ARTIST IN RESIDENCE STUDIO PROGRAM COLLABORATIVE INQUIRY FINAL REPORT 2019/20



AIRS Collaborative Inquiry Final Report 2019/20

written and edited by Maggie Milne Martens.

Unless otherwise stated, individual school reports are based on post-residency interviews conducted by Christine Giesbrecht and Maggie Milne Martens.

Photo credits go to Sadie Couture, artists and teachers from each respective school and intermediate students from Seymour and Begbie Elementary.

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PARTICIPATING SCHOOLS:

Admiral Seymour Elementary Sir John Begbie Elementary Britannia Elementary Florence Nightingale Elementary John Henderson Elementary Lord Beaconsfield Elementary Maquinna Elementary Mount Pleasant Elementary Queen Alexandra F.A.M.I.L.Y school Sir James Douglas Elementary Sir Pierre Elliott Trudeau Elementary Sir Walter Moberly Elementary Tecumseh Elementary Thunderbird šx^wəx^wa?əs Elementary

Preface

This has truly been an extraordinary year! What an honour and a privilege it has been to work with such remarkable teachers dedicated to enriching and expanding the horizons of childrens' lives. This document is a testament to their commitment and also to the passion, care and inspired vision of the artists who worked alongside them. Even in the midst of a global pandemic, the commitment of teachers and artists has been unwavering. In this new covid world we are reminded more than ever of the importance of the arts for fostering empathy, care and human connection. The pages that follow give witness to the power of the artmaking process to not only build these capacities in students, but also to inspire wonder and enable them to find beauty in the world around them. Art holds open the space of freedom and imagination to dream the world anew. - Maggie Milne Martens and Colleen Mieczaniec, AIRS Director and AIRS Lead Teacher

As the VSB facilitator for the AIRS inquiry group, I get to witness the enthusiasm and dedication of the teachers involved. They talk about seeing their students' engagement shift from fear that the *product* won't turn out "right" to joy in the *process* itself. This is evidence of groundbreaking shifts in student thinking that happen in the studio. As students create art with an artist, their brains and bodies calm while they connect with their community, experience joy and solidify and celebrate their own identity. These positive arts experiences round out and enhance students' educational journeys while they gain skills that transfer back into the classroom. -

Christine Giesbrecht, District Mentor Support Teacher and AIRS Collaborative Inquiry Facilitator





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AIRS

<u>AIRS</u> is a partnership program with the Vancouver School Board that seeks to provide equitable access to authentic, high quality and socially relevant artmaking for elementary students. AIRS reclaims space within elementary schools to create a dedicated working studio and enable a local professional artist-in-residence to work with students and teachers regularly across the whole school and over the course of the year.

This year, the AIRS program supported eight full year residencies within established studios. Through grants, we were also able to offer five pilot residencies and two media arts residencies encompassing 8 weeks each with an artist-in-residence. In addition, the Art and Discovery studio at Nightingale expanded its mentorship program to enable three emerging artists to share their knowledge and gain experience working alongside teachers in schools.

The Collaborative Inquiry

The collaborative inquiry process is an ideal framework for assessing and understanding the impact and value of artmaking for students within a dedicated studio space and with an artist-in-residence with respect to the development of core competencies within the BC curriculum and indirect benefits extended to curricular learning within the classroom.

The inquiry process is critical for gathering evidence of the value of the visual arts for the education of the whole child provide rationale for its protection and funding within public schools for the benefit of future generations. Feedback through the collaborative inquiry process enables us to determine best practices for collaboration between artists and teachers in schools to maintain successful, flexible and innovative residencies that strengthen equity and excellence in student learning.



Our Process for 2019/20

Our inquiry was facilitated by *Christine Giesbrecht*, district mentor support teacher who brings a wealth of knowledge and expertise from years of art teaching.

The inquiry process is structured to enable lead teachers from each participating school to meet 4 times over the year for professional development and to share and witness their observations on the impact of artmaking within the studio for student learning, with presentations by Maggie Milne Martens, AIRS director and Indigenous teaching artists Shelley MacDonald and Candice Halls-Howcroft.

Unfortunately, our process was cut short by the COVID-19 pandemic that necessitated the suspension of in person learning. However, data was still gathered and documented by teachers over the course of the year through photos, shared observation, teacher and student written reflections and a post residency interview.



We wondered...

... How does sustained collaboration with a resident artist in an established studio impact student learning in relation to the curriculum, the core competencies and the First Peoples' Principles of Learning?

> Under these umbrella questions each school developed their own focused inquiry question to reflect the focus of the residency and the learning priorities of the school.



...In what ways might the art making process contribute to the development of social emotional intelligence and mental health?



Key Findings

While each studio invited a unique experience for students dependent on the vision of the artist and the kinds of material engagements students were offered, there was marked consistency in teacher observations of student learning across all sites.

One of the key findings is the way in which the art making process powerfully builds student capacity in *all of the core competency areas* with particular intensity in the areas of *creativity as well as positive personal and cultural identity, personal and social awareness and social responsibility.*

Risk-taking, independent problem solving, and openness to new ideas were all habits of mind that were observed and fostered in the studio. More importantly, the artmaking process has demonstrable impact on student's sense of self, building confidence in their own creative capacities and the value of their ideas. For many students who struggle in the classroom, the studio is a place for them to flourish and for their talents to be recognized and valued.

It is important to note that these learning outcomes were not predetermined goals but were observed as being intrinsically nurtured through *the art making process* itself; that in the midst of the messy, chaotic, non-linear, haptic, and sometimes frustrating process of wrestling and transforming raw materials into significant form, that students are themselves transformed. *Learning is through the making of art.* The artmaking process is pedagogical to itself.

Emergent Themes

What is Art?

Understanding of what art is expanded; Students learned that art is not just 'drawing and painting' but a limitless process of transformation and meaning making in the world. Art can be made with all kinds of materials from cardboard and glue, cedar branches and ink, found objects and images, shadows and light, sound and gesture, as well as digital technologies. It involves all kinds of actions like dripping, cutting, tearing, spraying, pouring, mixing, gluing, constructing, capturing, arranging, rearranging, combining, pressing, moulding, printing, editing. Art can look many different ways.

Art can express feelings and be free to what their mind is open to. I think art is important to me because when I make art I feel free and creative. – Dave, Grade 7

Creativity

Teachers and students learned that creativity in art is about the process rather than the end product. Creativity is generative; it is open to experimenting, to testing limits, to "What if?", and the possibility of failure; it builds upon itself, with one idea leading to another; it is collaborative and playful. Many students were able to move from fear of making mistakes into a place of creative freedom. Students learned the rewards of patient process, in seeing their ideas develop and transform into something new. Students became more independent, trusting their own judgement, solving problems individually or collaboratively and developing a growth mindset.

Art is important to me Because it opens my mind and gives me more ideas.- Jian, Grade 7



Student Engagement

Every teacher remarked on the engagement of the students. Teachers connected this to the freedom for self-expression in the studio and the safety to explore ideas without judgement. Students were excited to go to the studio, explore the materials and get their hands dirty; this provoked cheers and the process was joyful. One teacher noted that on studio days, attendance was consistently higher. Teachers also observed that students were motivated and invested in their work because it connected to who they are as a person and what is important to them. This was apparent in the extended focus, degree of persistence and attention to detail that students displayed. Teachers noted that students were calm and self-regulated during their studio time.



I think art is a really important value in school. It's a way of expression, communication, history, beliefs, and so many more interpretations. We all need to have exposure to art. Carl



Deep Connection

Through the artmaking process, students were able to make deep connections to themselves, to one another and to the world around them. It allows students to slow down and attend to these relationships through felt perception. Some studio practices enabled students to connect with their bodies, feelings, memories and experiences. Other projects fostered deep connections with community, cultural identity and the earth. Through art, students were given space and time to honour these connections and to share them with others, building empathy, care and understanding of our inter-connectedness with one another and the more than human world. The artmaking process was transformative, enabling students to see themselves, others and the world around them in new ways fostering a greater sense of belonging.



Working with an Artist in the Studio Space.

Teachers consistently noted that working with an artist within a dedicated studio space was critical these outcomes. The transition to a separate space, where freedom and selfexpression were honoured allowed students to move into different mindset that allowed them to be more creative. Having a dedicated space and the chance to use special materials signalled to students that what they were doing and learning in the studio was important. The space also allowed students to spread out, use different materials, work big and make more mess. At Douglas, teachers noted that it was important for students to experience art through the lens and expertise of an artist. At Thunderbird, the teacher remarked; "there is nothing like having a specialist" who can enable students to "come out of their shell, and not be afraid to try something new."

Learning over time

Teachers from schools in their second and third year of the program, noted the way in which students were more open and able to move into a creative mindset than previously. At Britannia, a teacher observed a shift in the kinds of questions students asked, showing a deeper interest in the process and the capacity of the materials. At Seymour, teachers noted the students were more open to difference in their work and the work of others and were more likely to encourage and compliment one another.

A teacher at Douglas, one of the pilot studios, shared her sadness, that some grade 7s had no prior opportunity to experience the creative process of art. Many of the students' attitudes had already calcified into fixed ideas about art and their perceived lack of talent, emphasizing the importance of artmaking experiences from a young age.



