehensive programs. School boards and schools follow government guidelines and policies and make arts education available based on their human and material resources.

The arts are a core subject in many provinces. In many cases, the arts are core from Grades 1 to Grades 6 and for others this extends to Grade 9. At the high school level, the arts are usually optional and offered according to teacher, space and timetable availability. High school graduation diplomas in 5 provinces require at least one arts credit.

The arts curriculum tends to group all of the arts under one program. Cultural diversity is reflected in the documents, and guidelines dealing with students with learning disabilities are usually included. Many provincial governments produce their curriculum documents in English and French. Although content differs from one province to the next, major components such as knowledge, production, history and critical response are usually part of all programs in the arts. At the elementary level these documents are written for the generalist teacher and the art specialist. This means that some of the content of these programs can be challenging for the generalist teacher.

Throughout the country, some public and private alternative schools give a particular status to arts education. Innovative partnerships between schools and community centres or cultural organizations often result in models that can be used in other settings.

Assessment is part of all programs, and guidelines and tools are usually supplied to help teachers. It is easier to evaluate the knowledge component of an art course, but overall assessment in the arts is still problematic. Grading in the arts is still a new area of research, but new methods of assessment and new agreements on suitable measurement criteria are making it more reliable and more accessible to teachers. Arts education will not be valued unless it can be assessed.

3. Non-formal Arts Education

Non-governmental and governmental agencies and organizations, as well as community centers and private companies, offer a wide and a rich menu of courses to Canadian citizens. All of these provide a great service to communities. These organisations face many challenges, such as the lack of sustainable funding, shaping and maintaining their arts leaders and difficulties in creating and maintaining an audience.

4. Teacher Education

Teacher education is divided into two categories: pre-service and in-service education.

Pre-service education for teachers is the responsibility of designated universities in each province and territory. In-service training is provided by these universities or by professional and community arts organizations. Only designated course providers are recognized by employers for promotional recognition for teachers. Canadian institutions dealing with teacher certification would benefit from establishing pan-Canadian standards for arts education.

Pre-service Teacher Education

Future teachers need to know what the arts can do and how individuals learn in and through the arts. Not enough time is given to pre-service arts education programs which can range from a 12-hour course given over the period of an academic year to a 5-year program in arts education. If the end goal is to increase arts education in schools, the classroom teacher is central. Better teacher education for both generalist teachers and specialist teachers is needed as well as teacher education that makes arts sustainable in the schools and communities. Leadership courses should also be added to pre-service training in arts education.

In-service Teacher Education

It is in in-service education where a difference can be made for teachers. More flexible and interesting programs are needed to make the arts more accessible and rewarding for teachers. Mentorship and internship programs are one solution. Technology can be used to share information and practices, specifically in the context of distance education. More resources need to be provided for on-line teacher education. It was also recommended that artists be invited to interact with practicing teachers at weekend classes.

New approaches are needed for certification of teachers in the arts. This includes the possibility of classifying some artists as para-professionals so that they might benefit from regular employment. Programs and courses are also needed for people working in community arts. These would include courses in planning, management, child development and social services. Teacher associations could play an important role in this area and should be consulted regarding challenges or possible solutions.

Comments and Suggestions

Participants offered comments about formal and non-formal arts education in general. They did not talk about the need for uniformity across the country but more about the need for minimum standards that would strengthen, develop and promote arts education in Canada. These included the following:

- assure accessibility of publicly funded arts education for all children and youth;
- guarantee quality materials and instruments to create art;
- encourage and support artists and artists' groups in providing teacher training in specific art forms;
- include transdisciplinary approaches as part of teacher pre-service and in-service education;
- encourage the fusion of art forms because this creates better cohesion of cultures;
- provide art materials and support to encourage teachers to use the arts in teaching other subjects such as mathematics, science, and geography;
- highlight the need for good art teachers who encourage and promote artistic expression;
- distribute to art teachers information on the opportunities for arts learning in their own community;
- call upon youth to help transmit cultural knowledge;
- keep school guidance teachers regularly informed on possible academic and job opportunities available to students through arts education;
- offer alternative models of course programming which do not pit subjects against one another (i.e., visual arts vs. mathematics);
- offer programming that is continuous and sequential: so that every grade from K-12 has arts classes that build on knowledge, skills and experience;
- make art instruction mandatory until the end of secondary schooling;
- mandate two arts credits necessary for a secondary diploma;
- set down minimum arts instruction time for every grade level;
- mandate pan-Canadian standards for pre-service education in the arts;
- provide more in-service education in the arts;
- provide certified standards for teachers in the arts and more training in the arts for the generalist teacher by improving pre-service teacher education programs in the arts;
- insist that universities across Canada require at least one art course for university entrance;
- set out procedures that will allow community arts organisations or public institutions to credit teachers and high school students with credit courses in the arts;
- develop national standards for assessment and evaluation in arts education.

5. The Complementary Roles of the Artist and the Community

A conceptual change is called for in the way we view the roles of the artist and community in arts education. We need to explore, discuss and facilitate a better understanding of their roles in our society. Policies at the governmental and school board level and guidelines within teacher associations have not explored the full implications or possibilities of using artists and community services in the schools. There is a need to focus on the importance of building capacity within the arts community. Issues that must be addressed include accreditation, salaries and legal status.

Teachers are often expected to be artists and artists to be teachers. There is a need, however, for both. Artists and teachers have different responsibilities and are accountable for different things. Art teachers and generalist teachers do not have expertise in all areas of the arts. Finding ways to encourage young artists to work with young people is important. While the artist is not a spiritual saviour, psychologist or social worker, he/she can certainly be a role model. Arts programs that draw on artists or community services to teach students exist in every province, both inside and outside the formal school structure. There is a need for support services for artists who want to work within the school system. A mentorship program could be useful. Where possible, artists should be hired to teach in pre-service or in-service courses for teachers. Faculties of education could offer courses to artists who work in schools to give them the necessary skills. Summer institutes that bring together artists, art specialists and teachers are considered beneficial. When teachers and artists work together, it is a "win-win" situation.

Given the significance of the artist's role and the community's role in arts education, the following suggestions were made:

- create special art projects in schools as a way of involving all the community in learning and to raise the profile of the arts;
- value the artist and his/her work by providing support to the artist through advocacy;
- integrate more artists and community services into the education system;
- allow alternative art forms to flourish;
- develop mentorship programs for artists: artists teaching artists;
- support artists who want to receive courses in teaching the arts;
- protect and use with respect traditional arts as practiced by many Aboriginal artists;
- acknowledge the role and the contribution of the community to arts education;
- pay artists in an equitable manner for their work.

CONCLUSION

The text of this report makes it clear that arts education in Canada is complex, rich and varied. It also makes clear that many challenges remain and many obstacles will need to be overcome before Canadians have a more satisfying arts education afforded to them. Canadians in all parts of the country and all arts educational settings keep working to make progress toward the realization of this goal. They are confident that their ambitions regarding arts education are shared by all those who will gather from around the world at the World Conference on Arts Education in Lisbon in 2006.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Canadian Commission for UNESCO gratefully acknowledges the contributions of the following people towards the development and publication of this report.

Consultations Chair
Dr. Max Wyman, OC
President
Canadian Commission for UNESCO

Consultations Coordinator
Katherine Berg
Special Advisor to the Secretary-General
Canadian Commission for UNESCO

Consultations
Mathias Bizimana
Programme Officer, Culture and World Heritage
Canadian Commission for UNESCO

Cynthia Lacasse
Junior Programme Officer
Youth Canadian Commission for UNESCO

Secretariat
Marie-Tonine Moreau
Canadian Commission for UNESCO

Recording secretary and report writer and editor
Madeleine Aubrey
Madarte International Consulting Inc.

Special thanks to:

David A. Walden
Secretary-General
Canadian Commission for UNESCO

Sheila Molloy
International Desk Officer
Council of Ministers of Education, Canada