AIRS in Lockdown

During school suspension, artist re-conceptualized their studio residencies to continue providing students with meaningful, hands-on art engagements at home in ways that retained equity and built a sense of community and connection even whilst physically distant. Artists created art packages, instructional videos, postcard projects and innovative provocations that enabled students to use found materials and the natural world. Work was exhibited in virtual and unusual exhibition spaces to create connection with one another.

"This really saved online school for me." Toni MaKay

Whilst there were many logistical challenges along the way, teachers and parents were grateful for the videos and art invitations, particularly as a way to provide meaningful 'offscreen, hands on' learning time. Many of the teachers expressed a desire to continue using the videos in the Fall to facilitate art in their classes. For some students, the openended timeframe seemed to provide increased opportunity for prolonged engagement. Students were also able to re-watch the videos to see the demonstration over again promoting independence in working. Once school re-opened in June, teachers were able to utilize the videos and support the artmaking process, which proved extremely valuable for students who struggled with the on-line learning format.





Intersections: Indigenous ways of knowing and Art

On February 19, 2020, we were privileged to have Metis artist Shelley MacDonald and Squamish educator Candice Halls-Howcroft guide our collaborative inquiry and invite teachers into a deeper understanding of the intersection of <u>Indigenous</u> <u>ways of knowing and the arts</u>. Drawing on Martin Brokenleg's Circle of Courage, Candice reminded us that learning begins with identity and belonging and ends with generosity and giving back. Both Shelley and Candice emphasized that the arts within indigenous culture are not decoration, but created in and for community; "the arts hold our stories." Art takes time to create, time to encounter and time to respond in authentic ways.

Throughout the residencies, we continued to notice the ways in which the artmaking process resonates with indigenous ways of knowing articularted in the First Peoples Principles of Learning. Some residencies explicitly drew on Indigenous culture and story to help students make connections to their own cultural identities. Megan Jensen at Thunderbird, drew on Tlingit story to connect students to the land. Cole Pauls invited students to create stories of resilience and truth telling through comics. Heather Lamoureux connected students to the care of land and community with permission through Squamish transformation stories.

Deep connections to the land and a mindfulness of place was central to Pia Massie's residency at Moberly which integrated environmental art with practices of reciprocity. Rebecca Heyl, invited students into an experience of wonder through the forms and patterns of nature found on the school grounds and artifacts from the Beatty Biodiversity Museum.

Other residencies fostered a sense of belonging and community through stories. At Nightingale, the artists invited students through art to listen to the stories of their elders, and connect with memory and personal identity. At Britannia and Mount Pleasant, space was made for students' personal stories of expression to be explored and honoured, trusting in the innate creativity of each child.

First Peoples principles of Learning

Learning ultimately supports the well-being of the self, the family, the community, the land, the spirits, and the ancestors.

Learning is holistic, reflexive, reflective, experiential, and relational (focused on connectedness, on reciprocal relationships, and a sense of place).

Learning involves recognizing the consequences of one's actions.

Learning involves generational roles and responsibilities.

Learning recognizes the role of indigenous knowledge.

Learning is embedded in memory, history, and story.

Learning involves patience and time.

Learning requires exploration of one's identity.

Learning involves recognizing that some knowledge is sacred and only shared with permission and/or in certain situations.

Landscape by grade 5 student atThunderbird, inspired by Tlingit story of how Raven Stole the Light.



Art is important because sometimes in school you feel bored and in art you are creative . Art is like a jungle you want to explore and see because it is something you don't know until you experience it. You use art to express your feelings and it's where you feel artistic and you can make beautiful things. Grade 4 student

SCHOOL INQUIRY REPORTS

THE ART AND DISCOVERY STUDIO & MENTORSHIP PROGRAM FLORENCE NIGHTINGALE ELEMENTARY

In what ways do teachers see art making as creating students' sense of belonging and community within the studio? How does this carry over into the classroom?

> Principal: Parin Morgan Lead Teachers: Colleen Mieczaniec, Eleanor Tufts and Carl Yuen Artists: Maggie Milne Martens, Sadie Couture, Alex Ramirez and Jack Kenna



The Program

The Art and Discovery Studio, in its fifth year, is the longest standing studio within the AIRS program and serves as the hub for professional development opportunities in art, teacher collaborative inquiry sessions and an artist mentorship program. The mentorship program enables emerging community engaged artists to gain experience working in elementary schools within an established studio and a seasoned school community. Student and teachers alike benefit from being exposed to artists from different backgrounds, perspectives and art practices. This has expanded students' understanding of art , and how it is a powerful means of meaning making within the world. The Art and Discovery Studio is sponsored by the Rennie Foundation which has been instrumental in supporting the vision of AIRS from its inception.

Stories that Connect us together

The overarching theme at Nightingale this year was "Stories that connect us together". The intention was to create space through the art making process for sharing and witnessing stories about who we are, how we belong, what is important to us.

Through story and its representation in and through art we draw on indigenous traditions of learning that are directed towards the cultivation of community and an ethic of care. Art invites us to take time to attend to the stories of others.

Intermediate Projects

The upper intermediates worked with AIRS artist Maggie Milne Martens and filmmaker and podcast artist Sadie Couture to create a multi media work that honoured an elder in each of the students' lives. With Sadie, student conducted a recorded interview with their elder, in person or remotely ,and turned it into a sound work through editing and the overlay of voice and music. This inspired a multi-media work integrating drawing, painting, found images, personal photographs and physical objects to convey feeling and connection through the use of symbolic imagery, colour, texture and composition. The finished works were displayed in the school entryway with QR codes that enabled the viewer to listen to the audio piece while looking at the work.





Grade 4 and 5 students created multi-layered prints layering monoprints of their own hands over-layed with textures and a relief print of something that they hold dear. These prints explore the metaphor of holding; the things we hold in our hearts become stories in the world through the work of our hands.

Later, students were able to work with painter and ceramic artist Jack Kenna to re-create in clay, an object from their home that held special significance. Students learned techniques for sculpting form and adding textural detail, before firing and then painting their baked objects with bold, personally inspired colours.

Primary Program

Grade 2 and 3s explored the connection between shoes and the stories they tell through movement, drawing, and guache painting. The resulting works and the stories that inspired them were shared in circle together and incorporated into classroom books.

With textile artist Alex Ramirez students worked collaboratively to create a magical forest installation, inspired by origin stories of the forest from Guatemala and personal history. These became indelibly entwined with the students own stories and memories of being immersed in the natural world. These were expressed through ink dipped with the tips of cedar branches, leaf rubbings and embroidered journeys through trace imprints of blackberry leaves and pine needles dyed into fabric that was then stitched together. Students tip toed up in dispersed groups into a studio transformed;

"I feel like I am in a magical forest."

"It is beautiful and peaceful."

"I feel happy."

"The fabric is like clouds and the trees are holding up the sky."

"It is like the forest is carrying me in."

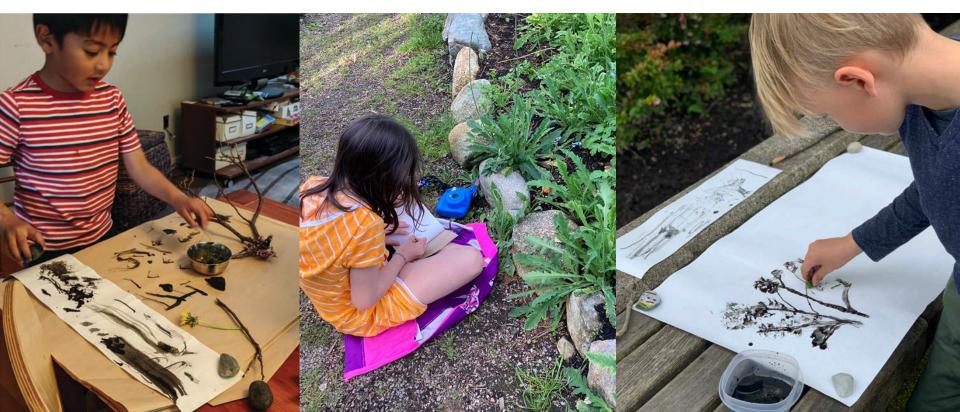
"All this artwork makes this wonderful place where we are in nature. We did everything together, caring, respecting and being nice to one another."



Kindergarten and Grade one students drew and painted enormous selfportraits attending to individual likeness through observation and bringing them to life by painting colours with feeling to celebrate the way in which we are all beautifully unique and the same all at the same time.

During school suspension, the primary students finished their studio time at home. We used this opportunity to take time to listen to the stories of plants growing all around us right where we live. Maggie created instructional videos, activity posters and art packages for students to use at home. Through these we spent time observing, listening, and attending with care to the intricate complexities, beauty and wisdom of plants. We learned that plants can be used for food, for healing and even for pigments and art tools.









At Nightingale, we wondered...

In what ways do teachers see art making creating students' sense of belonging and community within the studio? How does this carry over into the classroom?

Art creates community connection

Art connects us together in relationship in ways that matter deeply. For the intermediate students, "[the elders project] was very engaging as they were using technology that was familiar to them. However, rather than using iPads and phones to view and consume content as they are so accustomed to, they are becoming the creators of content. Social media is usually self-focused, but this helped students look outward, to see how they are connected to the past through the stories of their elders."

The visual pieces were unique and beautiful and students were invested in them because it connected to their own identity. The works provided a window into the child's identity and family experiences. Students created works that were vulnerable and personal. Students initially felt uncomfortable with this and some laughed, but they learned to value this aspect of the work. Seeing the work beautifully displayed on the walls made students feel that their stories were honoured. These works provoked joy, tears and overwhelming sense of connection and community for the students and families who viewed the works. This gave students a greater sense of belonging within the school. - E. Tufts.



Art honours the identity of each child

When the grade 4 and 5 students "worked with clay to recreate a prized possession, they first had to think deeply about what they cared about and then physically had to shape it. The clay was not easy to use! It took a lot of focus and effort to mold it the way they wanted; the class was so quiet during this. Students can say I made that, or collectively classes can feel like they achieved something great and special. Building confidence, comradery and community is so important, as then they can take it back into their classrooms and feel stronger about themselves and which they can then focus on other subjects and work." - C. Yuen

Art promotes a sense of belonging

Art connects us with who we are. For primary students, working on their portraits over 4 weeks helped students slow down and connect. Students were given tools to think like an artists rather than a blueprint for what it will look like when it is done. Balance between structure and freedom allowed for a unique expression that is connected to students own voice and story. C. Mieczaniec

In the words of students:

"When I see all the portraits hanging together I feel amazed, happy, excited, proud, clever, proud, pickles and brownies." – grade 1 students

"I chose the colours by listening to my heart."

"I notice that each painting has its own style."

"When I see all the portraits hanging together I feel love and kindness for others."

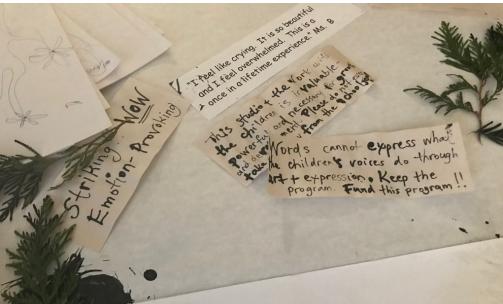
'Art helps you to draw better. Like when I learned how to draw myself huge and paint from my heart." K student



Art fosters belonging and community through intercultural understanding

"Visual Arts is at the heart and mind of Florence Nightingale School. With illuminating eyes and confidence, students humbly share the process involved in creating unique and individualized artwork with parents and visitors. The Arts are strengthening the dialogical relationship between students and between the students and the larger broader Nightingale Community.

Visual Arts is enhancing students sense of critical, creative, empathetic and aesthetic selves. Moreover, the Arts are also providing students with the opportunities to develop inter and intra cultural understandings. Students engagement with Artists from different cultural backgrounds, who bring a wealth of cultural knowledge, is invaluable. Students are developing understandings of the diverse culture and sense of belonging of others and yet appreciating their own sense of belonging in their own culture." - Parin Morgan, Principal.





Art is important in school because it is awesome! Art class creates a calm and supportive space for me to learn art skills and about indigenous culture and art. – Quinn, Grade 4

Art is important because it teaches you about cultures and it is important in schools because it helps students feel calm and relaxed. - grade 4 student

Art is important to me because it can show history. I can be proud of my identity and emotions. In our podcasts, I learnt a lot about life in my home country, and I took pride in our endurance. Carl, Grade 7

PILOT RESIDENCIES

at LORD BEACONSFIELD SIR JAMES DOUGLAS SIR WALTER MOBERLY MAQUINNA TECUMSEH

LORD BEACONSFIELD ELEMENTARY

"How will the Artist in Residence Program connect students' cultural experiences by celebrating similarities and differences in an exploration through art?"

Principal: Lani Morden Teachers: Anna Amenta, Lynda Ikeda & Shauna Bredin Artist: Kirsten Hatfield

Lord Beaconsfield Elementary School has a diverse population of students, both culturally and socio-economically. We also have a culturally diverse staff. To support an inclusive community we regularly introduce students to different cultural experiences and perspectives.

The art space for the residency was the lunchroom which organically suggested food as a uniting theme that would incorporate *Healthy Living* as a cross grade curricular goal and cross-cultural theme. Working with artist Kirsten Hatfield, students explored different types of mark making through both abstraction and observational drawing of foods. Students learned techniques in dry media, acrylic painting and collage using found materials such as magazines, wallpaper, string, glue, cellophane and patterned paper created from the previous two classes. The final project was intended to bring this learning together into a recipe book of foods that each child connected to in relation to their culture or personal history with food but was cut short due to school suspension.

For our inquiry teachers wanted to understand how learning new artistic techniques from a professional visual artist whilst exploring and sharing student personal cultural connections to food through art might lead students to an understanding that we are more similar, than we are different



Key Observations

During our short 7 weeks, working with Kirsten, there were a number of fundamental changes that occurred for staff and students.

Previously students tended to focus on an end product instead of valuing the process itself. This belief system has been slowly changing. Towards the second half of the program, students began to see themselves as their own artist and took risks, instead of comparing themselves to others or trying to copy what they thought was "good." Other students who initially painted carefully with acrylics, became messy finger painters, mixing colours directly on their creations. Some students seemed most comfortable with abstract art and mark making, while others didn't like it because it did not appear to make logical sense. Students became open to trying new techniques, although initially some wanted to only copy the teacher artist, Kirsten.

Working with a professional artist and using quality art supplies legitimized the importance of their art work. Over the time we saw a better acceptance of all styles of art, and students started to open up and create from their own ideas.





Teacher Quotes

"It was initially difficult to allow students to pull so many supplies out at one time. It looked disorganized and chaotic. I am starting to get used to it and understand that making messes is a part of the artistic process, and we have to allow the exploration."

"Art is not perfect. It is playing, therapeutic and sitting with friends."

"Some meticulous, student artists, realized they could relax, speed up and not be perfect."

"Art is not perfect. It is playing, therapeutic and sitting with friends."

"Free range painting went better than we expected!"

Written by Shauna Bredin with excerpts from Kirsten Hatfield.

Student Quotes:

"I am going to twist and turn this charcoal,....and see just like that a curvy line."

"If I turn this pastel on its side...look I'm mixing colours!"

"I'm rubbing the chalk on my thumbs."

"It looks like scribbling, but it's not ... "

"I'm turning the pastel just like Kirsten, this is good."

"I'm using the floor, the walls, whoa that looks cool!"

"Ooh! That looks like a fading picture."

"I'm making a pattern."

"First I made a triangle, covered it up with black, added a rainbow...and there you have it."

"Art is exploring, playing and noticing... art is a vehicle to different kind of thought" - Kirsten Hatfield

Breaking through

Students in crisis are learning to play through collage rather than needing it to be correct. - Shauna Bredin

Cana

SIR JAMES DOUGLAS ELMENTARY

How does collaboration with a resident artist in an established studio impact students' creative and critical thinking?

Principal Daniel Boulanger Lead Teachers: Alison Wardrop, Pat Treacher and Tiffany Gee Artist: Evaly Carvahlo

Three intermediate classes at Douglas had the opportunity to immerse themselves in the experience of the artmaking process; experimenting with different kinds of paint and ink techniques, using a variety of tools, additive materials like sand, salt and glue as well as subtractive processes to create richly textured abstract works. These became the base for imaginary creatures, inspired or invented and were collaged together as murals on a painted backdrop. The older class, began with a photographic exploration using light and shadow to create unique and powerful portraits. They later used calligraphy as a gateway to expressive gesture. These works were destroyed and exchanged and collaged to create something new from the amalgamation of two worlds.







Creativity and Critical thinking

Through the residency, the *students' concept of art was expanded*, moving beyond narrow ideas of painting or drawing to include different styles and techniques; cutting, pouring, dripping, scraping, layering, juxtaposing, exchanging, collaging. Students were engaged and eager to experiment with the materials and became invested in the development of their characters. Students were encouraged to push beyond their comfort zones, and dig deeper into their own creative capacities; to move beyond a 'completion' mindset and see where it could go further; Students learned to take something that they have created and turn it into something else. Students whose initial ideas started with a fixed idea or copied example, turned into something new through the creative process. All works were unique. Students learned that art is living and can be constantly modified and transformed. As the sessions progressed, teachers noticed that students became more independent, less likely to seek approval, and more confident in problem solving on their own. Teachers modeled growth mind set by being learners alongside. Students collaborated naturally, exchanging ideas and problem solving together. Students learned that creativity is inspired by others, curiosity in other's work and learning from their discoveries, and effects.

Students began to critically evaluate what they saw and the decisions they were making; noticing how small changes could create different effects (such as moving eyes closer together). One of the teachers reflected on how this kind of studio thinking translated into the classroom in the kinds of questions she asked students.



Inspiration Student excitedly and purposefully are expressing their thinking through the discovery of colours and forms and problem solving together. – Alison Wardrop

> **Confidence** Students afraid to make mistakes in the beginning are problem solving and trying something new. – Tiffany Gee

Look at what I'm doing ... You can just do a splatter. This looks so cool, right Maxy? I'm making purple. Hey look, look... testing it... it's living... and then you mix it ... I think you need the water How did you guys do that? Try doing this. I have an idea what we can do. We can put water here and then let it drip down. That's a great idea. That's exactly what I'm going to do! Can we do lines? You're not supposed to use all of the red This looks so cool! I know, right? Woah, the blue! Don't copy me! Mine looks like that, too. You can do that for one of them Oh, I get it! Ryan Comment tu as fait ça? I hear someone needs help I hope I'm doing this right I changed shades

SIR WALTER MOBERLY ELEMENTARY

How can we use outdoor art explorations as a vehicle to develop a stronger sense of place and Indigenous ways of knowing in our students?

Principal: Henry Au Lead Teachers: Gabi Lutynski, Kara Mach and Ashley Giles Artist: Pia Massie

When artist Pia Massie joined us at Moberly, she brought incredible talent and passion. She transformed an otherwise unused space into a magical studio that featured natural treasures, beautiful art books, and traditional fabrics donated by our school community.

The overarching vision for Pia's program had a dual emphasis – to introduce students to new materials, processes, and themes as well as to introduce teachers to meaningful, hands-on, place-based art initiatives as part of their own professional development.

Over the 8-week AIRS pilot program, Pia guided 3 primary classes through a multitude of projects and discoveries that honoured process over product.

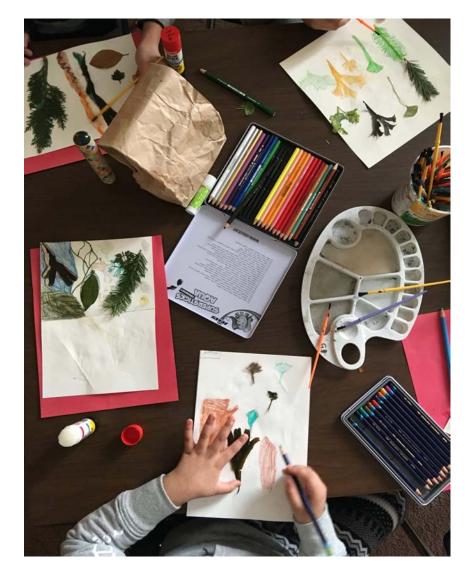
In Pia's words;

"Mostly it's just about the practice, about thinking creatively."

Her goal was to help students understand;

"How the world works and how we make meaning in it."

Nearly every lunch hour, Pia showed scenes from various DVDs that further illuminated valuable topics covered during studio time, such as composting and pollinators. During times of material exploration and visual expression, students explored mediums such as ink, watercolour, collage, and nature pressings.





At Moberly Elementary, we are fortunate to have a neighbouring community garden that features Indigenous plants. This garden became the focal point for engaging our students in learning, observing, caring, and creating.

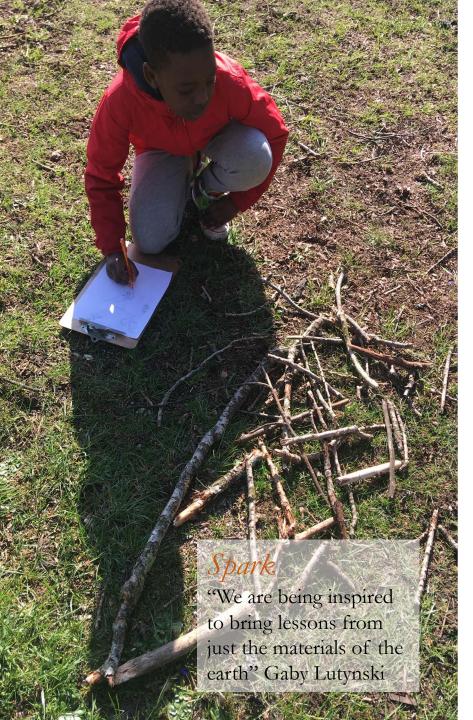
On one visit, when approaching the garden, Naheed, a grade 4 student, announced: "*Ding, dong! We're back!*"

This piece of our AIRS experience really honoured the rationale of our inquiry, to get students outdoors and connect with their local environment to develop a stronger personal sense of place and belonging.

Mrs. Mach observed that her students "were very keen to go explore, create, and work in the art studio and garden whenever they were able."

The specific focus of the residency at Moberly, designed by Pia Massie, was a tactile, experiential immersion through art that focuses on the beauty of the natural world and our inter-connectedness within it. A love and care for the earth is a critical capacity that is vital for a sustainable and just future, and one that is increasingly hard for students to cultivate in an urban and highly technologically mediated environment. Many students have never touched dirt, collected rocks and sticks or taken the time to notice the plants and trees that grow on the school property and the medicine garden in the adjacent field. This residency is about awakening all the senses at an early and critical age, to a love of the natural world and to the creative capacities that are within all of us.





Student Quotes

"Dirty! Dirty! Mud!" Helena, grade 1

"Birds flying in the sky, feels good, fresh air, so many trees, looks good." Parneet, grade 3

"It's like tons of little Goldsworthys running around!" Julian, grade 4

Teacher Quotes

"I found this program valuable not only for my students, but for me as a teacher. I was exposed to so many ideas for ways to do art that as a Kindergarten teacher I would have previously viewed as 'too difficult' or 'too complicated' for my little learners... AIRS helped remind me that art, especially for our youngest learners, is often about the process not the product." *Mrs. Giles, K teacher*

"Students began to identify plants and animals that they had typically overlooked... They began connecting with their food as well, noticing that their fruits and vegetables had seeds that could be replanted. This brought them so much excitement! Students began to show increased appreciation for the beauty of nature surrounding us. Students began to show increased patience as they learned that art is a multi-step process." *Mrs. Mach, Gr. 1/2 teacher*

"AIRS provided students with a new way of observing the world around them; of connecting with nature and with each other; of slowing down; of telling their personal stories; of discovering new materials, interests, and talents; and of engaging with the process of inquiry through asking questions, reflecting, collaborating, making, and sharing." *Gabi, grade 3/4 teacher*

MAQUINNA ELEMENTARY

Principal: Bruce Sallee Lead Teacher: Toni McKay Artist: Heather Lamoureux

Maquinna's residency coincided with the COVID-19 school suspension. Performance artist Heather Lamoureux created a series of videos for 3 primary classes that used both movement and material arts. The intention was to ground the students in their current reality of isolation and direct them to express their feelings through their imaginations. Heather considered;

How can the arts still connect us?

How can our work take care of ourselves and bring play into our day? How can we as a group connect to one another from a distance?



For Kindergarten teacher Toni McKay and the two other primary teachers, the art program was exactly what was needed during the pandemic disruption.

According to Toni, Heather's calm presence in the video, and the consistency of place all helped to create a connection and relationship of trust for students even though they had never met.

The activities were accessible, using their bodies and everyday found objects from their home or in nature. Lessons connected with art and physical education and social emotional learning. Activities directed students from self-reflection to an outward connection with place and others through hand messages to someone we love and miss, memory maps, medicine carriers and body part feelings.

These themes encouraged student to be in touch with themselves, express their feelings, and find meaning in and connection with the world around them. Students became grounded to who they are. Connecting with their bodies and feelings was extremely important during the pandemic. Student creative engagement was evident in their art responses that were thoughtful and full of careful detail. "Heather's program completely changed online school for me. Her activities have been such a light for our classes and I'm SO grateful to have been able to give these thoughtful tasks to them." - Toni McKay Kindergarten teacher

"Although I wasn't able to meet the children I feel connected to them through their work and am so touched by their expressiveness." - Heather Lamoureux

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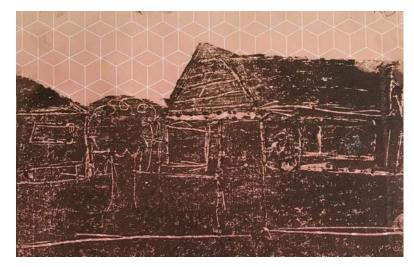


TECUMSEH ELEMENTARY

Principal Vincent Edwards Lead Teachers: Marion Elizabeth Collins and Tilia Prior Artist Julie McIntyre

How will using our neighbourhood (people, building, memories, natural environment) as a starting point build identity and connection to place? How will the process of artmaking help us to build our understanding of who we are, what we value, and what we hope for?

"Through the AIRS program, Tecumseh students worked with master print maker, Julie McIntyre, as part of their inquiry into place and nature-based learning in the Victoria-Fraserview area. Julie brought cedar bows, drawings of houses from different eras, wallpaper samples, and examples of neighbourhood banners to help inspire the students to trace how this place has changed, layer upon layer, into what they see now."



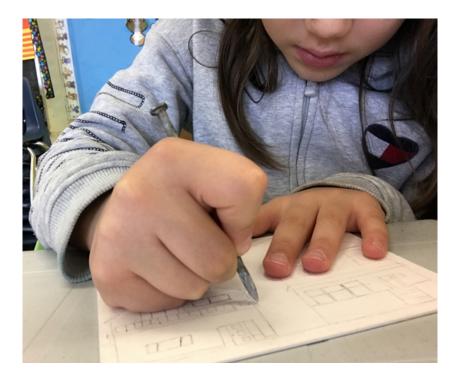
Students were introduced to a variety of relief printing techniques including stamp making using a variety of ingenious printmaking techniques such as a pasta press and custom inking pads adapted for the school studio. The multi-layered printing process and building prints on top of one another created richly textured prints that contain echoes of time. At the end, students created monotype banners to reflect what was important to them about the neighbourhood. In September, these prints will all be compiled into individual books incorporating reflective writing on the project done during school suspension.

Key Observations

Teachers noted that attention to the visual appearance of the buildings and trees in the neighborhood through research, walks and artmaking helped students see the neighbourhood and their relationship to it in a new way.

"Students felt a sense of belonging and pride. They experienced wonder - developing a greater sense of curiosity about the familiar and a genuine joy as they made discoveries and gained perspective. "*Integrating art with subjects creates a reciprocal relationship that helps students think differently.*

"The process of art-making brought students to a place of greater connection, understanding and self-identity."





"Julie truly gave them a sense of the importance of their community by honouring its transformation, its unique character, and its right to be celebrated through art. In doing so, students felt a sense of belonging and pride. They experienced wonder - developing a greater sense of curiosity about the familiar and a genuine joy as they made discoveries and gained perspective." - Quotes from Marion and Tilia

Prints are quiet freedom. AIRS gives you an open mind for doing art." Alexa, div. 7

"I liked AIRS. I got to work with a real life artist and learned many forms of art and how much it takes to be an artist."





Magical

The printmaking process and the surprise of the 'reveal' produces kids faces full of smiles and wonder. – Tilia Prior

MEDIA ARTS RESIDENCIES

at JOHN HENDERSON SIR WALTER MOBERLY

SIR WALTER MOBERLY ELEMENTARY

How can visual arts, specifically movie making (live action and stop motion), increase student voice, show more of their understanding and facilitate growth in project-based learning?

Principal: Henry Au; Lead Teachers: Alison Landry and Scott Burrell; Artist: Yunuen Perez Vertti

For this residency, filmmaker Yunuen Perez Vertti worked with three mixed intermediate classes in grades 4-6 to integrate learning about human rights topics from the social studies curriculum with digital storytelling in the form of stop motion animation. The focus was untold stories related to Japanese Internment Camps, The Chinese Railway Workers, and The Residential Schools. The goal was for students to develop an understanding of the use of visual language to represent their learning and understanding. Students worked collaboratively on their chosen topics in researching, storyboarding, production design, filming and editing. Props and scenes were constructed from a variety of different materials including cardboard, plasticine, construction paper, molding clay and Lego. In the course of the residency students were also given opportunity to learn about operating video, audio and lighting equipment and green screen special effects.



Teacher Reflections

Teachers and students alike were impressed with the scale of the project, the level of difficulty and complexity of the filmmaking process. It entailed hard work and involved a lot of time outside of scheduled studio sessions. However, in reflecting back on the quality and depth of learning, the commitment of the students to the process and the positive impact of "Oscar Day" and screening their films in front of their peers, teachers attested to the powerful impact filmmaking had on student learning.



Learning outcomes were numerous.

Students took time in creating their characters and sets, many working long hours to add detail and improve upon them.

Students used critical thinking and problem solving in creating visual effects such as the movement of water with Lego bricks.

Students worked collaboratively within their own and other groups, freely sharing techniques and ideas with others, and they were inspired by one anothers' work and accomplishments. Teachers and students became learners together, with students often taking a leading role.

Engagement was high. Students saw how time invested in each stage paid off in stunning effects. Many students were motivated to re-edit, re-do, re-record scenes to make them perfect. Students learned the connection between artistic choices and the communication and storytelling impact.

The filmmaking process gave students'

voice.; it allowed them to communicate ideas in a different way. A couple of students who had very little English and were normally reticent to share their work, became engaged and were able to successfully and effectively communicate learning and understanding through the visual process. The final sharing and celebration of the finished films showed students that their voice was powerful.

Student Reflections

No student asked about their mark; they experienced the full intrinsic rewards of their efforts in the film screening and acclamation by peers.

"I thought it was a really good experience." "My experience was that it was fun but pretty difficult."

"I love seeing the video when it was done." "I've never done something like this before." "You've got to take your time."

"I learned a lot."

"I learned a lot about what happened in the past and thing people went through."

"If I was to do it again, I would change the way I made the characters."

"I would put in more time and more focus."

"Working as a team was easier because there are more brains."

"I really like filming, I would want to do it again." "I would honestly want to do it again"



JOHN HENDERSON ELEMENTAR

Principal: Henry Peters Teachers: Johnny Wu, Joan Jung and Liz Woodwar Artist: Alanna Ho

Description of the Residency

New Media artist Alanna Ho worked with three intermediate classes to create a space where students gained knowledge and confidence in using sound as an art material. Alanna combined common craft materials, new technology such as LittleBits and MakeyMakey, intangible material such as field recordings, and loose parts.

Students looked at graphic scores in contemporary music; recorded audio samples of our personal dreams; built sound sculptures with simple circuits; drew and built 3D sound maps to demonstrate the translating of aural data to visual data; and played many movement games that exercise mindful listening (this included games about echolocation, meditation using the pulse of our bodies). For the final project students were introduced to the concept of *deep listening*; they listened to their heartbeats, chose a tempo of a natural pulse, and recreated this pulse with mechanics such as DC motors and servo motors.

*Deep Listening: a concept coined by composer and musician, Pauline Oliveros. It is a way of mindful listening. This was the underlying inspiration for this entire pilot program. This emphasis on using our whole body to mindfully listen, is a very special experience that may direct a child's future creative work.

General observations

Students were incredibly engaged; They worked collaboratively in mixed groups with very few behaviour issues. It was beautiful to see

The use of technology to create a machine to match the tempos of the water for example helped students learn to see it as more than just as a source of entertainment. Alanna integrated technology with ordinary and unexpected material objects like a leaf or pipe cleaner – which expanding thinking.

The whole experience was so creative.

There were so many interesting materials, arranged invitingly that encouraged students to explore. Students were asking active questions because they were pursuing solutions to open ended problems. They learned about the value of exploration and having less defined outcomes.

The value of having an artist work with students was key. Teachers would not have been able to conceive of these projects. The artist also gives the teacher the gift of time and to interact with and see the students in a different way.



"! appreciated the way students were learning to listen more carefully to what they are hearing, through listening walks, and the props – using their senses to learn." Joan Jung, Grade 5/6 teacher

> Often heard student quotes: "I just want to do that again" "I wish I could have stayed longer."

FULL YEAR STUDIOS SIR MATTHEW BEGBIE BRITANNIA MOUNT PLEASANT QUEEN ALEXANDRA ADMIRAL SEYMOUR THUNDERBIRD ŠX^w₂X^wA?₂S SIR PIERRE ELLIOTT TRUDEAU

SIR MATTHEW BEGBIE ELEMENTARY

How will the AIRS impact students with regards to social and emotional learning in the studio, classroom and their lives?

Lead Teachers: Renata Cazervan and Samantha Mok

The overarching theme for the Begbie Studio this year was **Wonder**. With artist Rebeeca Heyl, the primary students embarked on a journey of wonder into the biodiversity of forms, movements and migratory patterns of animals. Rebecca integrated storytelling, sensory observation of artifacts from the Beatty Biodiversity museum, and material exploration together to allow students to discover the material possibilities of charcoal and clay as a medium for telling and unearthing stories Susan's photography sessions with the intermediate classes were interrupted by the COVID-19 pandemic. In response, Susan adapted a program to use with a phone or iPad to find wonder in and gratitude for the world immediately around them at home. Each week, Susan developed engaging videos and challenge prompts for finding 'sanctuary 'inside and outside through a search for quiet, connection, small things, light, reflection, balance, peace and compassion, with mindful attention. Each week concluded with a statement of gratitude related to their experience and feelings of discovery.



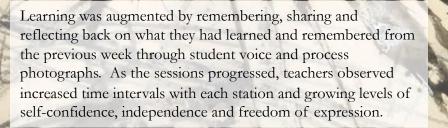
Teacher Reflections on Social Emotional Learning

Primary teachers found that with the integration of movement, tactile explorations and story, the students were constantly engaged. During each class, students moved through three different stations that encouraged different kinds of sensory engagements around a central theme. Teachers observed that the environment of the studio created a sense of calm and the tactility of the clay provided the sensory feedback that some kids really needed.



A grade three teacher noted that the freedom for students to explore through their own innate sense of creativity made for deeper connections to curricular learning.

The visual richness of the Begbie studio is part of the Wonder of the discovery experience for students.







"Ideas come out of the clay." - Grade 1 student

"I saw a shape in the clay and it gave me an idea. Using my imagination I can turn the clay into something real." Grade 3 student

"Charcoal smushes into tiny pieces and comes apart, while clay comes together." Grade 3 student

"Nature is everywhere!" - Grade 2 student

Teachers Reflect

"I think the students really relished in the time they got to just play with the clay, time that we normally can't afford on a day to day basis because of the amount of curriculum that needs to be covered. They were sorry to see the AIRS sessions end!"

Rosa Oudt, Grade 2 Teacher.

It was also very interesting to listen to their conversations as they shared, talked and bounced ideas off of each other during the process of handling their ever, changing clay creations, and experimentation with charcoal. Sandra Marino Grade 3 Teacher



Social Emotional Learning Remotely

Once the logistical hurdle of sharing the artists' video invitations and the challenge of uploading student work to share back was negotiated, students participated enthusiastically and with thoughtfulness.

Teachers noted the students' depth of engagement through the mindfulness of the photographs that were taken.

As this residency built on the experiences in the studio from previous years, students were able to take this knowledge and apply it at home, both in taking powerful and meaningful photographs and in thoughtfully selecting which photograph to share.

Students naturally integrated technical language like 'depth of field' and 'backlit' into their written reflection process and comments demonstrating mastery in understanding over compositional and technical photographic processes.



Student Quotes

"Over these 6 weeks I realized that there were so many things in nature all around may neighbourhood that I didn't notice before and doing AIRS really opened my eye about my surroundings and how I should pay more attention to my surroundings more often." - Laura

"During the 5 weeks AIRS program I learned many things; being creative with my pint of view, negative space and how to use natural light in photographs." – Grade 7 student

"Photography has helped me see that the world is a beautiful place and not even this pandemic can ruin it...and helped me to stop and take a look at the world at a different perspective." – Grade 7 student





I chose this photo to share because [it] shows a basketball sitting in my backyard all by its lonely self, waiting for someone to pick it up and paly with it...Over the last six weeks of AIRS, I have learned that taking a photo of an object from different angles can tell us a different story. It is incredible how moving slightly whether to the side, up or down, taking the photo in a different light can result in such magic." - Trinity Being quiet, allows us to hear nature's song on repeat

BRITANNIA ELEMENTARY

"How do students show their sense of self through the various forms of artmaking?"

Lead Teachers: Maria Elizabeth Costa, Pascal Spino and Elaine Tobin.

The Process

This year, Britannia students and teachers working with artist Tami Murray, were invited into an experience of process-based artmaking that explored the aesthetic and expressive possibilities of a variety of materials and mediums through a reciprocal process of experimentation and reflection.

Students were encouraged to 'make their mark,' thinking about who they are and who they think they are. Students began the year with a whole school continuous wall drawing using coloured electrical tape, that encouraged students to explore and discover the possibilities of line to create shape, texture, depth and form. Students enjoyed finding images that 'appeared' within the lines and creating drawing of what they saw.

Subsequent sessions allowed students the freedom to experiment with a variety of materials and techniques using inks, paints, tissue paper, electricians tape, graphite, chalk, oil pastels, glue, and watercolours. Tami kept the process open, but directed toward finding deeper and more reflective self-expression.



Teacher Observations

This was Britannia's second year in the AIRS program and first year working with Tami Murray. Teachers wanted to know **"How do students show their sense of self through various forms of artmaking?"**

The emphasis on the process and freedom to experiment with different materials and processes without pre-determined outcomes allowed students to trust their own creativity. This allowed students to build confidence, to be empowered, to take risks and to develop independent problem-solving skills; "I can!"

Teachers observed that students initially approached the studio, "with a gleam in their eye", were driven by the excitement of experimenting with novel materials, but as the sessions continued, **some began to take their time and were more thoughtful and purposeful**. Time and patience in the process were honored.

Pascal noted that without constraints imposed on the use of materials through multiple opportunities and iterations, **students were able to move into a growth mindset.** Because there was no specific goal, students worked more collaboratively, asking each other "How did you do that?" and appreciating one anothers' ideas.





Sense of Self

Students created work that expressed their own sense of expression and identity. Each work showed a unique style, reflecting their own individuality and personality. This was seen in the choice of colour, mood, sparseness or richness of materials. Even if a name wasn't on the work, you would know whose it was.

"Students could see themselves as powerful instruments of change." – P. Spino. The emphasis on process also allowed stories and narratives of the self to surface. Some of these stories were powerful means of self-discovery. Some teachers were able to use these emergent narratives as a springboard for writing or conversation.

Taking a step back encouraged this process of self-reflection and purposeful additions. Even students that struggled without 'rules' began to **develop more confidence in their own creative ideas and capabilities to create**.

The emphasis on process created an environment of safety for experimentation, where mistakes could be 'happy accidents', transformed or even re-tried. Student learned that in the creative process you start somewhere and can end somewhere else.



Teacher quotes:

"Every Wednesday there was a cheer when students saw that AIRS was part of the shape of the day."

"Students enjoyed taking the time to reflect on the process of making art and explaining their ideas behind it. This is something that is often overlooked in regular elementary school art lessons." E. Tobin

"In the AIRS art class my K's work intently and independently for 35-50 minutes. Children who are afraid to make mistakes fearlessly create in the studio. If things don't work they try again." -P. Spino

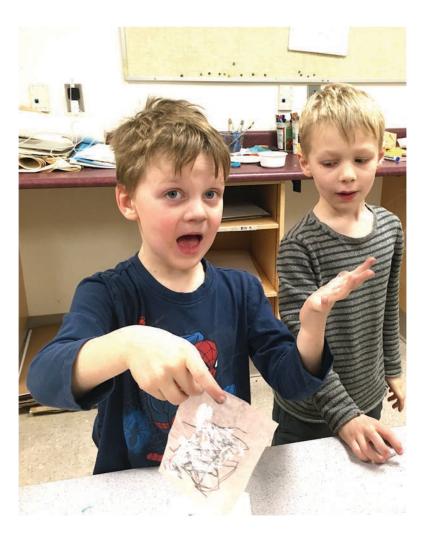
Student quotes

"Yes! It's ART time!" "I can bend lines in the air." "How did you make that." "I liked making art with stuff I normally don't make art with – like bits of plastic and tape and mesh."



"A grade 3 student realizes that lines are real and exist in space and not just on paper. The stretching and pulling of the tape to make curvy lines and the twirling and twisting to make it stand off from the wall made her realize her power to create designs, shapes, movement and even emotions with lines. Exploring how lines travel, intercept and combine in space to create art made students curious about how best to work with tape to make special designs." - Elizabeth Costa





"On our Wednesday AIRS program days student attendance is higher. Students who left at lunch to go to the dentist rush back in time for AIRS. Throughout the morning there is an energy as we look forward to going to AIRS and getting our hands super painty." – Pascal Spino

MOUNT PLEASANT ELEMENTARY

Why is creativity important? Why should creativity be valued within our school community?

Will our definition of creativity change after our experience with the AIRS program?

Principal: Jonathan Weresch; Lead Teachers: Linh Lui and Teala Mackowetsky; Artist: Tim Bauer



The Mount Pleasant studio is in an open area located at the heart of the school. The space is sponsored by Emily Carr University of Art and Design and the residency is awarded each year to a distinguished graduate alumn. This year, Tim Bauer, a comic book artist and graphic designer, and residency award recipient, wanted to invite students to "let their imaginations run" and give them space and opportunity to "discover their innate creativity as an important part of childhood."

"I want to bring play into the arts and let kids know that you can create a whole world out of what you have around you and that you can be whatever you want to be." - Tim Bauer The first project allowed students across the whole school to draw their own world however they imagined it experimenting with a variety of drawing tools. The only stipulation was to connect their drawing with two marks on either side of the page, that would allow all the drawings to be connected together across multiple classes into one continuous unfolding world of the imagination. Tim writes;

"At first the students seemed hesitant, but as they got more comfortable with sharing their ideas I started to see many of the students start to tell a story with their work."



Student continuous drawing execute from intermediate and kindercarten students



The second project, had intermediate students create an imaginary creature never before seen, incorporating random attributes such as horns or a tail, identified by rolling a dice. The students developed their characters on paper and then turned them into 3 dimensional creation using Sculpey and acrylic paint. These creatures were housed within a jam jar terrarium that became its own world decorated and elaborated with an assortment of found materials.

Tim noted that the students became more invested in their fictional characters as they drew and sculpted, giving them names and inventing stories of their lives, even creating entire families.

"They were seeing their imagination manifest in front of themselves. They got to see and experience that they have this capability of bringing their imagination to life."



The spring term was interrupted by the COVID pandemic. Tim adapted his program to invite students to respond to a series of provocations to express their ideas, using whatever art, toys or household materials they had at hand in their homes, whether it be feelings through colour or transforming an ordinary object into a monster. At the end of each instruction Tim would remind students:

"Remember, Remember, Remember to not only use your imagination and being creative, but to have a lot of fun!" – Tim Bauer

What we learned about Creativity:

The focus of the inquiry at Mount Pleasant was creativity; understanding it's value and what it might mean.

Students experienced the generative nature of creativity, beginning with drawing, and allowing one idea to lead to another, building on the possibilities that emerged from week to week and allowing the process itself to expand their imaginations.

Tim told the students "*Creativity comes from your brain. You can draw something you've never seen before.*"

Students were encouraged to keep going deeper into their ideas and older students were able to enter into an experience of play in their art.

"What I created was so much cooler than what I imagined at first!"





Working with an Artist in the Studio Space:

Teachers noted that students were freer to be creative working with an artist. With the artist, students understood that their own ideas were important, and there was no evaluation or judgement about their work. There was no right or wrong.

Entering the space of the studio signalled a shift into a more creative frame of mind for students. The freedom to create gave students a safe space to take risks. In particular, two anxious students were able to relax into the creative process. Over the residency, students changed their understanding of what it means to be creative:

Creativity is...

"…drawing, cutting, origami, imagination."

"…the first thing that comes out of your mind and it's something you can draw"

"...when you can make anything."
"...being yourself"

"…inside pens"

"...feels good to do. It makes me feel happy and it makes me enjoy my life. "...magic. It's anything you want it to be."

QUEEN ALEXANDRA F.A.M.I.L.Y SCHOOL

Principal: John MacCormack Lead Teachers: Julie Gelson, Sherrise Wong and Karen Tang Artists Cole Pauls and Rebecca Heyl

In what ways might the visual arts support social emotional learning and help build resilience in our students?

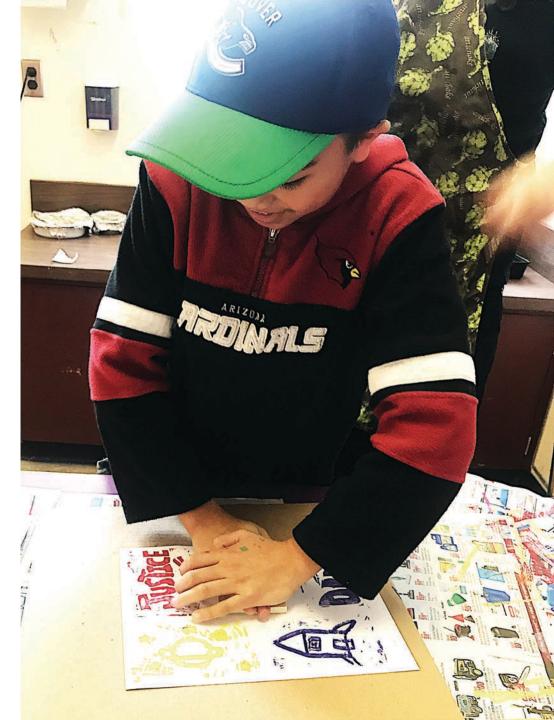
With the primaries, Rebecca continued building students capacity for sensory perception and curiosity through slow looking and tactile material explorations. Students encountered the textures and forms of the natural world around them on the school grounds, in samples from the Beatty biodiversity museum and even around their own homes. Students were able to learn through a variety of mediums and techniques for observing, responding to and capturing natures' patterns including drawing, rubbing, printing, staining, weaving and imprinting with clay.



For Grade 3-7 students, Cole extended and deepened their understanding and skills in comic making as a medium for sharing stories and important ideas. Students created zines on the concepts of resilience and truth and what that means in their lives. Cole used student centred discussion to build consensus on definitions.

Students were encouraged to develop their own ideas on these themes into one-page comics that were compiled into huge class anthologies. The upper intermediates also had the opportunity to learn about printmaking. Students developed and carved their own unique designs incorporating image and text into a lino plate, printing them onto stickers and cloth to create bold, dynamic identity markers that were uniquely theirs.





AIRS at Home

In the spring, during school suspension, Cole put together a 4 part video series creating a papercut comic. Students were to allow the silhouette of a household object to inspire them, turning it into a character and using their imagination to create a background landscape in the same way with associated objects. The plot thickened with a second character, a villain, inspired by another object in their home and some speech bubbles. All of these were cut out and set up to use a camera to capture comic panels with their newly made papercut world.





For the primary students Rebeeca created "Curiosity Boxes" from egg cartons for each of the students filled with materials from the studio such as paper, pens and pastels as well as unusual items such as yarn, shells and pine cones. She encouraged students to add to them with interesting found objects.

The intention was to help students continue the deep observational practices they started in the studio.

"My aim is to demonstrate to teachers, students and families that once "Studio Thinking" has been cultivated, it can then not only exist but flourish outside of the studio." - Rebecca Heyl

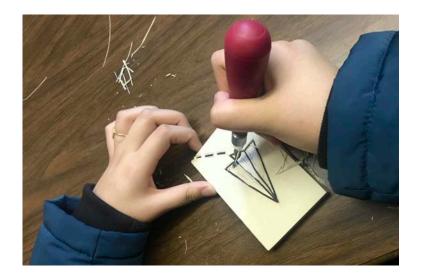
Building Resilience

Teachers appreciated Cole's calm, patient and gentle manner, his sense of humour and connection with students. This relationship allowed students to feel connected and comfortable sharing their personal story and ideas through art. This inspired students to want to do more. For some students, particularly the indigenous students, Cole became a role model.

The consistency of materials from week to week, and their simplicity, created a comfort and accessibility that really helped students to take risks, build persistence and resilience.

In particular, a few students who struggle making mistakes in the classroom and often shut down, were able to be more patient and try again in the studio.

This approach embodies the first people's principal that learning takes patience and time.





The younger primaries were also invited into slow process, discovering nature through their senses and material explorations.

Often in the classroom, there is a tendency to move towards a product rather than valuing and appreciating the learning within the process.

Rebecca encouraged process through open ended 'wonderings' that allowed for inquisitive exploration and enthusiastic sharing of their observations.

Cole and Rebecca created an environment within the studio that encouraged students to slow down and make deeper connections.

For Queen Alexandra students, the studio was a safe place for taking risks and a place of quiet. Activities allowed for a collaborative atmosphere which drew in more reluctant students; open ended self-exploration of materials and story created the desire to participate and share, naturally building on one another's ideas.

"Their buckets are filled up in the studio." - Julie Gelson





ADMIRAL SEYMOUR ELEMENTARY

Why is art such a powerful tool in community building and understanding the places they belong?

Principal: Dorothy Watkins; Lead Teachers: April Huang and Natasha Burditt; Artists: Susan Hall and Heather Lamoureux



At Seymour, artists Heather Lamoureux and Susan Hall invited students into reflective place-based art processes that connected the self to land and one another in community.

Heather Lamoureux worked with the primary grades integrating embodied movement explorations and material expression connecting students to the life of plants, to animals and to one another.

The older primaries and grade 4 students developed a land-based movement practice that explored the theme of "transformation." Lil-wat and Squamish transformation stories inspired students to create their own transformation bird stories that were brought to life through performance, integrating movements that resonated with birds, transformation, rhythm and the land, and wearing individually designed wings and headpieces that represented what their bird protected on the land. **Susan Hall** worked with the upper intermediate classes using photography and mixed media to investigate the theme of belonging. In photography, students considered

"What is the language of belonging?"

"What role does physical space play in creating a sense of belonging?"

"Who is in the frame and who has been left out?"

The work radiated out from the studio to incorporate the surrounding community and even the beach.

The younger intermediate class explored belonging in relation to trees and the animals and birds that live there using a variety of mediums including paint, printmaking and clay.

These works were exhibited invitationally to allow all the students across the school to reflect and interact with the art.





Teacher Reflections

Why is art such a powerful tool in community building and understanding the places they belong?

Storytelling has been a consistent thread through all the residencies at Seymour, including this year, helping students be mindful; of place, the land, in a talking circle and making personal connections.

The primary students had to shift their conceptions of 'dance' from learning a series of steps to 'movement' as a body language that tells a story. The significance of their art practice, came together with the performance outside wearing the wings and headdress, that allowed their transformation into protector birds. For a few students in particular this connected directly to their belonging within the raven clan.





Teachers noted that through photography, the intermediate students were able to see their surroundings in new ways. This was marked by a new attention to aesthetic details within the landscape and the streets around the school; "Did you see how that flower looked?"

Ultimately this created a greater sense of belonging within their neighbourhood. Sharing the camera apparatus and assisting their partner helped develop community care, patience and taking care to slow down and really look during their time with the camera.

Seymour student photograph





The exhibition and celebration of student work was a key component of community building.

The video screening of the bird transformations drew all the students in creating a sense of community and connection across classes. The exhibition of mixed media and photographs also created connection and community.

"I had fun becoming a bird"

"My favourite bird is Chikadee dee dee" "Thanks for making me believe I can be an artist - like Bob Ross"

The photographs sparked conversations about where the photos had been taken, extending the sense of belonging to place. There was an awe, respect and genuine appreciation of others work cultivating an ethic of care.

"This exhibit has been a wonderful reminder of what is possible and what this group of student's is capable of." - Dorothy Watkins, Principal

Student Reflections

"What I learned is that art is all around us, you just have to look for it."

"I learned to... pay attention to the world around me."

"I learned that belonging is in your heart."

"I want people to see the point of view and the colours and all of the lines."

"I started looking around... I ducked down, I looked up high and found the perfect angle. And took that photo."

"I learned to be kind and helpful towards other people."

Seymour student photograph

THUNDERBIRD ŠX^wəX^wA?əS ELEMENTARY

How can the AIRS program foster and support the social and emotional learning of students through an Indigenous focus?

Principal: Tassie Harris; Lead Teacher Fabienne Nguyen; Artist: Megan Jensen



The art making process

This year at Thunderbird, Tlingit artist Guna, or Megan Jensen focused on speaking to the land and connecting to Mother Earth through story telling. The grade 3-5 classes created paintings inspired by a Tlingit legend on how raven brought light into the world. Megan introduced students to visualizing and a variety of different brush and landscape painting techniques. Students chose different aspects of the story and exploring the meaning through the art making process.

The upper intermediates were introduced to stop motion film and inspired by the work of indigenous filmmaker Amanda Strong. They learned the power of storytelling to communicate important ideas such as the destruction and the disconnection to the earth caused through industrialization. Students were encouraged to create their own stories, real or magical. Sets and characters were designed and constructed using cardboard, paint, paper, clay, cotton and clay. Students had to focus on how these visual elements communicated the central message of the story.

Unfortunately school was suspended before students were able to film and complete their animation stories. During lockdown, Megan returned to the Yukon to be with her family and created a series of instructional videos that introduced primary student to the land of the Yukon and Tlingit culture, including regalia, beading and language.

Art and Social Emotional Learning

For Thunderbird students "art is a force that supports and nourishes social and emotional learning. The freedom to self-express emotions without rules, or being right, or having to conform builds self-confidence. Art affirms for kids that it is okay to be themselves. Students canvases', demonstrated the connection of feeling and emotion through colours to different aspects of story and land. Through this freedom of expression, the studio nourishes mental wellbeing.

Working with an artist encourages children to come out of their shells and build confidence. "One boy who academically struggled and lacked selfconfidence, his eyes would light up as he entered the studio; he was good with his hands and it was time for him to shine. At home, this talent was not affirmed, because the focus was on grades, but in the studio it was valued. Art is just as important as math and English. Working with an artist validated this for him and see himself as an artist and be proud of his work. .

Art creates calm and helps students who are particularly active to self-regulate. Working with their hands is therapeutic and helps students to get into their own emotional space." - F. Nguyen

"Art starts with the heart and touches the mind and the heart."





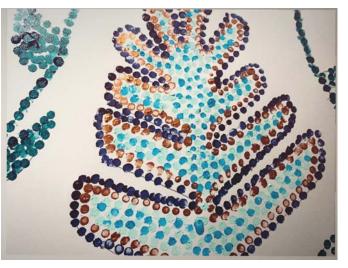
Indigenous Ways of Knowing

"Indigenous principles were incorporated all through the art making process.

Patience. It takes time and presence to tap into the imagination, be grounded with oneself and create. In art, there is no instant gratification, it takes time to think and express what you want say. Students learn to be patient with themselves.

Respect of the land. This was central, and called students to connect with nature with their five senses all around them." – F. Nguyen

Culture. Creating online videos from the Yukon, brought "forward new potentials for the children that would have not happened otherwise: and show students a "different world" that exists beyond their own. They have had the opportunity to be exposed to new art forms, new traditional clothing, new lands, new language, and new art forms. It would have not been as nearly as rich as it has been if I wasn't in the Yukon." - Guna



Quotes from students

"Painting makes me feel alive. " - Grade 4 student "I like to use , mix different colours to paint." - Grade 4 student "Making figurines relaxes me. I like working with plasticine." Grade 5 student

"I can be creative and myself." - Grade 5 student

SIR PIERRE ELLIOTT TRUDEAU ELEMENTARY

In what ways can the visual arts support the exploration and expression of positive personal and cultural identity?

Principal: Angela Hughes; Lead Teachers: Alison Diesvelt and Angela Micozzi; Artist: Amanda Wood



The younger students did contour drawings, and drawings without looking, engaging students in exploratory work using our combined senses. Then we worked on a mural that involved hand tracings, patterning, and overlapping that involved the use of pen, paint and pencils. -A. Micozzi

The older grades worked with a variety of sculptural forms using brown paper, cardboard boxes, hinges, brass fasteners, string and photo transfers of drawings. They worked to respond to the questions, "What do you want people to know about you? What sort of container can you create to hold or incorporate that which you wish to share about yourself?" -A. Diesvelt

OK for me and there was clouds it

Post COVID students from different grade levels responded to a series of short lesson activities such as photographing the sky; playing with lines and forms; creating patterns with tracings of common kitchen implements etc. The online learning activities involved video instructions delivered by the

artist and the collaborative sharing of images through our classroom Teams platform



District Autism Program

Students in the District Autism Program were able to extend their work from last year, exploring tactile materials and open ended invitations on a light table. Students used their whole bodies to layer, spin, squish, pour, stretch, unravel, twirl, stack, drop, taste, wrap...







Teacher Reflection: Primary

For the primary classes, our school sessions, shortened as they were, produced some wonderful results. My observations have been that the activities are very engaging and it's getting them to think, sometimes out of their comfort zone.

One student who has autism and does not generally like paint, became completely absorbed in painting his hands. For the younger students the process of working with the artist was very much about exploring sensory awareness and the potential of the creative process.

There was so much engagement. There was one student whose work really stands out for me, she engaged body and soul, so entirely focussed-that she actually kept pencil on the paper the whole time- she was so young and it was astonishing to see that level of intense focus and persistence in someone so small!

I learned that it is never too early to introduce some of these activities that might seem out of reach at first.-A. Micozzi

Teacher Reflection: Intermediate

At the start of our residency with Amanda, I really enjoyed watching the students explore ideas, sketch out containers, and discover how professional artists like Brendan Tang and Kimsooja work to convey "hybrid identity" - how the people we are is often comprised of layers and myriad influences. It was new for students and a lot to take in, but I could see them trying to understand these "weird ways of doing art" with bundles of cloth, odd compilations of objects, robot ceramics. They liked that it was "kinda strange". They were curious.

In the second part of our residency students worked with commonplace materials like cardboard but in ways that were knew to them. It was fascinating to me that they weren't quite sure of themselves or how to manipulate the media to make it do what they wanted. It took time, and oversight to ensure they were focused on the materials in a way that was productive because the materials were different, and it was sometimes challenging to get them to do what you wanted. It was fascinating to watch them gain confidence and momentum over time.

So much potential: more time required!

I felt that they were just beginning to notice each other's efforts and glean ideas from one another. I could see their ideas really beginning to take form and the satisfaction of seeing things take form in ways they both had and had not imagined. They were just starting to get a sense of that opportunity that presents itself when things don't quite work the way you expect so that you have to look at things differently and work the so-called mistake into a new conception-a new iteration. I would have loved to see where we might have gotten with it. -A. Diesvelt



In what ways can the visual arts support the exploration and expression of positive personal and cultural identity?

Teacher Reflections:

I felt that the question proved more challenging than I expected.

I loved the idea, but it really was a stretch for them; There was nothing for them to really copy and I could really see many of them "troubling" with the idea of what they wanted to say about themselves and how they wanted to say it.

They were somewhat cautious at the offset, but when they started to get into it, their confidence became bolder and more defined each session. It was exciting to see them coming out of their shells so to speak, and then so frustrating when the process came to such an abrupt ending because of the school closure.

Still, I think all our work with Amanda left them more open to play so that when she came up with the "AIRS Remote Residency" they were bolder and more playful than they might have been otherwise-more willing to take risks and less afraid of being judged.

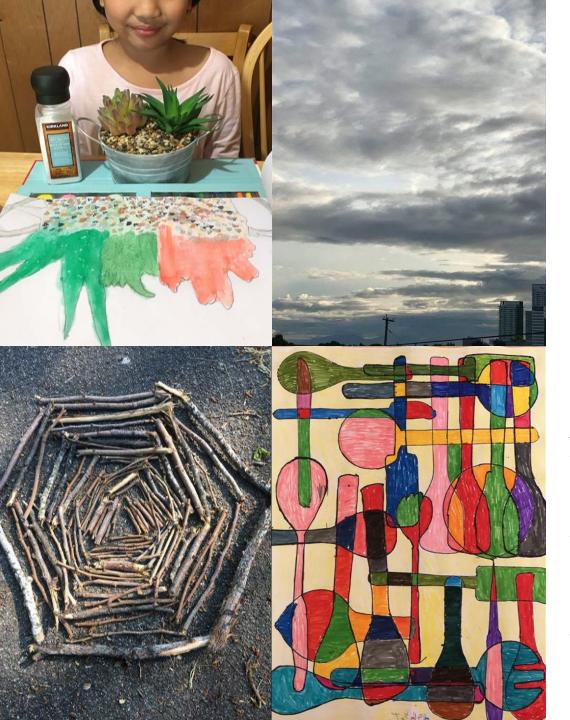
Student Reflections:

What I liked the most in our art in class was the cardboard art - it helped me to see my imagination and to think of ideas when I did something wrong. - Anthony

My face fills with joy when I see a new art project pops up! I get all excited! - Georgina

My favourite part of working with Amanda was being able to build and create our own containers and share our cultures with one another. In the beginning, it was really hard to come up with an idea for something to build but once you gave us examples and instructions that were really easy to understand; it was super easy and fun! -Jonas

I really enjoyed making the container that identified my culture. At first I didn't know what to sketch, but Amanda gave me tons of ideas, thank you for that, it helped me to sketch out lots of things from my culture. On the cardboard I was making a bus, with designs that looked like the bus on the Philippines that I used to ride on. - Kristel



AIRS Online

Once we got set up online, it was great to see how students took up the weekly invitations and see each other's images.. Amanda was extraordinary in her capacity to re-envision an AIRs program that would allow anyone and everyone from our school to engage. Striving for connection and collaboration without physical proximity was challenging to say the least, but I think it worked.

Building a collection of images together and sharing without judgment seemed cathartic. Some students did small modest works and others became thoughtfully absorbed. Without me there they had to be more autonomous, and the results varied widely and beautifully.

[The videos} are such a great addition to our online work, but also really helps to provide some lovely pro-d for teachers not just for now but as something they can also access down the road. - A. Diesvelt

These art projects have shown me that art is not just a stroke of paint across a canvas. Art can be anything you want, arta is everywhere. - Sasha

While I was working on my art projects, it made me think differently about art. I didn't know art could be made of shadows or collections! - Georgina

The AIRS Program gratefully acknowledges the financial support of The Betty Welburn Legacy Award Emily Carr University of Art and Design Higher Ground Holdings Rennie Foundation Vancouver School Board

Seymour student photograph